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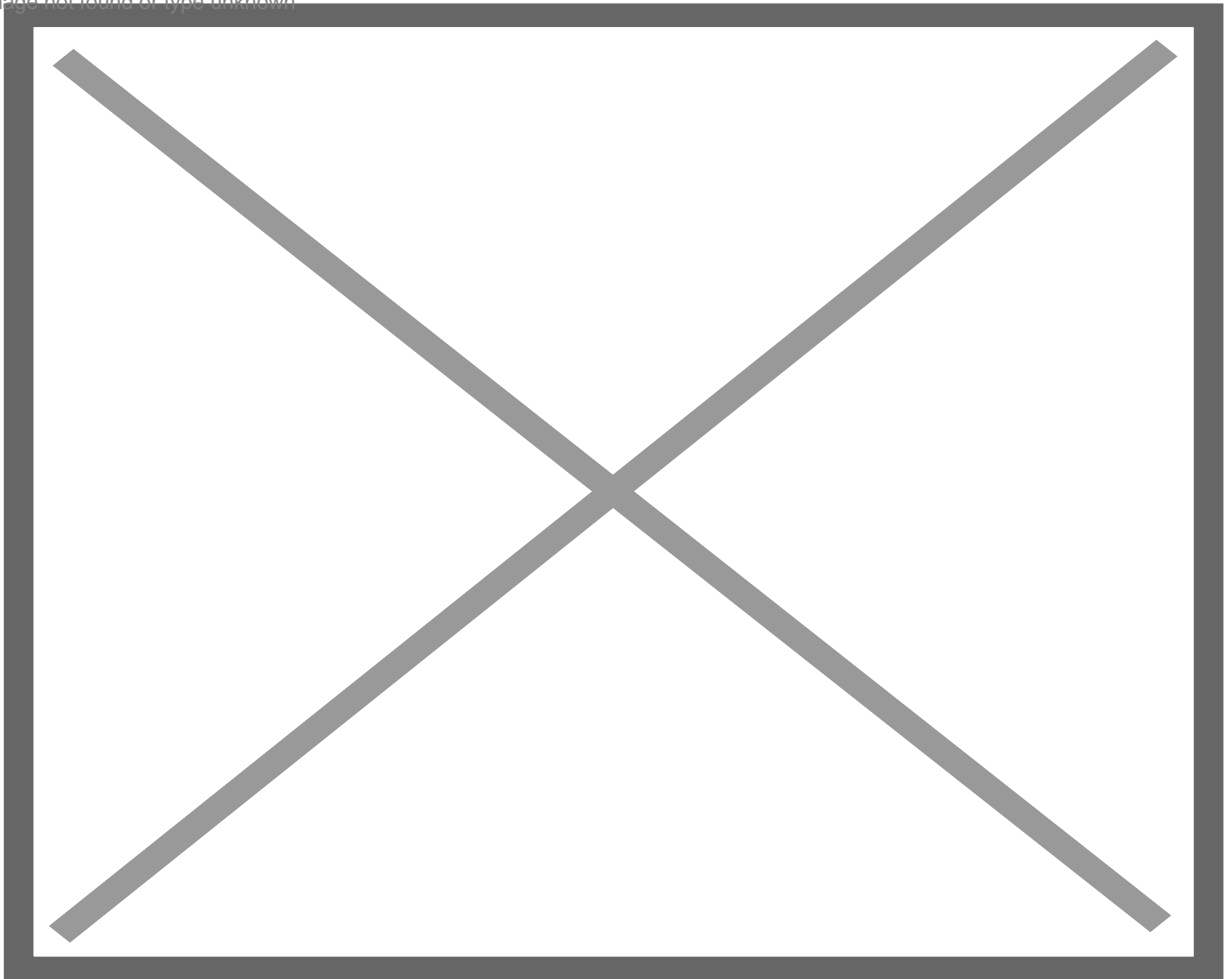
St. Croix Homicide Case Breakthrough: Two Arrested

Investigation leads to the capture of suspects involved in Kevin Jerome's death

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From left to right Daren Bess and Ian Benjamin, Jr. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. CROIX — The V.I. Police Department has provided new details on the investigation into the February 26, 2021, [shooting death of 30-year-old Kevin Jerome](#) of Williams Delights, resulting in the arrests of Darren Bess and Ian Benjamin Jr.

Responding to a 911 call at 9:57 a.m. that day, VIPD officers arrived on Main Street in Williams Delights to find Jerome suffering from a fatal gunshot wound to the head, next to an SUV that had multiple bullet holes. Jerome was quickly transported to Juan F. Luis Hospital, where he later died from his injuries. A parent later identified him.

VIPD's investigation led to the discovery that Bess and Benjamin Jr. had conspired to murder Jerome. The probe linked Benjamin directly to the murder, finding that he had used the same firearm in crimes committed before and after Jerome's death. Benjamin was apprehended with the weapon in his possession.

Arrest warrants were issued for both men by the V.I. Supreme Court. On March 1, 2024, Ian Benjamin Jr. was arrested without incident and detained at John Bell Correctional Facility with a bail set at \$1 million. Following an advice of rights hearing by Magistrate Morris on March 4, 2024, Benjamin was released on an unsecured bond under the third-party custodianship of his mother.

Darren Bess was arrested on March 6, 2024, in Placer County, CA, based on a VIPD warrant for Jerome's murder. He remains detained pending extradition to the Virgin Islands to face murder charges.

The VIPD extended its gratitude to the US Marshal's Office for their assistance in apprehending Bess and thanked the community for its support during the investigation. The department urges anyone with information regarding this case or any other crime to contact Crime Stoppers or the VIPD tip line at 340-778-4950.

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