



RICHARD A. BROWN
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

**DISTRICT ATTORNEY
QUEENS COUNTY**
125-01 QUEENS BOULEVARD
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568
718-286-6000

Release # 108-2009
www.queensda.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10, 2009

CONTACT: KEVIN RYAN
HELEN PETERSON
MERIS CAMPBELL
(718) 286-6315

**TWO TEENAGERS ARRAIGNED ON CHARGES OF ROBBERY AND MURDER
OF WORLD JOURNAL NEWSPAPER EMPLOYEE ASLEEP IN HIS CAR**

Second Asian Man Allegedly Targeted; Defendants Faces 25 Years to Life in Prison

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced today that Chris Levy, 17, of Harlem, and Cory Azor, 16, of East Elmhurst, have been charged with the weekend robbery and strangulation death of a marketing employee of the World Journal, the largest Chinese language newspaper in North America, who had fallen asleep in his car in Flushing. The two defendants and a third individual, Keron Wilthshire, 17, of Corona, are also charged with the robbery of another Asian man, also in Flushing, a week earlier.

District Attorney Brown said, "While all three defendants are accused of preying on Asian men to rob, two of the defendants are charged with a senseless and brutal crime that, by their own alleged actions, shows a complete disregard for human life. This case will be vigorously prosecuted."

The District Attorney said that the three defendants were arraigned today in Queens Criminal Court before Judge Lenore Gerald. Levy and Azor are charged with second-degree murder, first- and second-degree robbery, and third- and fourth-degree criminal possession of stolen property. Wilthshire is charged with first- and second-degree robbery and third-degree criminal possession of stolen property. If convicted, Levy and Azor, who were ordered held without bail, each face up to 25 years to life in prison, and Wilthshire, who was ordered held on a total of \$75,000 bail, faces up to 25 years in prison. All three defendants are scheduled to next appear in court on June 25, 2009.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to the charges, David Kao, 49, of Woodhaven, was asleep in a 2000 Lexus SUV double parked in front of 42-10 Colden Street at approximately 1:00 a.m. on Saturday, June 6, 2009, when Levy and Azor entered the vehicle and placed Mr. Kao in a choke-hold, pulling him over the driver's seat into the rear where they choked and punched him, causing his death. They then allegedly fled in the victim's vehicle and disposed of the body at another location. When the defendants were apprehended on June 8th, they were allegedly in possession of the victim's automobile, his wallet and credit cards. The defendant Wilthshire was also apprehended at that time and charged with operating the stolen Lexus.

In a second complaint, Levy, Azor and Wilthshire are charged with robbing 42-year-old Jin Tong Yuan as he entered the elevator at 140-50 Ash Avenue at approximately 8:50 p.m. on May 27, 2009. According to statements allegedly made to police at the time of their arrest, Azor and his two-co-defendants saw an Asian man (Mr. Yuan) and agreed to approach him and check his pockets. It is alleged that Wilthshire grabbed Mr. Yuan from behind and placed him in a choke-hold and Levy held a silver pistol to the victim's head while demanding money. The three defendants allegedly took the victim's cell phone and a sum of money from his wallet before fleeing. Wilthshire allegedly admitted to police that he threw the phone away because he didn't like it.

The investigation was conducted by detectives assigned to the New York City Police Department's 109th Detective Squad.

Assistant District Attorney Suzanne D. O'Hare, of the District Attorney's Homicide Investigations Bureau, is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Peter T. Reese, Bureau Chief, and Peter J. McCormack III, 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.

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

#

Note to Editors: E-version of this press release posted at www.queensda.org.