

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Man Charged With Attempted Murder After Life-Threatening Stabbing of Ex-Girlfriend's New Partner

Police say a Castle Coakley altercation left one man critically injured after being stabbed in the arm. Doctors said the wound severed an artery, nearly causing him to bleed to death. The suspect, Jeuris Ramirez Zabala, was later arrested and charged.

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Mugshot of Jeuris Ramirez Zabala. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

ST. CROIX — One man is facing charges of attempted murder after a life-threatening attack on his ex-girlfriend's current partner.

According to court documents, police were called in to the Juan F. Luis Hospital at the end of September to speak to a man who was in critical condition after being admitted for a stab wound.

The man, who spoke via interpreter, said that he was at a bar in Castle Coakley on the night of September 29. His girlfriend left the bar to drive home, and he said that he followed her in his own vehicle, concerned about her level of intoxication. While driving, he said he lost sight of her and decided to drive ahead and park near a restaurant in Peter's Rest to see if he could spot her.

While seated in his vehicle, another man who he identified as "Jeuris" reportedly opened his door and asked to have a conversation. The talk, Jeuris said, needed to happen in an area where nobody could see them. When the man seated in his vehicle said no, Jeuris reportedly suddenly sliced his arm with a sharp object. The man told police that Jeuris was upset because of the relationship between him and Jeuris's ex-girlfriend.

At the hospital, doctors quickly realized that an artery in the injured man's hand had been severed, placing him in serious danger of bleeding to death. Medical staff were able to act quickly to close the wound and stop the blood loss, however doctors advised police that a surgeon would have to see the patient to advise on what further treatment might be needed.

Officers investigating the incident at the scene found a pool of blood in the car in the restaurant parking lot, with more blood spatters around the vehicle. A woman seated in the vehicle initially denied knowledge of the incident, but eventually revealed that she was Jeuris's ex-girlfriend, who the injured man had been following home that night.

She told police that after leaving the bar, she arrived home to find her ex-boyfriend's car parked outside. She heard a commotion a few feet away, and found Jeuris and her new partner engaged in a physical altercation. The woman said that Jeuris slapped her across the face when she initially asked him what was going on, but he eventually told her several times that he had seen her current partner stalking her. Police noted the palm print on her face, which was swollen. The slap had also caused a laceration on the inside of the woman's upper lip, officers saw.

She helped police track down Jeuris Ramirez Zabala, who was immediately detained. He told police that his ex-girlfriend had called to ask him to escort her home from the bar. He said that they were driving away in their separate vehicles when a car overtook him and positioned itself between him and his ex-girlfriend's vehicle. Zabala said he followed both vehicles to the ex-girlfriend's house, and then he went to confront the alleged stalker.

He admitted to slicing the man's hands, but said that it came after the two men exchanged slaps and the alleged stalker ran to his vehicle to retrieve something. Zabala said that he left after his ex-girlfriend intervened because he did not notice any injuries to the man he admitted to slicing with a pocket knife.

Police charged with attempted murder, first and third degree assault, simple assault and battery, and possession of a dangerous weapon during a crime of violence.

During his advice of rights hearing, Magistrate Venetia Velazquez found probable cause to uphold the charges against Zabala, and assessed bail at \$100,000, with \$5,000 of that

sum payable in cash and the rest signed as an unsecured bond. His next court appearance is scheduled for October 15.

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