

# MIAMI POLICE DEPARTMENT



Public Information Office  
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Subject: **PEACEFUL PROTEST TURNS HOSTILE - SUSPECT ARRESTED**

On Saturday, May 30, 2020 a large group of protesters blocked the roadway adjacent to the rear of the Miami Police Department. The initial protest transitioned from peaceful to hostile as individuals who were within the crowd of protesters became violent. Several subjects were observed throwing bottles, rocks, and large pieces of debris at Miami Police officers and vehicles. As a result, several officers were injured, and several City of Miami Police vehicles were burglarized, damaged, and/or set on fire.

Miami Police detectives moved quickly to identify the persons responsible for the acts of lawlessness. Early in the investigation, detectives obtained video footage posted to a social media account depicting a Hispanic male wearing a black t-shirt, black backpack, and a Venezuelan flag-themed cap using a blue cooler to shatter the front and rear windshields and to damage the hood and trunk of a parked City of Miami Police vehicle. Other suspects soon joined in, and the vehicle was ultimately fully engulfed in flames. Ironically, the vehicle that was the target of the looters' rage was assigned to a Miami Police Academy instructor who trains police officers in de-escalation techniques.

On July 31, 2020, detectives identified the suspect wearing a Venezuelan flag-themed cap as Sebastian Manuel Romero. With the assistance of the Hernando County (FL) Sheriff's Office, Mr. Romero was located and apprehended at his new residence in Weeki Wachee, FL, on September 11, 2020. Mr. Romero was subsequently extradited to Miami, where he will face charges for inciting a riot and felony criminal mischief (over \$1,000).

To date, Miami Police detectives have apprehended seven suspects responsible for lawless behavior that has nothing to do with peaceful protest. We value peaceful protest as a cherished constitutional right, but we will not tolerate violence and acts of vandalism, and we will hold those engaging in such behavior accountable. In keeping with our commitment to ensure public safety, we will not cease in this effort until everyone engaged in such behavior is identified and apprehended.

**Anyone with information on other suspects involved are urged to contact the Miami Police Department at (305) 579-6111. Those with information who wish to remain anonymous may contact Miami-Dade Crime Stoppers at (305) 471- TIPS (8477), visit [www.crimestoppersmiami.com](http://www.crimestoppersmiami.com) and select "Give a Tip" or Send a text message to 274637. Enter CSMD followed by the tip information and press send.**

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Jorge R. Colina, Chief of Police

NEWS RELEASE