

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Two Men Charged After Shots Fired Into Crowd During Bovoni Laundry Fight

Police say surveillance footage shows shots fired into a crowd during a fight at a Bovoni laundry business on New Year's Day, leading to the arrest of two men after shell casings were recovered and a vehicle linked to the incident was stopped.

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From left to right, mugshots of Engember Brito and Robert De La Rosa. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

ST. THOMAS — Police say surveillance footage captured the moment a firearm was discharged into a crowd during a fight at Lima Laundry in Bovoni on New Year's Day,

leading to the arrests of two men now facing multiple criminal charges in connection with the incident.

According to court documents, officers responded to reports of a disturbance shortly after 2 p.m. on January 1. At the scene, police made contact with a nearby business owner who provided surveillance video showing a brawl in progress. The footage, authorities say, depicts one man firing a weapon into a group of people while another man stood nearby. Investigators later identified the alleged shooter as Engember Brito, with Robert De La Rosa identified as his companion.

The same surveillance footage reportedly shows the two men entering a black Kia Forte, with the license plate visible, and leaving the area immediately after the gunfire. Officers at the scene recovered two spent shell casings from the parking lot.

A short time later, another patrol officer spotted the black Kia traveling west on Rhymer Highway near Fort Mylner. Police attempted a traffic stop, and the vehicle eventually pulled into a gas station, where both occupants were detained.

Police stated that surveillance video from the gas station shows the two men switching seats inside the vehicle. According to officers, Brito was observed driving at some point during the afternoon and was unable to produce identification documents when questioned.

A search of the vehicle did not uncover any firearms or ammunition. However, a black-and-white shoulder pouch found inside the car was claimed by Brito. Police reported that both men admitted they were involved in the fight but denied possessing or using a firearm during the incident.

Authorities say additional CCTV footage contradicted those denials. According to investigators, the video clearly shows Brito wearing a black shoulder bag while discharging a firearm into the crowd and running through the parking lot with the weapon in his hand. Several individuals are then seen tackling Brito and removing the gun from his possession.

As a result of the investigation, both men were charged. De La Rosa is accused of accessory to the illegal discharge of a firearm after the fact, reckless endangerment after the fact, driving without a license, and disturbance of the peace by fighting. Brito faces charges of illegal discharge of a firearm, possession of a firearm during the commission of a crime of violence, reckless endangerment, possession of ammunition, operating a vehicle without a license, and disturbance of the peace by fighting.

The men appeared before Julie Smith Todman, who found probable cause to uphold the charges against Brito. Bail was set at \$100,000, with Brito required to post 10 percent in cash to secure his release ahead of trial, while the remaining balance was set as an unsecured bond.

Upon release, Brito is required to report in person to the probation office twice a week and comply with a daily curfew from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. He is prohibited from possessing or using alcohol, firearms, ammunition, controlled substances, or any other dangerous weapons.

Brito's next court appearance is scheduled for January 30. As of press time, information regarding De La Rosa's advice of rights hearing was not publicly available.

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