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Victim Attacked With Pipe, Bodyslammed Outside Pelican Shop as Off-Duty Officer Witnesses Assault

Police say Luis Amaro Jr. struck the victim with what appeared to be a steel pipe outside the Pelican Shop, while surveillance reportedly showed a punch and bodyslam before the man woke up hospitalized with a concussion and broken tooth.

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Mugshot of Luis Amaro. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

ST. THOMAS — A St. Thomas man is facing felony assault and weapons charges after police say he attacked a bar patron outside the Pelican Shop with what appeared to be a steel pipe, leaving the victim unconscious, bleeding and later hospitalized with a concussion, a broken tooth and other injuries.

The incident reportedly occurred on May 3 outside the establishment. According to court documents, an off-duty police officer was sitting outside with a friend that night when they saw a man exit the business. Luis Amaro Jr. was also outside and reportedly made a comment to the man as he walked past.

The off-duty officer did not hear what was said, but observed the man go to his vehicle and begin a verbal exchange with Amaro.

At one point, Amaro reportedly left his seat outside the lounge and went to his vehicle, where he retrieved what appeared to be a steel pipe. The off-duty officer told police that Amaro then struck the other man with the pipe, causing him to fall to the ground while bleeding from the right side of his face.

The officer who witnessed the incident called 911 for assistance. Amaro reportedly left the scene in his vehicle, while an ambulance was called to transport the injured man to the hospital.

When investigating officers later spoke with the victim, he said that before entering the establishment, Amaro had taken issue with something he had said earlier. The man told police he was confused, but apologized to Amaro for his remarks before going inside to have drinks with his friends.

At the end of the evening, the man said he went outside and stood near the car while waiting for his friend to settle the bill. He told police he remembered nothing after that, only that he regained consciousness in the hospital.

The victim was treated for injuries to his face, hand and knees, and had also suffered a concussion and a broken tooth during the assault. He told police that his friend later explained what had happened.

The man said there was no animosity between him and Amaro. However, because of Amaro's "known temperament," he said he made it a point not to engage with him. The victim told investigators he suspected Amaro took issue with a friendship between the victim and Amaro's ex-girlfriend.

Police also reviewed surveillance footage of the incident. According to court documents, the footage reportedly showed Amaro punching the victim in the face before grabbing him and bodyslamming him to the ground.

Amaro presented himself to police on May 11 but declined to provide a statement about the incident. He was arrested and charged with third-degree assault, aggravated assault, simple assault, possession of a dangerous weapon during a crime of violence, and disturbance of the peace.

During his first court appearance on Monday, Magistrate Simone VanHoltten-Turnbull found probable cause to uphold all charges against Amaro.

The court allowed him to post 10 percent of the \$25,000 bail requirement in cash to secure his release from detention ahead of trial. While the case is pending, Amaro must abide by a daily curfew from 7 p.m. to 6 a.m., report to the probation office in person twice each week, and comply with other standard bail conditions imposed by the court.

His arraignment is scheduled for May 29.

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