

Police Give Concert 'Extra Attention

Written by Keith ID577

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Interest in the rap/hip-hop concert at the Sovereign Bank Arena which featured headliner Lloyd Banks and other artist Jadakiss and Lil' Scrappy; was shared not only by fans but also area police and gang intelligence units.

Trenton police Capt. Joseph Juniak, who oversees the tactical and gang intelligence units, said yesterday the units would be at the arena for several reasons.

With a gangster rapper act like Banks performing, police wanted to give the show "extra attention."

"We'd be remiss if we didn't," Juniak said.

Units planned to collect information on the gangs, such as gatherings of suspected gang members from the area.

"We don't expect any problems," Juniak said before the show, but units were scheduled to be on hand last night in case, he said.

The Mercer County Sheriff's Office is frontline security for the arena. Sheriff's spokesman John McEwan said five extra officers would be on duty.

But McEwan said the concert is only expected to draw about 2,500 to 3,000 spectators, and the

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complement of officers for that type of an event is about 10.

Sovereign Bank Arena spokeswoman Amanda Bogotuik declined to discuss whether any extra security measures were in effect for last night's show, reports NJ.com.

"We're preparing for a show like we would prepare for any other show at Sovereign Bank Arena," she said yesterday afternoon.

Banks, 22, whose birth name is Christopher Lloyd, has quickly made a name in the rap world since his debut album this spring, "The Hunger for More." The single "On Fire," produced by Eminem, was recently nominated for a Grammy.

Banks is a member of the G Unit, a collaborative of friends and rappers from the Jamaica section of Queens. The group, featuring 50 Cent, Tony Yayo and Young Buck, together released an album last year that sold several million copies. And all have successful solo careers.

But the G Unit also retain, and often rap about, their strong connection to their neighborhoods, and the fact that they are real gangsters, according to media interviews.

50 Cent and Banks have been wounded in shootings - Banks in the early morning hours of Sept. 11, 2001 - and Young Buck was recently charged with stabbing a man at an awards show in Los Angeles in November. Banks reportedly was involved that night with the G Unit.

The G Unit is known to travel with armed bodyguards, and 50 Cent wears a bulletproof vest in public and on stage.