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**COMMUNITY OUTRAGE AGAINST NYPD POLICE BRUTALITY!
Coalition of Supporters for The Monumental 5 To Announce Updates
at Press Conference: Tuesday, July 5 at 12:00 pm (New York City Hall)**

New York, New York – Concerned community members, hip hop artists, local activists, grassroots organizers, and elected officials will gather at the steps of New York City Hall to do three things: To show support for those who were beaten, maced, and arrested by New York City police officers (NYPD) at an album release party for **Pete Rock, Tek and General Steele** (of the hip hop group **Smif N Wessun**); to publicly outcry yet another instance of police brutality; and to issue a call-to-action to the community-at-large. Though the individuals who were beaten and arrested last Tuesday, now collectively known as The Monumental 5, have been released until a more in-depth investigation can be launched, the calls demanding justice have grown over the past week, all fueled by the police brutality video footage that has gone viral on the Internet (<http://bit.ly/Monumental5>).

The press conference will take place **Tuesday, July 5, 2011** at noon at City Hall (located at City Hall Park in Lower Manhattan between Broadway, Park Row, and Chambers Street). The Monumental 5 are **Louis Pena, Gabriel Diaz, Cynthia Rosa, James W. Ayala, and Jade Everett**. Confirmed participants for Tuesday's press conference include: Pete Rock; General Steele; **Shara McHayle** (one of the victims of police brutality who is also an entertainment industry professional and the wife of Pete Rock); **Lisa "Cynical" Smith** (one of the party's organizers); activist and writer **Kevin Powell**; activist **Lumumba Bandle** from the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement and Senior Community Engagement Advocate for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund; NYC Council Member **Charles Barron**; and **Kenneth Montgomery**, the attorney representing The Monumental 5.

Powell offered this statement: "Pete Rock and Smif N Wessun are not only pioneers and legends in the global, multibillion dollar hiphop music industry with extensive resumes and followers across the planet, but they are also very engaged in their communities locally. Indeed, I have personally worked with Pete and Steele of Smif N Wessun and know their commitment to community, family, and positive, proactive events. That is what makes this over-the-top police violence following their joint CD release party so outrageous and unjust. We say enough of treating every single hiphop gathering in New York like a crime waiting to happen, and we say enough to the NYPD's use of excessive, inhumane force, especially when it comes to young people and people of color in New York."

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BACKGROUND

Montgomery explains that friends and family gathered to celebrate the album release of *Monumental*, the collaborative album of Pete Rock and Smif N Wessun. The sold-out event, held at Tammany Hall in the Lower East Side of Manhattan, was peaceful on the inside and outside. Earlier in the evening some guests wanted to enter Tammany Hall but were turned away by the club's management and security. A minor argument ensued but was peacefully settled by the club's bouncers. Thirty minutes later, approximately 15 – 20 uniformed New York City police officers from the 7th precinct arrived. There were no incidents, disturbances, nor any cause for alarm. They left quickly and joined their fellow officers in the exit area of the venue. Upon joining their fellow officers, the officers who had just left the venue began to put on black leather gloves. Simultaneously, more uniformed officers arrived and exited their vehicles.

Montgomery also indicated that “The officers then hurried into the club and began macing and assaulting individuals inside the club, dragging one of them out and pummeling him directly in front of the club. Present at the event were artists, industry tastemakers, fans, photographers, and camera men. Several people began filming and recording the unprovoked brutality ... The officers then began to mace and assault anyone within arm's length, including several women. Their behavior was unjustified, unprovoked, and simply barbaric considering there was no provocation. Pete Rock, Tek, and Steele, fortunately were not harmed. Some of their friends and family members, however, were assaulted by the police.”

McHayle added: “We all left the venue to be greeted outside by a sea of NYPD gloved up and very aggressive. As we began to move, we all witnessed the most brutal beating of a party patron. He was on the floor surrounded by 10 police officers with sticks out, beating him. In shock, we must have not moved quickly enough to the officers' liking and they shouted "Move the F*** Back" and then shoved myself and my daughter down to the ground. Now we were surrounded by 3 cops and 1 pinning us down. My daughter shouted "Get off my mother" and was handcuffed and arrested.”

Ms. McHayle's daughter, Jade Everett, one of the Monumental 5, was arrested and charged with assaulting a police officer, resisting arrest, and disorderly conduct. While in police custody Ms. Everett and her friend Cynthia Rosa began their menstruation cycles yet were refused feminine hygiene products for more than a day, adding to the inhumane conditions the young women were made to endure.

STATUS

Over the holiday weekend, Attorney Montgomery affirmed the following: “All defendants except for Mr. Ayala were charged with rioting, obstructing governmental administration, resisting arrest, and assault on a police officer. Mr. Ayala was charged with obstructing governmental administration. After initially requesting substantial bail for Mr. Pena and Mr. Diaz, the Manhattan district attorney's office consented to their release after reviewing some video footage with the defense. All defendants were released and the case was adjourned to September 27, 2011, for grand jury action. All defendants have advised the government that they intend to testify in the grand jury, when and if an indictment is sought. The Manhattan district attorney advised the court that they will continue to investigate. The defense is scheduled to meet with internal affairs investigators next week to review video footage.”

Media inquiries are directed to April R. Silver at AKILA WORKSONGS. Call 718.756.8501 or send an email to pr@akilaworksongs.com

Directions to City Hall by subway: #4, #5, #6 trains to City Hall / Brooklyn Bridge; #2, #3 trains to Park Place; W, R trains to City Hall; A, C trains to Chambers Street.

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