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**TAXI DRIVER ARRAIGNED ON CHARGES**  
**OF ATTEMPTED RAPE OF FEMALE PASSENGER**

*Faces Up To 15 Years In Prison If Convicted*

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced today that a livery cab driver has been arraigned on charges of attempting to rape and assault a 23-year-old female passenger last week.

District Attorney Brown said, "The offenses of which the defendant has been charged are crimes of violence that pose a serious threat to public safety and which warrant vigorous prosecution."

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Klever Sailema, 46, of 79-11 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue in Elmhurst, Queens. Sailema was arraigned on Saturday, March 7, 2009, before Queens Criminal Court Judge Barry Kron on charges of attempted first-degree rape, first-degree sexual abuse, second-degree assault, forcible touching and second-degree unlawful imprisonment. Sailema was ordered held on \$50,000 bail and to return to court on March 23, 2009. If convicted, he faces up to fifteen years in prison.

The District Attorney said that, according to the charges, the 23-year-old victim entered Sailema's livery cab at approximately 1:00 a.m. on March 2, 2009, in the vicinity of 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 37<sup>th</sup> Street in Astoria. It is alleged that the victim fell asleep in the back seat and when she awoke her pants and underwear were down and Sailema was on top of her. The victim allegedly began screaming and punching the defendant, biting him on the arm, before grabbing the defendant's hack registration and a photo of the defendant and fleeing the vehicle. The victim was taken to a local Queens hospital and treated for injuries sustained during the alleged assault.

The investigation was conducted by the New York City Police Department's Queens Special Victims Squad. Assisting in the investigation was the NYPD's 114<sup>th</sup> Precinct Detective Squad.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Jared R. Rosenblatt, of the District Attorney's Special Victims Bureau, which is under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Marjory D. Fisher, Bureau Chief, and Assistant District Attorneys Kenneth M. Appelbaum and Lucinda C. Suarez, Deputy Bureau Chiefs, and under 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.

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