



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Sanders Jr.

## Dozens Mourn at Sanders' Candlelight Vigil for 1st Murder Victim of 2017

JAMES SANDERS JR. January 6, 2017



State Senator James Sanders Jr. (D-Rochdale Village, Far Rockaway) held a candlelight vigil Friday evening honoring the memory of the first homicide victim of 2017, at the location where the shooting took place in Richmond Hill.

"I stand with the victim's family, the Guyanese community and all people of good will to condemn this senseless act of violence that ended in the death of Rocky Kalisaran and injured his brother. The start of a new year is supposed to be filled with joy and hope, but

instead we have a time of tragedy and loss. I call upon the perpetrators of this heinous crime to turn themselves in. We will not put up with this kind of madness. You will be caught, and you will be brought to justice.”

Kalisaran, 31, was gunned down during an attempted robbery at 3:20 a.m. on January 2, 2017. He was visiting New York from Guyana and was in town to attend the funeral of his grandmother. His brother was also shot during the incident but survived.

Although no one was immediately arrested in connection with the crime, Captain Brian Bohannon Jr., the Commanding Officer of the 106th Precinct, who was in attendance at the vigil said the NYPD has identified two persons of interest in connection with the case, both black males in their 20s, and they are believed to have fled to South Carolina.

The victim's mother, Anita Kalisaran, and sister, Vanny Kalisaran were the first to light candles at the vigil. They were joined by dozens of supporters, who braved the bitter cold, to honor the memory of Rocky Kalisaran with prayers and song. They called for unity, justice and peace. The attendees placed white roses and lit candles around a photo of the victim near a lamp post at the shooting site. They also released white balloons at the conclusion of the vigil.

"This is something that no country wishes, because we know as a people, we are peaceful," said Barbara Atherly, Guyana's Consul General in New York. "The circumstances under which Rocky met his death, is certainly troubling for the community and for the society as a whole. I can understand the devastation that this death had brought to the family and to the wider community."

We would like to thank the 106th Precinct, the Richmond Hill Economic Development

Council, Sadhana, the Indo-Caribbean Alliance, and 100 Suits for 100 Men for co-sponsoring this event.