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Queens couple, man plead guilty to sex trafficking ring

Forced woman to perform sexual acts in Franklin Square massage parlor

Three Flushing residents who were arrested for coercing women into performing sexual acts on customers in Franklin Square and West Hempstead have pled guilty for their involvement in a cross-county sex trafficking ring, Nassau County District Attorney Madeline Singas announced on May 13.

Zhaowei Yin, 49, and his wife Shuwen, 47, along with Li Fei Leng, 33, the manager of the parlors, hired two women under the guise that they would be expected to perform massages. The victim's were required to perform sexual services on male customers at the two locations, Panda Foot Spa in Franklin Square and Lucy's Spa in West Hempstead, both of which have closed.

According to investigators, the women were often forced to sleep at the business. Additionally one victim was never paid by one of the defendants for the time that she worked at the massage parlor and deducted wages from the other victim for occasional transportation home after work and for sleeping at the location, even when she was forced to stay there, the D.A.'s office said.

The three defendants threatened to post naked photos of one of the victims on the Internet and in newspapers if she failed to comply with their demands, investigators said. In addition the defendants threatened to deport the undocumented victim if she reported them to the police.

When a male customer physically assaulted one victim, the defendants forced her to continue to perform the services that the customer requested.

Prior to the arrest of the three defendants, both victims were arrested and charged following an undercover operation by the Nassau County Police and their cases were handled in the Human Trafficking Intervention Part of the Nassau County District Court. Upon further investigation it was determined that the women had been coerced to perform sexual acts and had become the victims of sex and labor trafficking. The charges against them were dropped and a wider investigation into their alleged traffickers was launched.

Yin and his wife, and Leng were charged with two counts of sex trafficking and two counts of promoting prostitution. They will be sentenced on May 20.