

Star-Ledger, The (Newark, NJ)

March 19, 2008

Edition: ESSEX

Section: ESSEX

Page: 53

Suspect killed in Newark police chase

Man was wanted for questioning in shooting incident

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Article Text:

A 26-year-old Newark man wanted in a shooting led police on a high-speed chase Monday, but died after driving through a stop sign and crashing into a Newark police vehicle and an apartment building, a city police spokesman said.

Rajohn Fuller died of his injuries shortly after 1 a.m. at University Hospital after he drove through the stop sign and hit a police pickup truck that was not involved in the pursuit at Central Avenue and Third Street, Detective Todd McClendon, a Newark police spokesman, said yesterday. McClendon said the car came to a stop after it slammed into the side of the apartment building at 433 Central Ave. He said residents had to be evacuated because city officials had concerns about structural damage.

Fuller and his passenger, Deani Edwards, 26, of Newark, were suspects in the shooting of a 28-year-old Newark man, who suffered a gunshot wound to the leg at Verona and Highland avenues shortly before 1 a.m. McClendon said the victim, who was treated at University Hospital, has been uncooperative with police about why he was targeted by the suspects. He said police got a description of the car, a Nissan Murano, that Fuller was driving from residents in the area and the report was broadcast over the police radio.

Moments later, McClendon said, officers with the department's street crimes unit saw the car and tried to stop it at Central Avenue and Market Street.

Fuller kept driving until he crashed into the police vehicle and the building.

No one in the building was hurt. Edwards was critically injured and the police officer transporting barricades in the pickup truck suffered neck and back pain, McClendon said.

He said police recovered a firearm from the suspects' vehicle and it matched the one used in the shooting incident at Verona and Highland avenues.

Edwards is facing charges of possession of a weapon, possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, possession of heroin and possession of hollow-point bullets.

Though the incident happened early Monday, Newark police did not release information about it until 5 p.m. yesterday.

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