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**DARCEL D. CLARK**  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY, BRONX COUNTY

198 EAST 161ST STREET  
BRONX, N.Y. 10451  
(718) 590-2234

**43-2023**  
**For Immediate Release**  
**June 29, 2023**

**RIKERS INMATE INDICTED FOR ARSON IN MASSIVE FIRE  
THAT INJURED A DOZEN PEOPLE AT JAIL  
Defendant Allegedly Used Batteries and Wires to Ignite Furniture/Linens in Cell**

Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark today announced that a Rikers Island inmate has been indicted for setting a large fire on Rikers Island that injured 12 detainees and Correction Officers with smoke inhalation.

District Attorney Clark said, “The defendant allegedly started a blaze that sent thick smoke billowing through the jail, causing detainees and Correction Officers to suffer smoke inhalation, and putting dozens of lives at risk. Thankfully, first responders were able to put the fire out quickly to prevent further harm.”

District Attorney Clark said Marvens Thomas, 30, was indicted on second-degree Arson, third-degree Arson, 29 counts of second-degree Assault, second-degree Criminal Mischief, fourth-degree Arson, third-degree Criminal Mischief, fifth-degree Arson, five counts of Obstructing Governmental Administration, Obstructing Firefighting Operations, 24 counts of third-degree Assault, and second-degree Reckless Endangerment today before Bronx Supreme Court Justice Beth Beller. The defendant was remanded and is due back in court on September 13, 2023.

According to the investigation, on April 6, 2023 at approximately 4:28 p.m., the defendant, who is awaiting trial for a Bronx stabbing and an Attempted Murder of a Correction Officer, allegedly started a fire in his cell in Housing Area 2A, North Infirmary Command, at Rikers Island. Thomas allegedly used stripped headphone wires and batteries from a tv remote control to create a heat source sparking the fire which started in his cell. The defendant allegedly lit linens on fire on a table and set fire to items on his bed. The flames consumed his cell, even melting plastic covering on the cell lights, and damaged adjacent cells.

The fire created a hazardous, thick, dark smoke condition that spread throughout the second floor of North Infirmary Command. Five NYC Department of Correction Officers suffered smoke inhalation, chest pain, and shortness of breath. Seven detainees were treated for injuries connected to the fire. The defendant was burned when melted materials fell on him.



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

District Attorney Clark thanked Crime Victim Advocate Norma Rivera, Trial Preparation Assistant Tara DiMeglio, Rikers Island Community Coordinator Lourdes Galindez and BXDA Senior Detective Investigators Yanireth Pascal and Kareem Clay for their assistance in the case.

District Attorney Clark thanked Correction Officer Ryan Gunning, who helped extinguish the fire. District Attorney Clark thanked FDNY Fire Marshals Brian Fealy and Tom Boland, and New York City Department of Correction Investigators Walter Holmes, Jeff Rios and John Cammisuli, and the New York City Department of Correction Intelligence Bureau for their work in the investigation.

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

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