

## **NYPD rules out hate crime in death of Robert Martires**

Written by Administrator  
Monday, 14 July 2014 13:53

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**Robert Martires was to celebrate his 57th birthday on July 14.**

The New York City Police has ruled out hate crime in the random attack of a Filipino private chauffeur who succumbed to his head injury on June 24.

Robert C. Martires, who was to turn 57 on July 14, was punched in the face by a still unidentified man on Roosevelt Avenue near 69th Street in Woodside, Queens after midnight on June 21.

Chief of Detectives Robert Boyce has told reporters that the NYPD doesn't "have any belief that it was a hate crime at this juncture."

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The NYPD press office also said the Hate Crimes Task Force was not investigating the incident.

Police, according to some reports, attributed the attack instead to a fight after a World Cup match.

Martires, a father of two grown children, reportedly came out with a friend from late night eating at Krystal's Cafe when a man approached them and asked Martires if he was Filipino.

The friend said the man threw a punch even before Martires could answer and hit the victim in the face.

Martires reportedly fell back and hit his head on the pavement.

He was brought to Elmhurst Hospital Center in critical condition and died in the morning of June 24.

A makeshift memorial was put up near the site of the attack, and had grown to include a flag of the Philippines, flowers and collection baskets to help pay for Martires' wake and funeral.

Signs with the suspect's photo, captured on surveillance video, were put up on Roosevelt Avenue near the memorial.

A wake was held June 27 at the Kennedy-Roth Funeral Home, also in Woodside, attended by family and friends.

### **Public help urged**

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Assemblyman Francisco Moya (D-Jackson Heights) has urged the public to share any information they may have surrounding the assault.

“Queens, the borough of diversity and community, will not tolerate such hatred and violence in our midst. An attack on an innocent person is an attack on all of us,” Moya said.

“Hate in anyone’s heart is a threat to everyone.”

Police are still looking for the suspect, believed to be Hispanic, who was last seen on the CCTV video wearing a dark-colored baseball cap, blue jeans and white T-shirt.

It was the fourth time this year a person died after being punched and hitting their head on pavement, authorities said.

Police Commissioner William Bratton said four such death “is an unusual number for these types of incidents.”

The Philippine Consulate General in New York said it is conducting its own inquiry in coordination with law enforcement authorities “to ensure a speedy administration of justice.”