

## Vet extradited to US over dog-smuggling heroin scheme

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**NEW YORK:** A Colombian vet appeared in a New York court, accused of injecting liquid heroin into puppies to evade border control in a drug smuggling ring.

Andres Lopez Elorez, 38, was arrested in Spain on a US warrant and extradited to the United States on Monday.

If convicted on conspiracy charges, he risks spending at least 10 years and potentially life in jail.

His arrest was part of a 12-year Drug Enforcement Administration investigation and he was remanded into custody pending trial.

Prosecutors said he used his vet skills to surgically implant packets of liquid heroin into the bellies of puppies transported from Colombia to the United States. Once in America, the heroin was surgically removed.

Ten puppies were found in a raid on a makeshift clinic in Colombia in 2005. The *New York Times* said three of the dogs later died as a result of infections. — AFP