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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS, COMMISSIONER SEWELL ANNOUNCE
ARREST IN RECENT STABBINGS TARGETING HOMELESS NEW YORKERS**

Deputy Commissioner Julian Phillips, Public Information, Police Department: Good afternoon everybody. I'm Julian Phillips, Deputy Commissioner of Public Information. I'd like to welcome you to One Police Plaza for this update on the ongoing homicide and assault investigation. Joining us today is the Honorable Mayor Eric Adams, Police Commissioner Keechant Sewell, First Deputy Commissioner Edward Caban, Commanding Officer of the Detective Bureau Citywide Investigations Division Assistant, Chief Joseph Joe Kenny, Department of Social Services Commissioner Gary Jenkins.

Deputy Commissioner Phillips: Now, after this briefing, we're going to be taking on-topic questions only. The schedule is tight. We're not going to have room for a whole lot of questions. So just keep that in mind. We'll advise you for any other information you have as well as other topics after this is over. Now, Honorable Mayor Adams.

Mayor Eric Adams: Thank you. Thank you, Julian. It's good to see you as part of the team here with all your knowledge and experience. I want to thank the commissioner and her team for apprehending a dangerous person that assaulted on our vulnerable New Yorkers and really highlights how imperative it is to move people into safe spaces, into shelters, and eventually into permanent housing. But I also want to take the moment to commend a retired member of the correction family. A correction officer played a major role in the coordination with the Police Department in apprehending this dangerous person.

Mayor Adams: It just really goes to show you that the men and women who provide public safety in this city, both on-duty, off-duty, and upon retirement continues to play a vital role in keeping our city safe. He went beyond the call of duty to ensure that this dangerous person was removed from our streets. Job well done by our uniform officers on the ground. Job well done by our detectives who gathered the information that allowed us to put out the visuals that we had. And job well done in bringing this dangerous person into apprehension. Now I want to turn it over to the commissioner. Commissioner, you and your team did an amazing job.

Police Commissioner Keechant Sewell: Thanks Mr. Mayor.

Commissioner Sewell: Good afternoon. And thank you once again for coming on behalf of the entire NYPD. I want to express our deepest sympathy for the three men senselessly stabbed on

the street in separate attacks since July 5th, excuse me. One of those victims was tragically killed. But today we are here to announce that the swift work of your NYPD officers and your patrol officers in tandem with the public has led to an arrest in this series of crimes. This violence should not happen anywhere. But when it does happen, New Yorkers are fortunate to have the combined commitment of your police working with the people we serve. This partnership, once again, puts the focus where it always belongs, which is getting the justice for victims.

Commissioner Sewell: I would also like to acknowledge the New York City Police Foundation and their support of the Crime Stoppers tip line, which is a vital resource in this and many other investigations. Early this morning in Upper Manhattan, 40 year old Trayvon Murphy was taken into custody. A Good Samaritan spotted him sitting at a bus stop near St. Nicholas Park. He was dressed in the same shirt and distinctive neon sneakers he was wearing in the photos and videos the NYPD publicly released just yesterday to all of you in the media.

Commissioner Sewell: Again, thank you for amplifying that information. That Good Samaritan then turned to the police and the NYPD did its job safely, securely and without incident. But once again, this is a story we have told many times before. This suspect should not have been on our streets. He was already convicted in Tennessee and given probation, which he violated and he was wanted on an outstanding warrant for that violation.

Commissioner Sewell: Additionally, Mr. Murphy was released on his own recognizance after he attacked a roommate in Queens back in April. He was due back in court on July 22nd, just days from now. This man was preying on the vulnerable and we are thankful for the combined effort to apprehend this subject quickly and safely. I will now ask Chief Kenny to brief you on the details of the apprehension.

Assistant Chief Joseph Kenny, Detective Bureau, Police Department: Good afternoon everybody. To review the details of these three incidents. On Tuesday, July 5th at approximately three o'clock in the morning, a 34 year old male was stabbed in the abdomen while sleeping on a park bench on the Hudson River Park Walkway in the vicinity of West Street and Christopher Street in the confines of the 6th Precinct. He initially survived this attack, but later succumbed to his injuries.

Assistant Chief Kenny: Then on Friday, July 8th at approximately 10:00 PM, a 59 year old male who was also sleeping on a park bench was stabbed in the stomach near the corner of Madison Avenue and 49th Street. This is in the confines of Midtown North Precinct. For two days, the victim tried to self-medicate and take care of his own wound, but finally on Sunday, July 10th, he sought medical attention and reported the incident to the police. He was treated and is currently in stable condition.

Assistant Chief Kenny: Then on Monday, July 11th at approximately 3:30 AM, a 28 year old male was stabbed while lying on the ground inside the Stanley Isaac Playground located at 95-95 FDR Drive in the confines of the 23rd Precinct. He was taken to the hospital and is currently in stable condition.

