



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on November 24, 2017

Illegal Alien Who Is MS-13 Member Charged in Brutal Murder in Maryland

A suspected member of the notorious MS-13 (Mara Salvatrucha) transnational criminal gang has been arrested and charged with first-degree murder of a man who was lured to Wheaton Regional Park in Wheaton, Maryland, and stabbed more than 100 times.



The *Washington Post* cited police documents that were made public on November 22 in Montgomery County District Court that revealed that 10 members of the MS-13 street gang communicated with each other over walkie-talkies to swarm in on their victim. After killing him, they decapitated him and then cut out his heart before burying him in a pre-dug grave in the park.

The first suspect to be arrested in the extremely violent attack was Miguel "Timido" Angel Lopez-Abrego (shown), who is 19. Lopez-Abrego was charged with first-degree murder and is being held in jail following a brief hearing on November 22.

"He is noted as being the first individual to thrust a knife into the chest of the decedent," Assistant State's Attorney Kelly McGann said in court. The *Post* reported that police are continuing to search for the other suspects.

Fox5 News in Washington, D.C. reported that U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has said that Lopez-Abrego is originally from El Salvador and is in the country illegally. ICE has lodged a detainer against him following his arrest.

Montgomery County police said the victim's body was found on September 5, but authorities believe that the murder took place sometime between December 2016 and March 2017.

Lopez-Abrego was arrested when he was found in North Carolina on November 11. Law-enforcement officers were looking for another MS-13 suspect from Maryland named Milton Portillo-Rodriguez, who was accused of a murder in Anne Arundel County. U.S. marshals tracked that man to Avery County, North Carolina.

Avery County Sheriff Kevin Frye said in a telephone interview with the *Post* that back on November 4, about 10 law-enforcement members from the U.S. Marshals Service and his department knocked on the door of a condominium in Avery County where they found not only Portillo-Rodriguez, but also Lopez-Abrego and a third MS-13 member from Maryland, Edwin Ruiz-Urrutia.

Ruiz-Urrutia has been accused of participating in another attack in Wheaton Park, in which as many as 15 gang members surrounded two victims and beat them with tree limbs. However, there were no fatalities in that attack. Ruiz-Urrutia is being held in Montgomery County on charges of attempted



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second-degree murder and first-degree assault.

Over the past several years, *The New American* has published multiple articles about MS-13, which Attorney General Jeff Sessions vowed last April to “devastate,” calling the group “one of the most violent gangs in the history of our country, no doubt about it.”

We noted in a [July 2014 article](#) that MS-13 was established in Los Angeles in the 1980s among immigrants from El Salvador. Many gang members were deported after being arrested, with one high-ranking member, Jose Abrego, being deported four times, indicating how loose our immigration screening procedures are. Because of the deportations, MS-13 leaders turned to recruiting more members back in Central America, who have, in turn, illegally entered the United States.

The influx of MS-13 gang members into our country was especially prevalent during the border surge in unaccompanied “children” from Central America that occurred in 2014, under the Obama administration. Many of these “children” were in their late teens and were gang members. In a [report last May](#), we cited a letter from Senator Ron Johnson (R-Wis.), chairman of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, sent to Scott Lloyd, director of the Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Refugee Resettlement. The letter, dated May 23, stated that at least 16 self-proclaimed MS-13 gang members had been transferred out of federal custody and into community placement centers across the country during the 2014 border surge in unaccompanied “children” from Central America.

Johnson’s committee had been holding hearings last May on the “The Rise of MS-13 and Other Transnational Criminal Organizations.”

In his opening statement for his committee’s hearings on the rise of MS-13, Johnson observed that during the committee’s examination of America’s unsecured borders, “we have learned how transnational criminal organizations and drug cartels exploit American policies and our lack of border security to advance their criminal agenda. Today we continue that important work by discussing how the street gang Mara Salvatrucha, commonly known as MS-13, and other Central American gangs affect communities throughout the United States.”

The senator said that the FBI has identified five hot spots that have a concentrated MS-13 presence and violence: Los Angeles; Houston; the Washington, D.C. region; Long Island, New York; and Boston. He cited figures of an estimated 10,000 MS-13 members in the United States and another 30,000 in Central America.

While the revelations about MS-13 members’ easy entry into the United States may be news to some people, we have written about the situation repeatedly in *The New American*.

In an [article](#) last March, we reported that two illegal aliens from El Salvador, identified as members of the notorious MS-13 gang, were arrested in Houston on February 27 and appeared in court on March 1 to face charges of aggravated kidnapping and murder.

The Massachusetts U.S. Attorney’s Office reported that in 2012, MS-13 became the first, and remains the only, street gang designated by the U.S. government as a “transnational criminal organization.”

CNN observed last March that the Justice Department regards MS-13 as such a major threat that the FBI created the MS-13 National Gang Task Force in 2004.

The report went on to cite a statement from the U.S. Attorney’s Office noting:

MS-13 is one of the largest criminal organizations in the country, with more than 6,000 members in



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at least 46 states and the District of Columbia, the U.S. Attorney's Office said. In addition, more than 30,000 members operate internationally, mostly in El Salvador, Honduras, [and] Guatemala.

Photo of Miguel Angel Lopez-Abrego: Montgomery County Police Department

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