



PRESS RELEASE

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**SHIPROCK MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FEDERAL
ASSAULT AND FIREARMS CHARGES**

ALBUQUERQUE – Lancelot Lapahie, 25, an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation who resides in Shiprock, N.M., entered a guilty plea to assault and firearms charges in federal court this morning under a plea agreement with the U.S. Attorney's Office, announced U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales.

Lapahie was arrested on March 24, 2012, on a criminal complaint and subsequently charged in an indictment with (1) assault with a dangerous weapon, a machete; (2) assault resulting in serious bodily injury; (3) assault with a dangerous weapon, a baseball bat; (4) abuse of a child under the age of 18 years; and (5) possession of an unregistered firearm. According to the indictment and other court filings, the offenses were committed during the late hours of March 23, 2012 and the early hours of March 24, 2012, at a Shiprock residence located within the Navajo Indian Reservation.

Today, Lapahie pled guilty to Counts 2, 3 and 5 of the indictment. According to the plea agreement, during the late hours of March 23, 2012 and early hours of March 24, 2012, Lapahie was drinking alcohol with several individuals when an argument broke out. Lapahie admitted striking one individual with a baseball bat and using a machete repeatedly to strike another individual about his head, arms and body. The victim of the machete attack suffered multiple stab wounds and cuts to his head, face, forearm, leg and back. During the investigation of these crimes, officers found an unregistered shotgun in Lapahie's residence. Lapahie admitted possession of the unregistered shotgun.

At sentencing, Lapahie faces a maximum penalty of ten years of imprisonment. Lapahie has been in federal custody since his arrest and remains detained pending his sentencing hearing, which has yet to be scheduled. Under the terms of the plea agreement, Counts 1 and 4 of the indictment will be dismissed after Lapahie is sentenced.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jack E. Burkhead, and was investigated by the Albuquerque and Farmington offices of the FBI and the Shiprock Division of the Navajo Nation Department of Public Safety.

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