Assistant Chief Kenny: From the time of the first incident on July 5th, investigators began retrieving and comparing video from these three crimes. And based on video review, detectives

concluded that each of these assaults were committed by the same perpetrator. This determination was largely based on the clothing description of the suspect. Namely, the following three items: neon sneakers worn in all three incidents, a gray backpack also worn in all three incidents, and a black hoodie with white writing on the front that said Innocence Project, which was worn by the suspect in two of the three attacks. Over the past week investigators continued the video canvas in and around these incident locations. And yesterday, July 12th, new video was recovered, showing clear images of the attack that occurred in Midtown North on July 8th.

Assistant Chief Kenny: These new images, along with a number of other investigative steps led to the identification of the suspect. That suspect was Trayvon Murphy, a 40 year old male who he himself is homeless and was residing in local shelters. Photographs and video of the suspect were released to the public over the past few days, which proved to be invaluable as the investigation moved forward. Because early this morning, July 13th at approximately 6:42 AM, a member of the community who was in the vicinity of West 128th Street and St. Nicholas Avenue near the park called 911 to report a possible sighting of the man wanted in connection with these stabbing attacks.

Assistant Chief Kenny: At the same time, this community member saw two uniform members of the NYPD standing on the corner. He approached them, pointed the subject out to them, and he was taken into custody without incident. He was wearing the neon sneakers, the gray backpack, and the black Innocent Project hoodie. The officer then took the suspect to the 28th Precinct where he is currently being processed.

Assistant Chief Kenny: I will remind you this is still an active investigation, but we can confirm that the suspect was in possession of a knife in his left pants pocket at the time he was taken into custody. And he has also made statements to investigators identifying himself in still images related to the attacks. I want to thank the best detectives in the world for their work on this case. I'd also like to thank the members of the public who stepped up to aid us in this investigation. I would also like to thank the media, you guys, for pushing out the images that helped us with this investigation. I'd like to thank the Department of Social Services for their assistance over the past week. Thank you.

Mayor Adams: I'm going to bring up Gary Jenkins. Commissioner of HRA.

Commissioner Gary Jenkins, Department of Social Services: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Good afternoon. I would first like to thank the brave members of the NYPD who worked diligently to apprehend this suspect who has been terrorizing unsheltered New Yorkers for the past two weeks. I would also like to thank the DHS outreach teams who have been working around the clock to get our unsheltered New Yorkers inside during NYPD's citywide search for this suspect.

Commissioner Jenkins: For far too long folks living on the street have been the subject to extreme violence, simply because they are experiencing homelessness. Let me be clear, every New Yorker, regardless of housing status, deserves to feel safe in our great city. I look forward to working with Commissioner Sewell and her outstanding staff to work together to protect our city's most vulnerable, and once again, would like to thank them for their great work in protecting our unsheltered New Yorkers. Thank you.

Commissioner Sewell: You have questions? Any questions?

Question: Any indication the suspect knew the victims as he is homeless?

Commissioner Sewell: That's a part of the investigation.

Question: Did he make any statements to police to say why or any indication at all?

Chief Kenny: As of right now, we're still working on what the motive is. He's currently being interrogated. He did waive Miranda and he is speaking to us, so hopefully as we go down to the investigation, we'll be able to get more information on that.

Question: Is there any indication why he picked these three individuals or was he [inaudible] in those areas? You mentioned shelters, but did he have any connectivity to those three locations?

Chief Kenny: Our investigation is revealing that he is familiar with the New York City shelter system. He has had numerous encounters in other shelters and other boroughs. As far as selecting the victims, we're still looking at that. He himself is homeless, but the commonality is that all three victims were homeless and all three victims were sleeping at the time of their attack.

Question: Chief, will you tell us about his Tennessee conviction and his assault arrest for [inaudible].

Chief Kenny: The Tennessee conviction, which he's currently on probation for was a narcotics charge. He has an active warrant which Tennessee will extradite for, for that. As far as his incident, it was in the confines of the 115 Precinct. He was in a homeless shelter. He assaulted a roommate who coincidentally was also asleep at the time of the attack.

Question: Any particular reason for that case? For that attack rather?

Chief Kenny: No.

Question: Chief, do we believe that is the weapon used in the three stabbings?

Chief Kenny: Yes.

Question: Any indication about his psychological status, mental health well-being? And a larger question for the mayor. We've seen two strains of attacks against homeless people in the past few months. What does that say about where our society is as it treats homeless people?

Mayor Adams: Our city is extremely humane and our initiatives have been clear. The streets are not dignified places for people who are homeless to live. That's why we have been extremely aggressive in placing them in safe environments. We just want to thank the coordination of HRA, the NYPD, and our non-profits. We were able to remove 1,700 individuals who are living in our subway system in an unsafe environment that are now in shelters, safe havens, and on the pathway to permanent housing and wraparound services they deserve. So I don't think this dangerous person is a reflection of New York. Sometime we look at the worst among us and

define it as our city. The average New Yorker gives the homeless a helping hand. They do not use their hands to assault them. And that's the statement from New York City.

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