

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Man May Lose Sight in One Eye After Pueblo Assault Police Say Began With Suspect's Water Request

Police say Lee Joseph attacked the victim after asking him to buy water at Pueblo, allegedly throwing a gallon-sized bottle at his face before punching, kicking and placing him in a headlock in an assault that may cost the man sight in one eye.

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Mugshot of Lee Joseph. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

ST. THOMAS — A St. Thomas man is facing assault and mayhem charges after police say he attacked another man inside Pueblo Supermarket in Long Bay, leaving the victim with severe trauma to his right eye and the likelihood that he may lose sight in that eye.

The incident occurred on Friday, May 22, while the victim was shopping inside the supermarket. According to police, the man was approached by Lee Joseph, who was reportedly staring at him aggressively. The victim asked why he was being watched, and Joseph allegedly responded by attacking him.

Police say Joseph pushed the man in the face, causing him to fall to the ground. He then reportedly climbed on top of the victim and punched him repeatedly about the face and body until bystanders pulled him away.

Store surveillance footage captured the attack, police said, and reportedly showed Joseph's aggression toward the victim.

Officers later met the injured man at the hospital. Medical personnel advised that his injuries included severe trauma to his right eye and said he would likely lose sight in that eye as a result.

Police subsequently located Joseph at his Estate Thomas residence and transported him to the Criminal Investigation Bureau for questioning. There, he reportedly admitted to the assault.

According to police, Joseph said he became upset after asking the victim to purchase some water for him at the supermarket. He reportedly admitted that he threw a gallon-sized bottle of water at the man's face before beginning the physical attack.

Police say Joseph also admitted to punching the victim in the face and kicking him several times about the body while the man lay defenseless on the ground. He reportedly further admitted to placing the victim in a headlock and squeezing with all his strength until bystanders physically separated them.

Joseph was charged with first-degree assault, two counts of third-degree assault, and mayhem. He was remanded into custody and appeared before Magistrate Simone VanHolten-Turnbull on Saturday, May 23.

The judge found probable cause to uphold all charges and set bail at \$25,000, with 10 percent required in cash to secure Joseph's release before trial.

Once released from detention, Joseph must report to the probation office in person twice a week and comply with other standard bail conditions.

His next court appearance is scheduled for June 12.