Written by Keith ID405 Wednesday, 17 November 2004 06:41 -

Rapper Ja Rule's manager was arrested on Wednesday in a widening investigation of the music label Murder Inc.

Ron "Gutta" Robinson, 29, was awaiting arraignment on money laundering charges in federal court in Brooklyn. An indictment alleges he conspired to launder proceeds from drug trafficking according to the <u>AP</u>

A call to a spokeswoman for Ja Rule was not immediately returned.

Federal prosecutors are probing ties between drug dealers and the recording home of Ja Rule and other platinum-selling acts like Ashanti.

Last week, the bookkeeper for Murder Inc. was indicted, also on money laundering charges. Cynthia Brent, 39, pleaded not guilty and was released on \$200,000 bond.

Murder Inc. changed its name to The Inc. earlier this year after executives said the label's image was hurt by court filings alleging that they had been laundering drug money from a Queens crack dealer, Kenneth "Supreme" McGriff.

Federal officials also have linked McGriff to several drug-related murders, according to court filings. McGriff is serving time on a gun offense but has not been charged with the murders.

Both McGriff and Irv Gotti, the head of The Inc., have denied any involvement in money laundering.