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MAN KILLS SELF AFTER ARGUMENT
STANDOFF FOLLOWS VIDEO STORE DISPUTE
Author: JUSTO BAUTISTA, Staff Writer; The Record
Dateline: CLIFTON

Article Text:

An unidentified man who got into a dispute with two other men at a video store on Lexington Avenue - pulling a gun on them - shot himself to death in his car Wednesday night as officers tried in vain to coax him out of the vehicle, police said.

City detectives said they were still investigating late Wednesday, and the victim's name was not released. They recovered a 9mm semiautomatic handgun from the victim's car.

The incident began at 7 p.m. at the Blockbuster Video Store on Lexington Avenue, where the victim had a "minor" confrontation with two other men inside the store, said Detective Sgt. Ralph Pennella.

After pulling a gun, the victim allegedly told the men, "Let's forget about this. I'll leave," and calmly walked out of the store, police said. The men called police on a cellular telephone. Within minutes, police spotted the victim's maroon Ford Taurus in traffic on Lexington Avenue and boxed his car in, police said. The victim sat in his car as police tried to coax him out, ordering him to "show your hands," police said.

After tense minutes, police yelled, "Drop the gun! Drop the gun!" as they saw a gun in the victim's hand. Within seconds, police said, there was a shot and they moved in.

"We're still investigating the reason behind it," said Pennella.

Police had the street blocked off during the standoff, but residents who converged on the scene saw a grisly sight: the victim's head slumped over the steering wheel, a bullet hole in the car's roof.

"The car was still running. . . . The dead man still had his foot on the brake pedal," said one resident. "I could see the brake lights still lit."

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CLIFTON SUICIDE VICTIM IDENTIFIED AS MEDICAL STUDENT

Author: TIMOTHY D. MAY, Staff Writer; The Record

Dateline: CLIFTON

Article Text:

The man who shot and killed himself after police stopped his car on Lexington Avenue was identified as Parag Deshpande, 29, a Botany Village resident, detectives said Thursday. Deshpande, whose parents are doctors, was a student at a medical school in Grenada who spent a one-month stint at St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center in Paterson last year, police said.

He shot himself about 7 p.m. Wednesday, a few minutes after getting into a confrontation with two men outside a Blockbuster Video store, police said.

The incident at the store began when Deshpande made eye contact with a man who was sitting in his car, waiting for a friend to drop off a video, said Detective Capt. Thomas Surowiec.

Deshpande walked by the man and "gave him a look," Surowiec said. After the man's friend returned, Deshpande walked up close to them, and one of the men pushed him away, the captain said.

"They said it seemed like he was looking for some kind of trouble," Surowiec said.

After he was pushed, Deshpande backed away and pulled a 9mm semiautomatic handgun out of the back of his pants. He accidentally dropped the gun, picked it up, and pointed it at them, the captain said.

Deshpande then said: "I don't want any trouble," got into his car - a maroon Ford Taurus - and pulled out of the parking lot; meanwhile, the two men called 911 on a cellular phone and reported the incident, Surowiec said.

"We had [police] units nearby, and marked units saw him leaving the parking lot. They pulled behind him while an unmarked car pulled in front," boxing him in, Surowiec said.

The officers got out of their cars and instructed Deshpande to raise his hands, but he refused to comply. A few seconds later, Deshpande shot himself through the mouth, Surowiec said.

Deshpande was declared dead at the scene.

Police said Deshpande was a medical student "on leave" from his school, St. George's University in Grenada, an island nation in the Caribbean. In October, Deshpande served a one-month student rotation at St. Joseph's, but he is not associated officially with the hospital, officials said.

His parents were en route to New Jersey on Thursday. Deshpande's mother is a psychiatrist at

St. Vincents Health Center in Erie, Pa.; his father runs a family practice and is affiliated with the same hospital, officials there said.

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