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NINE RIKERS ISLAND INMATES INDICTED FOR BEATING FELLOW INMATE UNCONSCIOUS, BREAKING HIS NOSE

Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark today announced that nine Rikers Island inmates have been indicted on Attempted Gang Assault in the First Degree and other related charges for pummeling and stomping on an inmate, leaving him unconscious.

District Attorney Clark said, “Brutality in the jails will not be tolerated. These defendants allegedly carried out an unprovoked assault on a fellow inmate, fracturing his nose, and now they are being held accountable. But beyond our prosecution of violence, there must be prevention of these incidents.”

District Attorney Clark said the defendants, Najee Johnson, 22, Nasir Gutzman, 26, Jerrold Merriweather, 25, Darius Johnson, 24, Reggie Johnson, 24, Michael Rogers, 23, David Medrano Torres, 26, Lloyd McLean, 28, and Zachary Quiles, 27, were indicted on Attempted Gang Assault in the first degree, second-degree Assault and third-degree Assault. All but Marriweather were arraigned on February 13, 14 and 15 in Bronx Supreme Court and they are due back in court on April 16, 2024.

Bail was set for McLean and Gutzman at \$75,000 cash, \$150,000 bond by Bronx Supreme Court Justice Steven Hornstein. Bail was set for Quiles and Darius Johnson at \$5,000 cash, \$20,000 bond. Bail for the remaining four defendants was set at \$2,500 cash, \$20,000 bond by Bronx Supreme Court Justice Brenda Rivera.

According to the investigation, on December 25, 2023 in the Eric M. Taylor Center on Rikers Island, the defendants, who were serving sentences of one year in jail, acted in concert to attack a 39-year-old inmate, punching, kicking, and stomping the victim repeatedly. The victim was also struck multiple times with a plastic chair. The victim lost consciousness and sustained bruising, swelling as well as a fractured nasal bone. He was transported via EMS to a hospital for treatment.

The case is being prosecuted by Senior Investigative Assistant District Attorney Georgia D. Barker of Rikers Island Prosecution Bureau, under the supervision of Jonathan Abramovitz,



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Director of the Rikers Island Violence Reduction Initiative, Jose Arocho, Deputy Chief of RIPB, Francis Alberts, Chief of the Rikers Island Prosecution Bureau, 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 BXDA Senior Detective Investigator Tashana Phelps and Trial Preparation Assistants Netanya Pierrot, Massiel Castillo, and Jordy Burgos.

District Attorney Clark thanked Department of Correction Central Intelligence Bureau Investigators Korab Hasangjekaj, James Ruiz, Walter Holmes and Jeffrey Rios, for their work in the investigation.

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