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Police get report of second taxi assault

Sketch of alleged rapist in Aug. 6 attack is released

By [Matt Rocheleau](#) and [Jaclyn Reiss](#) | GLOBE CORRESPONDENTS | AUGUST 18, 2013

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A female victim told police she was sexually assaulted by a man who gave her a ride after she tried to hail a taxi in Allston early Sunday morning, less than two weeks after a similar attack was reported in Newton.

Boston police spokeswoman Katherine Shea said Sunday night that authorities are investigating whether the attacks are related.

“We’re investigating this incident and taking into consideration the other incident,” Shea said. “We just want to make the public aware of the incident going on.”

The most recent ordeal began at about 2 a.m. Sunday when the victim, whose age was not released, sought to hail a taxi near the intersection of Linden and Pratt streets. A man driving a dark four-door, mid-sized sedan stopped and offered to drive her to Cambridge, police said.

The female told officers she was taken to an area she believed was near Harvard University’s campus along North Harvard Street in Allston near the Boston neighborhood’s border with Cambridge, where the driver sexually assaulted her.

Police said the vehicle was not a licensed Boston taxi.

The driver was described as an Indian man in his mid-30s, about 5-foot, 8-inches tall with a medium build, a “medium complexion” and short, cropped, dark hair and “very crooked” teeth. Police believe he was wearing a black, short-sleeved collared shirt and had a thick accent.

Meanwhile, authorities on Sunday released a description, along with a sketch, of a driver who allegedly picked up a 21-year-old woman in an unlicensed cab outside a popular bar in South Boston less than two weeks ago and drove her to an area near the Newton-Brighton line, where he raped her.

The man was described as being of Hispanic, Indian, or Middle Eastern descent, in his late 20s to early 30s,



MIDDLESEX DISTRICT ATTORNEY’S OFFICE

Authorities on Sunday released this sketch of the suspect in the Aug. 6 rape of a 21-year-old woman.

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about 6 feet tall, weighing between 230 and 240 pounds, according to a statement from the Middlesex district attorney's office.

The suspect has a muscular build, a dark complexion, buzz-cut black hair, and neatly cropped facial hair, the statement said. He was wearing a polo-style collared shirt, jeans, and dark-colored head covering.

The attack occurred in the early morning hours of Aug. 6, authorities have said.

The woman said she was at the Whiskey Priest pub in the Seaport District with a friend and left at about 1:30 a.m., officials have said.

She signalled for a taxi near Seaport Boulevard and Northern Avenue and a black Lincoln livery sedan stopped and picked her up.

But the driver did not take the woman to where she wanted to go, according to the district attorney's office. Instead, she was driven to a secluded area on state property in front of the Daly Memorial Ice Skating Rink off Nonantum Road, near the border of Newton and Brighton, where she was assaulted.

After she struggled with the man, he threw her to the ground and drove away, authorities said.

Officials said the vehicle had a software application running on a tablet or smartphone that was mounted to the dashboard and displayed a map and fare tally. But they said the vehicle was not a registered taxi and did not have a Boston taxi medallion, which includes a requirement for background checks to screen drivers with criminal records.

On Sunday night, Boston Police warned people to be vigilant and to avoid traveling alone or getting into unmarked taxi and livery cars, and to always use clearly-marked licensed cabs and livery vehicles.

Following the Aug. 6 attack, there have been renewed calls for heightened city oversight of livery vehicles operating outside the regulation of the Boston police hackney unit. And that case has also generated criticism of law enforcement officials who did not disclose the alleged rape until Friday, 10 days after it had occurred.

The lapse happened because of a jurisdictional mix-up between State Police and the Middlesex district attorney's office, State Police spokesman David Procopio [told the Globe on Friday](#).

He apologized for the delay, said law enforcement should have issued a public alert sooner, and promised to broadcast reports about future attacks in a more timely manner.

But in its statement Sunday, the district attorney's office defended its decision to wait to publicize the attack because releasing information sooner could have compromised the investigation.

“It was determined that to protect the integrity of the investigation, it was in the best interest of the investigation not to release details of the assault as police were seeking to conduct interviews and gather evidence,” the statement said. “The priority of investigators has been to find the suspect by following all leads.”

Stephanie Chelf Guyotte, a spokeswoman for the district attorney’s office, and State Police Trooper and spokesman Dustin Fitch declined to comment further Sunday afternoon.

Boston Police asked anyone with information about the attack on Sunday to call the detectives at the department’s Sexual Assault Unit at 617-343-4400.

Information can be provided anonymously by calling CrimeStoppers at 1-800-494-TIPS or by texting the word ‘TIP’ to CRIME (27463).

Cambridge police, Harvard University Police, and Massachusetts State Police are also investigating.

Authorities asked anyone with information about the Aug. 6 attack to contact State Police at 617-740-7875 or detectives assigned to the Middlesex district attorney’s office at 781-897-6600.

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