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19-Year-Old Arrested for Firearm Possession During Traffic Stop in St. Croix

Jorge Ayala apprehended with a loaded .45 caliber handgun during VIPD's "Operation Set De Tone" initiative aimed at combating illegal firearm possession

Crime / **Published On November 19, 2024 07:07 AM /**

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Mugshot of Jorge Ayala. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. CROIX — A 19-year-old male, Jorge Ayala, was arrested on Friday, November 15 for firearm-related offenses during a traffic stop conducted by the V.I. Police Department's Special Operations Bureau under its "Operation Set De Tone" initiative.

The incident occurred at approximately 8:44 p.m. on the Melvin H. Evans Highway, east of the Industrial Road intersection. Officers stopped a silver Toyota Camry after observing the vehicle

being operated without rear taillights, brake lights, or a front license plate.

Upon stopping the vehicle, officers noticed the front-seat passenger, later identified as Ayala, with what appeared to be a gun holster in the waistband of his pants. Both the driver and passenger were ordered to exit the vehicle. While Ayala was still seated, officers reported hearing a solid object fall onto the vehicle's floorboard. Upon inspection, the object was identified as a black .45 caliber handgun with a fully loaded 17-capacity magazine inserted. Ayala claimed ownership of the weapon but did not have a license to possess it.

Following this discovery, Ayala was arrested and charged with carrying a firearm openly or concealed and possession or sale of ammunition. His bail was set at \$50,000, in accordance with standard procedures.

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