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## VIPD Shuts Down Opening Night of Festival Village After Fights Spark Safety Concerns

**Police ended festivities in Frederiksted moments after a performance by soca artist Voice, canceling multiple sets after fights broke out across the Village and a suspect allegedly struck a police sergeant, prompting heightened alert ahead of J'Ouvert.**

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**VIPD shuts down opening night of festival village following safety incidents. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM.**

ST. CROIX — The opening night of the 2025–2026 Crucian Christmas Festival Village was abruptly shut down Monday night after a series of fights across the venue prompted safety concerns and forced the V.I. Police Department to end festivities early.

The decision came shortly after a performance by Trinidad soca artist Voice, when law enforcement officials determined that conditions inside the Festival Village in Frederiksted had become unsafe. Several violent incidents were reported in different areas of the grounds, culminating in a confrontation in which at least one suspect involved in a scuffle allegedly struck a police sergeant. The individual was subsequently arrested.

As a result of the shutdown, multiple scheduled performances were canceled. U.S. Virgin Islands soca artist Pampa was not permitted to perform his set, nor was Small Axe out of St. Kitts. Pampa later took to the stage briefly to inform patrons that, following discussions with the V.I. Department of Tourism, he is now scheduled to perform Tuesday night at 11:00 p.m.

The disruption comes at a critical point in the festival calendar, just two days ahead of J'Ouvert Morning — widely regarded as one of the most challenging events for public safety officials due to the scale of participation and early-morning timing. The incidents have placed the VIPD on heightened alert as festival activities ramp up.

Despite the opening-night interruption, Village events are set to continue Tuesday night with the Soca Monarch competition. The show is being presented as a tribute to late Virgin Islands artist Jeavon Sasso, also known as Uncle Sasso, who died several months ago following a vehicular collision on September 8.

Festival organizers and law enforcement officials are expected to maintain an increased security presence as celebrations move forward.