

Transcript from Tuesday, April 12, 2022: Mayor Eric Adams, NYPD Hold a Briefing on the Subway Shooting in Sunset Park, Brooklyn

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John Miller, Deputy Commissioner for Intelligence and Counter Terrorism, Police Department: Good evening. I'm John Miller, deputy commissioner for intelligence and counter terrorism. We're here to provide an update on the ongoing investigation into the shooting that occurred earlier today in Brooklyn. We're going to hear from police commissioner of the City of New York, Keechant Sewell, chief of department, Ken Corey, your first deputy commissioner, Ed Caban here. Chief of detectives, James Essig, will update us on the investigation. We also have assistant director in charge of the FBI, in charge of the New York office, Mike Driscoll, and the JTTF efforts with the NYPD that are ongoing, as well as the special agent in charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, John DeVito.

Police Commissioner Keechant Sewell, Police Department: Thank you all for attending this evening and helping us get this information out to the public. It's so important. We are truly fortunate that this was not significantly worse than it is. As we reported this afternoon, a man who was traveling on a Manhattan-bound N train, opened two canisters that dispensed smoke throughout the subway car. He then shot multiple passengers as the train pulled into the 36th Street station in Sunset Park. 10 people were injured by gunfire, and an additional 13 were either injured as they rushed to get out of the train station, or they suffered smoke inhalation. Some good news is that none of the injuries appear to be life threatening. As detectives processed the crime scene, they recovered a nine millimeter semiautomatic handgun, extended magazines, and a hatchet. Also found is a liquid we believe to be gasoline, and a bag containing consumer-grade fireworks and a hobby fuse.

Commissioner Sewell: About an hour ago, detectives located a U-Haul van in Brooklyn that we believe is connected to the suspect. At this time, we still do not know the suspect's motivation. Clearly this individual boarded the train and was intent on violence. We are conducting a highly-coordinated investigation that includes NYPD detectives, the FBI-NYPD Joint Terrorism Taskforce, and the ATF, who have been instrumental in tracing the firearm and ballistics. The suspect is a dark-skinned male and was wearing a neon-orange vest, and a gray-colored sweatshirt. We do have a person of interest in this investigation, but we need the public's assistance with additional information. We're asking anyone with information to call Crime Stoppers at 800-577-TIPS. We know this incident is of grave concern to New Yorkers. We cannot lose sight of victims in this city. We will use every resource we can to bring those to justice who continue to prey on the citizens of New York. I'll ask Chief James Essig to come in and give details of the investigation.

James Essig, Chief of Detectives, Police Department: Good evening, everybody. Today at 8:24 AM, aboard a Manhattan-bound N train, 10 people were shot, seven males, three females, and they were removed to area hospitals. An additional 13 people suffered injuries related to smoke inhalation, falling down, or a panic attack. The information I'm about to give you is preliminary, and it's subject to change right now. As that N train was between 59th Street and the 36th Street stations, seated in the second car, in the rear corner, was a dark-skinned male. Various descriptions of his height are given. He is heavy-set, wearing an orange-green nylon-type construction vest. He also had on a gray hoodie, a surgical mask, and a neon-green construction helmet. As the train approached the 36th Street station, witnesses state the male opened up two smoke grenades, tossed them on the subway floor, brandishes a Glock nine millimeter handgun, he then fired that weapon at least 33 times, striking 10 people.

Essig: The male then fled the scene, and detectives are actively trying to determine his whereabouts. Recovered at that scene, was a Glock 17 nine millimeter handgun, three extended Glock-type magazines. One was still in the weapon, one under a seat, and one in a backpack. We had 33 discharged shell casings, 15 bullets, five bullet fragments, two detonated smoke grenades, two non-detonated smoke grenades, a hatchet, a black garbage can, a black milk-type-style rolling cart, the gasoline, and a U-Haul key. The U-Haul key at the scene led us to the recovery of a U-Haul van, a short while ago in Brooklyn. The male who we believe is the renter of this U-Haul in Philadelphia, is a Frank R. James. Male, 62 years old, with addresses in Wisconsin and Philadelphia. We are endeavoring to locate him to determine his connection to the subway shooting, if any.

Essig: The two crime scenes, the subway and the van, are very active, and are still being processed. We are asking for anyone's help with information, cell phone video, witness information, or if they can identify the perpetrator or the renter of this vehicle, to call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-577-TIPS. There is a \$50,000 reward out right now, 25,000 from the New York City Police Foundation, 12,500 from the MTA, and 12,500 from the TWA Local 100. I just want to assure everyone that we in the NYPD have all our resources working this, along with our partners in the FBI and the ATF, to find this perpetrator.

Mayor Eric Adams: Thank you, commissioner and chief. As we indicated, today was a difficult day for New York. And days like these are planned out too often in cities across America. As mentioned this morning, we witnessed an act of violence and evil in the heart of Brooklyn, where a shooter attacked a subway car full of innocent people at the 36th Street station. We saw a quiet Tuesday morning turn the N train into the war zone, as a smoke bomb was detonated, and multiple shots rang out. We witnessed... 20 individuals have been injured so far, as it was mentioned. And thanks to the quick thinking of the MTA crew, and the bravery and cooperation of passengers, lives were saved. And thanks to our first responders, the injured were quickly taken to area hospitals, and all of them are expected to recover.

Mayor Adams: I have been realistic and outspoken about my commitment to protecting public safety. I stand by that, and will continue to do everything in my power to dam the rivers that feed the sea of violence. But this is not only a New York City problem. This rage, this violence, these guns, these relentless shooters, are an American problem, and it's going to take all levels of government to solve it. It is going to take the entire nation to speak out and push back against a cult of death that has taken hold in this nation. A cult that allows innocence to be sacrificed on a daily basis. A country where buying weapons of mass destruction is as easy as picking up a piece of plywood, or a garden shovel. A country where there are more guns than people. There are over 400 million guns in this country alone. The US gun homicide rate is 26 times that of other high-income countries, where over a hundred people die in gun violence every day.

Mayor Adams: Guns are the leading cause of death for American children and teens, like the 16-year-old baby which we lost in the Bronx. From schools in Columbine, Sandy Hook, and Virginia, to music festivals in Las Vegas, to nightclubs in Orlando, to movie theaters and yoga classes across the nation, these killers have used weapons of mass destruction to massacre innocent people. They control no armies or military forces, yet these individual killers terrorize our nation. I've often said that this city is not going to

adapt to dysfunction. Ending gun violence means changing gun laws. We cannot clean up a flood when the water is still pouring into the basement, and we can never stop the killing, if we cannot stop the guns. To be clear, we will not surrender our city to a violent few, and we will not surrender all of America to this cult of death.

Mayor Adams: This sea of violence comes from many rivers. We must dam every river that feeds the greater crisis. That is the work of my life, this administration, and this police department. I will not stop until the peace we deserve becomes the reality we experience. You have my word as a former police officer, a fellow New Yorker, and your mayor, that we will end this epidemic, and that we'll capture the individual responsible for today's attack. We will capture him and prosecute him to the full extent of the law. Thank you NYPD, FDNY, our first responders, and the collaboration from the federal government, the state, the city agencies.

Commissioner Sewell: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I'd like to turn it over to assistant special agent in charge of the FBI New York office, Michael Driscoll.

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