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Department of Police
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Chief of Police

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 26, 2021

Note to Editors: Please see attached photo

CONTACT INFO. :

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Felony Assault suspect arrested

EAST PROVIDENCE, RI – On March 25, 2021, at about 0425 hrs. Officers were called to the Rumford Motor Inn at 400 Newport Ave. for the report of gun shots. Arriving Officers searched the area for any signs of gun fire and spoke with the owner of the property. After searching the parking lot and hallways of the property a hole was found in the hallway outside of a second floor room. Officers knocked on the door and spoke with two occupants who were uninjured.

The occupants said they heard a noise and as Officers looked around the room they found two bullet holes in the windows and one through the wall. Occupants of surrounding rooms were contacted and it was determined no one had been injured by the gun fire. Officers secured the scene and BCI and Major Crime Detectives responded to the scene.

After interviewing the occupants of the room it was discovered that one of them had received a threatening text message earlier from a male party. Investigators were also told a possible suspect had been seen leaving the area in a dark colored vehicle and the suspect may be a thin black male with short dread locks. The incoming phone number was retrieved from the victim's phone and it was learned the message had come in through an app known as "Text Now".

Investigators were able to find the owner of the incoming text “Text Now” account and the IP address associated with it.

Investigators tracked the IP address to a house on Burke St. in Pawtucket. A check of the house showed a black Acura in the rear yard. Investigators watched the house and notified Pawtucket Police.

Around 7:30 pm the vehicle was seen leaving the residence and investigators surveilled the vehicle and the operator, who matched the description of the suspect. The vehicle pulled into a Shell Gas Station and Pawtucket Police approached the vehicle and took the operator into custody without incident. The suspect, identified as Joshua Francois, age 27, was brought back to the East Providence Police Department and gave a statement admitting to firing a gun outside of the Rumford Motor Inn at a specific room occupied by two females.

Francois is charged with 2 counts of Felony Assault with a Handgun, Firing in a Compact Area, and Vandalism.



Joshua Francois