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## Fashion designer Anand Jon held in three alleged sexual assaults

Beverly Hills police arrest Anand Jon in three reported sexual assaults. His attorney says the allegations are fabrications by models.

By Richard Winton

Times Staff Writer

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Prominent fashion designer Anand Jon has been charged with multiple counts of rape and sexual assault involving three alleged victims, the youngest a 15-year-old girl, prosecutors said Tuesday.

Beverly Hills police arrested Jon on March 6 after a woman said he raped her.

The 33-year-old designer to the stars, whom Newsweek named one of the people to watch in its "Who's Next in 2007" issue, remains jailed.

Jane Robison, a spokeswoman for the Los Angeles County district attorney's office, said Jon was charged with six felonies and one misdemeanor for alleged sexual assaults between October 2004 and March 5.

Jon's attorney, Ronald Richards, said the allegations were fabrications by models who believed they weren't getting the work they had expected from the designer.

"In these cases, what is going on here is these girls fly in for model jobs after months of dialogue filled with flirtation, they have sexual interaction and if he doesn't put them in the show ... then some time later they claim they had unwanted sex," Richards said.

Prosecutors allege that in October 2004, Jon raped a woman, and that this year he committed lewd acts with the 15-year-old March 3 and 4.

Beverly Hills Police Lt. Mitch McCann said his department's sex-crime detectives began their investigation after another woman reported being raped March 5.

"These are very serious charges," McCann said. "We arrested him March 6 at a [Beverly Hills] residential property.... Additional evidence led us to other victims."

Although prosecutors have charged Jon with assaulting three people, detectives are aware of a fourth, another juvenile, McCann said.

Richards said that in 2004, prosecutors declined to charge Jon in the first alleged assault but have resurrected the claim in the current case.

The lawyer added that the 15-year-old told police in the arrest report that she was 17 and is on film saying she was 18. "She lied about her age," he said.

The designer is being held in lieu of \$1.3 million bail. However, Immigration and Customs Enforcement has also placed a hold on the New York-based designer, who is a superstar in his native India. Richards said Beverly Hills police contacted immigration officials.

Jon is a rising name in fashion, featured on MTV and in magazines.

A recent Newsweek article described him as a "party boy in Miami in the 1990s ... who as a Parsons-trained designer launched his first line at New York Fashion Week in 1999 and has gone on to dress the likes of Paris Hilton."

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