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London Police Probe Ilford Restaurant Arson Attack

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– *Categories: General News*

London, UK – Scotland Yard is investigating a suspected arson attack at a restaurant in Ilford, east London, that left three people critically injured on Friday night.

Emergency services were called to the scene on Woodford Avenue, Gants Hill, at approximately 9:00 p.m. Firefighters rescued five individuals from the building, while nine others escaped unaided. The London Fire Brigade reported that the fire, which damaged part of the ground floor, was extinguished by 10:32 p.m.

According to the Metropolitan Police, five people sustained injuries, with three in life-threatening condition due to burns and smoke inhalation. All were treated at the scene before being transported to the hospital.

A spokesperson for the London Fire Brigade confirmed that seven emergency calls were received regarding the incident. Fire crews from Ilford, Hainault, Leytonstone and Woodford fire stations attended the scene. “The cause of the fire is being investigated by the brigade and the Metropolitan Police Service,” the spokesperson said. No arrests have been made at this stage.

Resident Edward Thawe, 43, described the incident as “horrible” and “more than scary.” He stepped outside his nearby home with his 12-year-old son after hearing screams. “I heard screaming and people saying they had called the police. I came outside and there was a man with his skin peeled off. His skin was burnt. I did not want to look at it,” he said.

Detective Chief Inspector Mark Rogers of the Met's Central Specialist Crime North Unit reassured residents that the investigation is progressing quickly. "We understand this incident will cause concern within the community. My team of specialist detectives are working at speed to piece the incident together," Rogers said. He advised locals to expect a large police presence in the area and to approach officers with any concerns.

On Saturday, uniformed officers maintained a police cordon as forensic teams examined the site. Investigators reported finding a trail of what appeared to be bloody footprints along the pavement.

Wes Streeting, the Health Secretary and Member of Parliament for Ilford North, thanked emergency services for their swift response. He urged residents via social media to avoid the area while investigations continue, noting that further updates would follow from local authorities and emergency services.

Authorities are appealing for witnesses or anyone with information to come forward.