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San Francisco Police Make Arrest in Polk and Clay Streets Assaults 21-072

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On Monday, March 22, 2021, at approximately 7:56 a.m., San Francisco Police officers from Northern Station responded to Polk and Clay Streets for a person attacking people. Officers arrived on scene and located three Asian victims who reported that the suspect physically attacked them.

One of the victims witnessed the suspect following two unknown Asian females. As the females began to run away from the suspect, the suspect threw an unknown object at the females. One of the victims observed that the unknown object hit one of the females in the back as they were running away. The suspect then turned their attention to the victim who witnessed the attack and approached him uttering threats of violence. The victim fearing for his safety pepper-sprayed the suspect. The suspect then retrieved a broomstick and approached the victim again while continuing to utter threats of violence, but the victim fended off the suspect by using pepper spray a second time. The victim did not sustain any injuries from the altercation.

The suspect then approached a second victim who is homeless. The second victim reported to police that he was laying on the sidewalk when the suspect assaulted him without provocation. A third victim witnessed the attack on the homeless victim and intervened to stop the suspect's attack but was assaulted by the suspect with a broomstick. Both victims sustained non-life-threatening injuries and were treated by medics at the scene.

Officers located and detained a subject that matched the victims' descriptions and was also identified as the attacker at the scene. Officers developed probable cause to arrest the suspect identified as 43-year-old Michael Lopez. During the arrest officers located and seized suspected methamphetamines and drug paraphernalia in Lopez's possession.

Lopez was transported and booked at San Francisco County Jail for assault with a deadly weapon (245(a)(1) PC), assault and battery (242 PC), hate crime enhancement (422.6(a) PC), possession of suspected methamphetamines (11377(a) H&S), and possession of narcotic paraphernalia (11364(a) H&S).

The assaults are believed to have been unprovoked. Though the victims reported that no hate speech was uttered, investigators are working to determine if racial bias was a motivating factor in the incident.

Investigators are seeking the public's assistance in identifying and speaking with the two female victims who Lopez initially attacked at Polk and Clay Streets.

While an arrest has been made, this remains an open investigation. Anyone with information is asked to call the SFPD Tip Line at [1-415-575-4444](tel:1-415-575-4444) or Text a Tip to [TIP411](sms:TIP411) and begin the text message with SFPD. You may remain anonymous.

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