

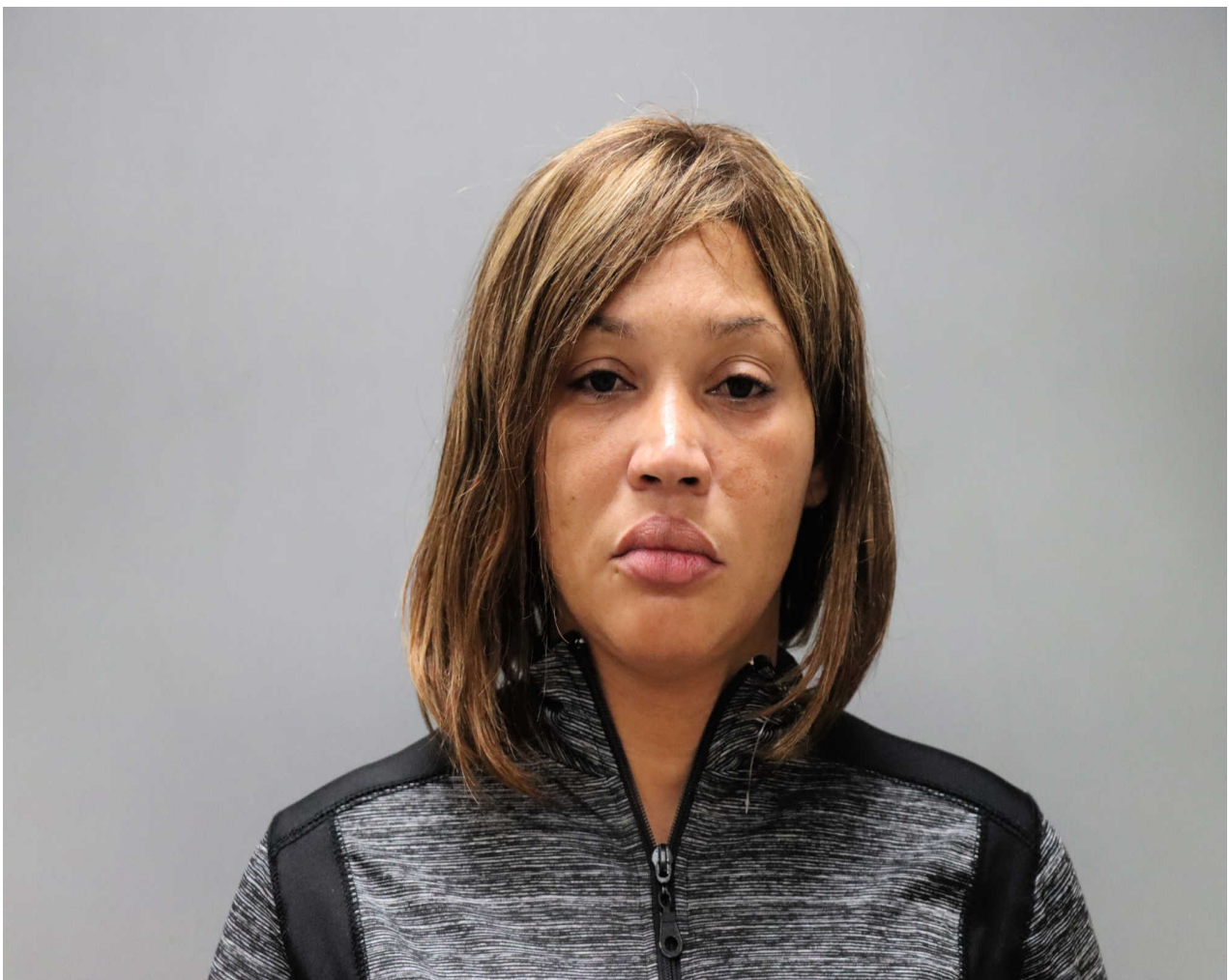
The Virgin Islands Consortium

Judge Rules Full Bail Required After St. Thomas Assault with Aluminum Bat Results in Serious Injuries

Victim bleeds profusely following brutal attack; Magistrate sets \$75,000 bail for assailant's release

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Mugshot of Yant Diaz. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. THOMAS – One woman is facing felony charges after reportedly hitting another in the head with a bat.

According to the probable cause fact sheet, in the wee hours of Sunday January 21, police were dispatched to a location on Kronprindsens Gade to investigate a reported assault. Responding officers spoke to Yant Diaz, who told them that she had been

assaulted with a knife by another woman, and had thus defended herself by striking her assailant in the head. Diaz had a laceration to her left arm which was bleeding, but reportedly declined medical attention.

However, the reported aggressor told officers that she had been the one who was assaulted first, with Diaz hitting her in the back of the head with a blunt object. She denied having a knife, and was ultimately transported to Schneider Regional Medical Center to receive treatment for her injuries.

The woman told police that she and a friend were standing at an intersection when they noticed Diaz, who they know as "Janet", across the street taking pictures of them with her phone. The woman said that she decided to do the same to Diaz and her friend, at which point "Janet" crossed the street and began to argue. The verbal confrontation escalated into a physical altercation when Diaz reportedly began punching the woman, causing her to stumble and fall. Grabbing a glass beer bottle she found on the ground, the woman said she threw it at Diaz to fend off her attacker. "Janet" reportedly left the area but subsequently returned, reportedly armed with an aluminum bat, which she used to strike the other woman several times about the head and body.

Under attack again, the woman said she threw another glass bottle and a rock at Diaz in an attempt to defend herself, following which some bystanders separated the two women and quelled the altercation. She said she realized that she was bleeding profusely from the head following the second attack by "Janet".

Investigators obtained surveillance video from the security cameras of several establishments in the area. The footage appeared to corroborate the woman's story, showing Diaz approaching the friends and punching the woman several times. Officers also watched as Diaz walked off and returned with the bat, hitting the woman in her head and body several times, after which the woman threw several items in a defensive manner. Police discovered that this is an ongoing situation between the two, with Diaz reportedly continuing to harass and cause disturbances with her neighbor.

Ultimately, on February 9, Diaz was arrested and charged with first and third degree assault, simple assault, mayhem and disturbance of the peace. She was remanded into custody to await her first court appearance. In court on Monday, Magistrate Paula Norkaitis set bail at \$75,000 payable in full.

A subsequent application to modify bail conditions to allow for the payment of 10% in cash with the rest remaining as an unsecured bond was opposed by prosecutors and subsequently denied by Judge Norkaitis. Diaz currently remains in custody and is scheduled to next appear in court on March 1.