

## Hip-Hop Artist Ja Rule May Face Federal Rap

Written by Keith ID1683  
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Hip-hop rap artist and actor Ja Rule is now in the target of the Brooklyn federal prosecutors. Federal prosecutors have taken over the investigation into the caught-on-tape shootings of two men, one fatally, outside a popular midtown Manhattan LQ nightclub after a party for the rapper last Christmas, The Post is reporting.

These are the same prosecutors who have already indicted Irv "Gotti" Lorenzo, the founder of Murder Inc., the hip-hop, rap and R&B record label that launched Ja Rule's spectacular career, on charges Gotti used the company to launder \$1 million for notorious drug kingpin, Kenneth "Supreme" McGriff.

The federal focus on Ja Rule, who like Gotti and McGriff hails from Hollis, Queens, was launched recently after Troy Moore, the survivor of the double shooting, agreed to tell investigators about the bloodshed Dec. 27 outside the LQ nightclub on Lexington Avenue in Manhattan, law-enforcement sources said.

The violence surrounding Ja Rule and his entourage can be folded into the sweeping federal probe of Gotti, Murder Inc., now called The Inc., and several other artists and record labels, authorities believe.

Ja Rule's lawyer, Murray Richman, denied the rap artist/actor had anything to do with the shooting.

Christopher Renfro, who represents Moore, declined to comment, as did a spokesman for Brooklyn U.S. Attorney Roslynn Mauskopf.

According to sources, the fatal gunfire stemmed from a previous robbery of the brother of another famous rap artist, Foxy Brown.

Although the rip-off was never reported to cops, people in the rap community in Queens suspected Moore, an ex-con who did two stints for weapons and assault, and his crony, Willie

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"Willie Bang Bang" Clark, who served 12 years for weapons possession, were behind the robbery.

Both ex-cons were well known in Hollis, where Ja Rule, who was born Jeffrey Atkins, was also raised.

According to sources, Ja Rule's crew was enraged to see Moore and Clark enter the rapper's party at about 1:30 a.m. despite the suspicions surrounding them.

Around 3:30 a.m., Ja Rule and his entourage left the club.

Videotapes seized later by NYPD detectives show Ja Rule's vehicle pulling away from the club, just as Clark and Moore come walking by.

Suddenly, Ja Rule's vehicle stops, and yet another bodyguard runs up to the car, tapping on the window and saying, "Come with me, it's coming down."

One of the bodyguards gets out, joins his comrade and, as Ja Rule's car pulls away, they open fire, killing Clark and wounding Moore.

Because Moore and Clark were also carrying weapons, Moore faced a gun charge that could send him back to jail.

He initially did not cooperate with cops, but has since told his story to federal prosecutors.

And now Ja Rule and his two bodyguards face possible federal charges, including "conspiracy to commit murder."

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