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BRONX MAN CHARGED WITH MURDER FOR KILLING 59-YEAR-OLD MAN IN RANDOM SUBWAY STABBING ON THE J TRAIN

Attacker was Armed with Two Kitchen Knives; Faces up to 25 Years to Life in Prison, if Convicted

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Jyrell Thomas has been arraigned on murder and weapon possession charges for the fatal stabbing of 59-year-old Mesias Lojano on the subway Wednesday night. Thomas entered a busy subway car and stood alone until the northbound J train approached Woodhaven station, when he produced a knife and randomly targeted the victim, stabbing him repeatedly as other passengers scattered in fear.

District Attorney Katz said: "As alleged, this defendant caused mayhem on a rush hour train when he fatally stabbed a fellow passenger who was minding his own business and had no prior interaction with the perpetrator. All New Yorkers want, and deserve, to ride our mass transit system safely and without fear. I thank the good Samaritans who chased the assailant after the attack and our partners at the NYPD for quickly apprehending the defendant. We will seek justice for the victim and his loved ones."

Thomas, 25, of the Bronx, was arraigned today on a criminal complaint charging him with murder in the second degree and two counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the fourth degree. Queens Criminal Court Judge Indira D. Khan remanded the defendant and ordered him to return to court October 6. If convicted, he faces up to 25 years to life in prison.

District Attorney Katz said that, according to the charges and investigation, on September 30, at approximately 5 p.m., Jyrell Thomas boarded a Queens-bound J train at the Broadway Junction station in Brooklyn.

At approximately 5:15 p.m., as the subway car approached the elevated platform at Woodhaven train station near the intersection of Woodhaven Boulevard and Jamaica Avenue, Thomas allegedly screamed loudly, produced a knife and repeatedly stabbed 59-year-old Mesias Lojano with whom he had no prior connection.

When the subway doors opened, Thomas ran from the scene dropping his weapon along the way. Fellow subway passengers chased after the defendant and NYPD officers responding to 911 reports of the incident apprehended Thomas two blocks from the station where he had climbed on top of a garage.

Police later recovered two kitchen knives -- one broken knife left on the subway car and a second kitchen knife with blood on its blade allegedly dropped down the subway stairs by Thomas as he fled.

Lojano was taken to a local hospital and was pronounced deceased with stab wounds to his chest, neck, lip and back.

The investigation was conducted by Detective Frank Lasala of the 102nd Detective Squad.

Assistant District Attorney Gabriel J. Reale of the District Attorney's Homicide Bureau is prosecuting this case with the assistance of Assistant District Attorney Angel Semerdzhiev under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys John Kosinski, Bureau Chief, Karen Ross and Jonathan Selkowe, Deputy Chiefs, and under the overall supervision of Chief Assistant District Attorney Shawn Clark.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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