

Beat: News

Bloods Gang Member Sentenced to 25 Years for Murders and Other Violent Crime

Dylan Cruz, member of Red Lane Gorillas

New York, New York, 24.06.2022, 06:16 Time

USPA NEWS - Earlier today, in federal court in Central Islip, Dylan Cruz, a member of the Red Lane Gorillas "set" of the Bloods street gang, was sentenced by United States District Judge Joanna Seybert to 35 years in prison following his conviction on racketeering charges for his role in the July 2012 murder of Anthony Richard in Baldwin Harbor, the October 2014 murder of Ehrik Williams in Hempstead, the November 2010 attempted murder of a rival gang member in Roosevelt, and a several years' long conspiracy to murder members of a rival "set" of the Bloods gang in Brooklyn. Cruz pleaded guilty to racketeering in December of 2021 along with co-defendant Richard Michel who is awaiting sentencing.

Breon Peace, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York and Michael J. Driscoll, Assistant Director-in-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York Field Office (FBI), Patrick J. Ryder, Commissioner, Nassau County Police Department (NCPD), and Keechant L. Sewell, Commissioner, New York City Police Department (NYPD), announced the guilty plea.

"Dylan Cruz's senseless, callous violence took the lives of two innocent young men and devastated their families, all because of suspected offenses against his fellow gang members and associates," stated United States Attorney Peace. "The relentless efforts of this Office and our law enforcement partners resulted in Cruz being held accountable for these murders that went unsolved for years. Today's sentence should send a message to all that violent actors will be held accountable for their criminal acts, no matter how long it takes."

"The details of this years-long investigation make clear: The NYPD and our law-enforcement partners will never tolerate violent gangs and the havoc they wreak in our communities," stated NYPD Commissioner Sewell. "Today's sentencing reflects this defendant's callous disregard for life, and reaffirms our commitment to rid our streets of violent criminals by holding them fully accountable for their actions. I want to thank the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of New York, the New York Field Office of the FBI, the Nassau County Police Department, and everyone else who worked to make New York City safer for all the people we serve."

According to court filings and statements made by the defendant at his guilty plea, between 2010 and 2021, Cruz, along with other members of the Red Lane Gorillas, engaged in a violent gang war against rival gangs, including the Crips and the 5-9 Brims set of the Bloods, in Nassau County and Brooklyn. Cruz conspired to kill members of the 5-9 Brims and on February 20, 2016, shot and seriously wounded a rival gang member and an innocent female bystander in Queens.

On November 17, 2010, Cruz also shot a rival Crips gang member in Roosevelt that left the man paralyzed.

Cruz also engaged in extreme violence against anyone suspected of disloyalty or disrespecting his gang. On July 15, 2012, Cruz murdered Anthony Richard, whom he wrongly suspected of assisting the Crips in the 2010 murder of a member of their gang. Cruz followed Richard to Baldwin Harbor, waited until he parked his car, and then fired 15 shots into Richard's vehicle, killing him and seriously wounding a passenger.

Just over two years later on October 14, 2014, Cruz murdered Ehrik Williams in Hempstead in the mistaken belief that Williams had robbed one of his associates. Cruz walked up behind Williams in broad daylight and fired multiple shots at him, killing him.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), a program bringing together all levels of law enforcement and the communities they serve to reduce violent crime and make our neighborhoods safer for everyone. As part of the program, U.S. Attorneys' Offices work in partnership with federal, state, local and tribal law enforcement and their local communities to develop effective, locally based strategies to reduce violent crime.

The government's case is being handled by the Office's Long Island Criminal Division. Assistant United States Attorneys Nicole Boeckmann, Michael Maffei and Oren Gleich are in charge of the prosecution.

The Defendant:

DYLAN CRUZ (also known as “L Banga” and “Red Lane Banga”)
Age: 30
Brooklyn, New York

E.D.N.Y. Docket Nos. 18-CR-664 (S-3) (JS)

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Wendy writes for the United States Press Agency and is a former columnist with the Fulton County Expositor, Wauseon, Ohio.

Source: Department of Justice, U.S. Attorney’s Office, Eastern District of New York press release June 17, 2022

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-21124/bloods-gang-member-sentenced-to-25-years-for-murders-and-other-violent-crime.html>

Editorial office and responsibility:

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