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**For Immediate Release**

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# **Three Gang Members Sentenced to Life Without Parole for Multiple Murders**

## ***Gang Rivalry in National City Led to Retaliatory Killing***

San Diego County District Attorney [Summer Stephan](#) announced today that the three gang members involved in multiple shootings and killings have been sentenced to life without parole for the murders of three rival gang members.

Defendants Ethan Apan, 33, Kristian Apan, 32, and Ismael Betancourt, 25, were convicted last May after an 11-week jury trial in which jurors found them guilty of multiple counts of murder, conspiracy to commit murder, attempted murder, shooting at an occupied vehicle, assault by means likely to cause great bodily injury and several other felony counts.

The sentencing breakdown is:

- Ethan Apan was sentenced to two terms of life without the possibility of parole plus a term of 132 years-to-life in state prison
- Kristian Apan was sentenced to one term of life without the possibility of parole plus a term of 107 years-to-life in state prison
- Betancourt was sentenced to two terms of life without the possibility of parole plus a term of 139 years-to-life in state prison

“Today sentencing brings to a close the gang warfare the plagued a small South Bay city with murders, shootings and retaliation,” DA Stephan said. “I am grateful to our prosecution team, Robert Eacret and Abrey Zora,” who expertly navigated the complicated underworld of gang activity to bring justice for these senseless killings.”

During their National City shooting rampage in 2019 and 2020, the trio killed Joaquin Ruiz, Marco Magana, and Juan Galvan, and severely injured Julio Martull, James Mullens, and Adan Duke. The initial killing of Ruiz was in retaliation for a rival killing a week prior. But the hunt

down set off a wave of violence that included the three defendants routinely driving into rival gang territory to commit shootings, often mistakenly shooting innocent bystanders.

After a joint investigation between four San Diego Police Department Homicide Teams, the National City Police Department, and the District Attorney's Office's Gangs Unit, Ethan Apan, Kristian Apan, Ismael Betancourt, and six fellow gang members were arrested for their involvement and prosecuted for this string of shootings.

Prior to the trial, several co-defendants pleaded guilty and were sentenced for their involvement in the shootings.

- Jorge Sanchez, 23 was sentenced to 105 years-to-life in state prison
- John Anthony Orozco, 32, was sentenced to 38 years in state prison
- Raymond Sandoval, 36, was sentenced to 20 years in state prison
- Daisy Diaz, 28, was sentenced to 12 years in state prison

The District Attorney's Gangs Division prosecutes complex murder cases and other serious crimes perpetrated by violent gang members who terrorize neighborhoods. These cases are handled by one prosecutor from beginning to end – also called vertical prosecution.

Deputy District Attorneys Robert Eacret and Abrey Zora prosecuted this case.

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*About the San Diego County District Attorney's Office*

*The San Diego County DA's Office prosecutes all felony crimes in the county and misdemeanor crimes committed outside the City of San Diego. The office files about 40,000 criminal cases a year and balances prosecution with numerous crime prevention programs. District Attorney Summer Stephan leads the office of more than 1,000 dedicated employees who pursue fair and equal justice, and support victims daily across San Diego County.*