



Anna Sanders ♥ Become a fan
anna.sanders@huffingtonpost.com



Manuel Rodriguez-Perez, Accused New York City Weed Kingpin, Charged With Five Murders

Posted: 08/22/2012 5:33 pm

NEW YORK -- Federal prosecutors slapped dozens of new felony charges on an alleged drug lord Monday, accusing him of killing five men over more than a decade while running a lucrative marijuana smuggling ring.

Manuel Rodriguez-Perez, 39, was the leader of the drug gang, according to the extensive racketeering indictment released Monday by Manhattan prosecutors. The indictment names eight other men as members of Rodriguez-Perez's organization, which prosecutors said yielded millions of dollars in profits.

"As alleged, these nine defendants were part of a sweeping enterprise that has the blood of six people on its hands and that trafficked in tons of marijuana, laundered millions of dollars, and obstructed justice," said U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara.

Rodriguez-Perez and three others named in Monday's indictment, including his cousin, were [arrested in October 2010](#) in a sweeping takedown of more than 50 members of a drug trafficking ring that transported tons of weed from Florida and California to be sold in New York. The bust grew out of an investigation named Operation Green Venom.

Rodriguez-Perez also was charged in the indictment with five more attempted murders, drug trafficking, obstruction of justice and laundering money in New York, Florida and the Dominican Republic.

His younger brother, Orlando Rodriguez, 36, was charged with strangling a victim known as "Carlos Valentin" or "Campi" in Riverdale Park in the Bronx on his brother's orders in 2000. Rodriguez also is charged with attempting to kill another man who had a gripe with his brother four years earlier.

He is currently in the Dominican Republic awaiting extradition after being arrested last week.

Jay-Z's former business partner, Kareem Burke, was arrested during the 2010 bust and sentenced in June to five years after [pleading guilty](#) to distributing more than 100 kilos of marijuana.