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102-2017
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**FIFTEEN RIKERS ISLAND INMATES INDICTED IN BRUTAL GANG ASSAULT
OF NYC DOC CAPTAIN ON THANKSGIVING DAY**
Defendants Held Meeting To Plan Attack
Captain Beaten In Retaliation For Disciplining Bloods Member

Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark today announced that 15 Rikers Island inmates have been indicted in the assault of a New York City Department of Correction captain on Thanksgiving Day in an orchestrated, retaliatory attack.

District Attorney Clark said, “This case presents a chilling picture of the society of violence on Rikers Island, with gang members who think they control the jails. But they do not; the rule of law does. Defendant Jason Reid gathered several of the defendants and 90 minutes later, a coordinated attack was unleashed on Captain Awais Ghauri in a show of gang power. Three weeks earlier, the captain deployed pepper spray to defuse a tense situation after a fight between inmates, and Reid — a member of the Bloods — threatened to assault the captain if he sprayed.

“These inmates are sorely mistaken if they think they can mete out punishment to correction staff who are doing their jobs. If you play any role in making Rikers Island unsafe, we will arrest you, prosecute you and urge consecutive sentences if you’re convicted.

“I urge the Board of Correction to work with DOC to find a way to implement severe consequences for inmates who repeatedly assault other inmates and correction officers. They cannot continue to brutalize with impunity. The mindset must be changed because this violence must be prevented.”

Department of Correction Commissioner Cynthia Brann said, “Each of these inmates is accused of playing a part in the unprovoked assault of a Correction Captain on Thanksgiving Day, and they are all now facing charges that can lead to additional jail time. We will never tolerate any assault on our officers. As demonstrated by these indictments and arrests, anyone involved in such an assault will face consequences. We would like to thank our Correction

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Intelligence Bureau and the Bronx District Attorney's office for expediting this case.”

District Attorney Clark said 15 defendants are charged with first-degree Robbery, Attempted Gang Assault in the first-degree, second and third-degree Assault, second and third-degree Robbery, Attempted Robbery in the first, second and third-degree, first-degree Riot; defendants are variously charged with first and second-degree Promoting Prison Contraband, Unlawfully Possessing Noxious Material, fifth-degree Criminal Possession of Stolen Property, second-degree Obstructing Governmental Administration, Tampering with Physical Evidence and second-degree Harassment. If convicted of the top charge of first-degree Robbery, the defendants face up to 25 years in prison.

Seven of the defendants were arraigned on December 12, 2017 before Bronx Supreme Court Justice Robert Neary and remanded. They are due back in court on March 14, 2018. Eight defendants were due to be arraigned on December 14, 2017.

According to the investigation, on November 2, 2017, in the Otis Bantum Correctional Center (OBCC), Reid threatened to “cut” Captain Ghauri after the captain used his pepper spray to diffuse an inmate altercation. On November 23, 2017, Reid, 33, allegedly called a meeting with multiple inmates in Housing Area 3 North of OBCC.

Surveillance video shows the defendants meeting at 12:15 p.m., and approximately 90 minutes later, surveillance video shows Reid leading the attack, striking Captain Ghauri from behind, knocking him to the floor and repeatedly punching him. When Captain Ghauri began to defend himself, defendants Maurice Hennegan and Lyemel Summerville allegedly joined in the assault, punching the Captain several times. He suffered multiple injuries including a laceration on his neck and multiple abrasions.

According to the investigation, 14 defendants stole a canister of pepper spray from a Correction Officer, attempted to steal another officer's canister, and acting in concert they stood watch and physically blocked and threatened other Correction Officers from aiding Captain Ghauri. A Correction Officer assigned to the housing area came to the aid of the Captain, and she fought off several inmates.

Defendant Juan Dejesus who, on December 11, 2017, was sentenced to 15 years for a
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Bronx shooting/stabbing case, aided in the robbery of the pepper spray and the assault on the captain by raising a chair to menace correction personnel. He also helped to dispose of the cannister.

A 16th defendant, Christian Martinez, who was locked in his cell during the assault, later took possession of the pepper spray can and disposed of it.

The investigation is ongoing.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Jonathan Abramovitz of the Rikers Island Prosecution Bureau under the supervision of James Brennan, Deputy Chief of the Rikers Island Prosecution Bureau, and Deanna Logan, Chief of the Rikers Island Prosecution Bureau and the overall supervision of Stuart Levy, Deputy Chief of the Investigations Division and Jean T. Walsh, Chief of the Investigations Division.

District Attorney Clark thanked the Department of Correction Intelligence Bureau and Investigators Anthony Scoma and Scott Frank under the supervision of Captain Johannah Banks and Acting Deputy Commissioner Antonio Cruz for their assistance. She also thanked Bronx Supreme Court Administrative Justice Robert Torres for facilitating the arraignments.

An indictment is an accusatory instrument and not proof of a defendant's guilt.

Defendants

Jason Reid AKA Chuk, 33, Bronx
Lyemel Summerville, 19, Brooklyn
Maurice Hennegan, 24, Brooklyn
Jakwan Ramos AKA Floss, 21, Bronx
Juan DeJesus AKA J Dollar, 25, Bronx
Menelick McQuicken, 26, Brooklyn
Aphell James, 36, Queens
Laquan Russell, 25, Brooklyn
Pirterson Loiseau AKA Pistol, 21, Queens
Isreal Jimenez, 22, Brooklyn
Jonathan Scott, 25, Brooklyn
Kenneth Threatts AKA Bloody, 21, Virginia

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Sherwin Benn AKA GT, 34, Queens
Amara Toure, 22, Bronx
Christian Martinez, 29, Manhattan