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D.A. BROWN: QUEENS MAN CHARGED
IN ALLEGED HATE CRIME ATTACK ON SIKH MAN

Faces Up To 15 Years In Prison

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced today that a Floral Park man has been charged with assault as a hate crime in an attack in the New Hyde Park section of Queens earlier this week on a Sikh man who was allegedly subjected to racial slurs and profanity before being beaten and having his nose and jaw broken.

District Attorney Brown said, "Queens County is the most diverse county in the nation. It is home to many races and nationalities. Crimes motivated by bias – particularly those involving violence – will never be tolerated in this county. When they do regrettably occur, they will be vigorously prosecuted and those involved will be severely punished."

The District Attorney identified the defendant as David C. Wood, 36, of 76-52 263rd Street in Floral Park, Queens. Wood was arraigned last night before Queens Criminal Court Judge Gene Lopez on charges of second-degree assault as a hate crime, second- and third-degree assault and second-degree aggravated harassment. Wood, who faces up to 15 years in prison if convicted, was ordered held on \$10,000 bail and to return to court on January 30, 2008.

The District Attorney said that, according to the charges, 63-year-old Chadha Bajjeet had parked his car in front of 222-34 95th Avenue in New Hyde Park on Monday, January 14, 2008, and was about to enter his place of worship when Wood began yelling profanities and making statements, such as ". . . Arab, go back to your country." Wood then allegedly approached Mr. Bajjeet and stated, "You don't listen" and then punched him in the face, breaking his nose and jaw.

According to the complaint, Mr. Bajjeet is scheduled to undergo surgery for repair of his nose and will require further medical consultation about his jaw once the swelling goes down. Mr. Bajjeet is presently required to be on a strict liquid diet.

District Attorney Brown expressed his appreciation to the members of the New York City Police Department's Bias Investigation Unit for their assistance in the investigation and prosecution of this case.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Michael Whitney, of the District Attorney's Gang Violence and Hate Crimes Bureau, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Mariela Palomino Herring, Bureau Chief, and Michelle E. Goldstein, Deputy Bureau Chief, and the overall supervision of Senior Executive Assistant District Attorney for Trials James C. Quinn and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorneys for Trials John H. Larsen and Robert J. Masters.

It should be noted that criminal charges are merely an accusation and that defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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Note to Editors: E-version posted at www.queensda.org.