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**27-2022**

**For Immediate Release**

**April 7, 2022**

**FORMER RIKERS ISLAND INMATE INDICTED FOR ATTEMPTED MURDER  
OF ANOTHER INMATE FOR DISTURBING HIS SLEEP  
Victim Suffered Traumatic Brain Injury, Left Unable to Walk or Speak**

Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark today announced that a former Rikers Island inmate has been indicted on Attempted Murder and additional charges for attacking another inmate in the jail, causing him to suffer brain damage and seizures.

District Attorney Clark said, "The defendant allegedly brutally attacked another inmate, allegedly because the victim disturbed his sleep. Those being held at the jail should not be subject to violence and we will hold anyone who inflicts harm accountable."

District Attorney Clark said the defendant, Eric McKenzie AKA Eric Belmar, 56, of Brooklyn, NY, was arraigned Wednesday on Attempted Murder in the second-degree, first-degree Assault and two counts of second-degree Assault before Bronx Supreme Court Justice George Villegas. Bail was set in the amount of \$100,000 cash, bond, or partially secured bond. The defendant is due back in court on June 29, 2022.

According to the investigation, on December 13, 2021 at approximately 4:40 p.m., the defendant allegedly became upset with inmate Jose Matias because he was being too loud while McKenzie was trying to sleep. McKenzie allegedly chased Matias and threw him to the floor, stomped on his neck and head, and kicked and punched him in the head. Matias was taken to Elmhurst Hospital where he was put in a medically induced coma. He was transferred to NYC Health + Hospitals Bellevue and remained at the facility until February 16, 2022. Matias sustained traumatic brain injury and suffers from seizures and brain damage. He was left unable to speak or walk and needed extensive physical rehabilitation.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Lisa Mattaway of the Rikers Island Prosecution Bureau, under the supervision of Francis Alberts, Chief of the Rikers Island Prosecution Bureau, and under the overall supervision of Denise Kodjo, Deputy Chief of Investigations Division, and Wanda Perez-Maldonado, Chief of Investigations Division.



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District Attorney Clark thanked Assistant District Attorney Larry Pisahov, Assistant District Attorney Nadia Alirahi and Community Coordinator Lourdes Galindez, all of the Rikers Island Prosecution Bureau; and Detective Investigators Fernando Nunez, Tashana Phelps, Monisara Brahm, Clayton NyoNyo and Benjamin Ahmadi, all of the Bronx DA's Detective Investigator Squad, for their assistance in the case. District Attorney Clark thanked Trial Preparation Assistant Roderick Kelly of the Rikers Island Prosecution Bureau and Stalin Crespo of the Bronx DA's Video Unit for their assistance in the case.

District Attorney Clark also thanked Investigator Walter Holmes, New York City Department of Correction Liaison, Investigator Cecil Phillips, and the Department of Correction's Correction Intelligence Bureau for their assistance.

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

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