

# DISTRICT ATTORNEY

DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
Larry D. Morse II

ASSISTANT DISTRICT  
ATTORNEY  
Joseph M. Tresidder



CHIEF DEPUTY  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
David Moranda

CHIEF DEPUTY  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
Harold L. Nutt

2222 "M" STREET, MERCED, CA 95340  
TELEPHONE (AREA CODE 209) 385-7381  
FAX (209) 385-7473

---

September 21, 2007

## GANG MEMBERS ENTER PLEAS IN JAIL ATTACK CASE

El Nido resident Ramon Osequera, Jr., 21, and Merced Resident Alejandro Vargas, 23 entered no – contest pleas to Felony Assault and Felony Participation in a Criminal Street Gang charges on Thursday. According to Deputy District Attorney Christa Gonzalez, who prosecuted the case, the pleas stem from a July 23 incident in the Merced County Main jail. Osequera and Vargas, along with three other inmates, attacked Samuel Hernandez, causing serious injuries. All of the attackers, as well as the victim, are validated Norteno gang members.

The attack led to a massive search of the jail facility, during which numerous items of gang related contraband were located and seized by Sheriff's Deputies and Correctional Officers. The incident also led to a length lockdown of the cellblock where the Norteno criminal street gang members are housed, said Gonzalez. Gonzalez, who is assigned to the District Attorney's Gang Prosecution Unit, said the beating was likely in retaliation for disobeying gang directives.

"This incident demonstrates the utter disregard gang members have for the law. It shows just how willing gang members are to resort to violence to maintain their influence and control over the community, and over their own criminal enterprises", Gonzalez said. "Even while in custody, gang members continue to call shots", Gonzalez added.

District Attorney Larry D. Morse II, who recently announced the creation of a Drug and Gang Task Force, said "Gang members in our community should understand that their crimes will not be tolerated. The District Attorney's Office will vigorously prosecute them, no matter who the victim is."

Sentencing for Vargas will be held on October 11. Osequera will be sentenced on November 16.