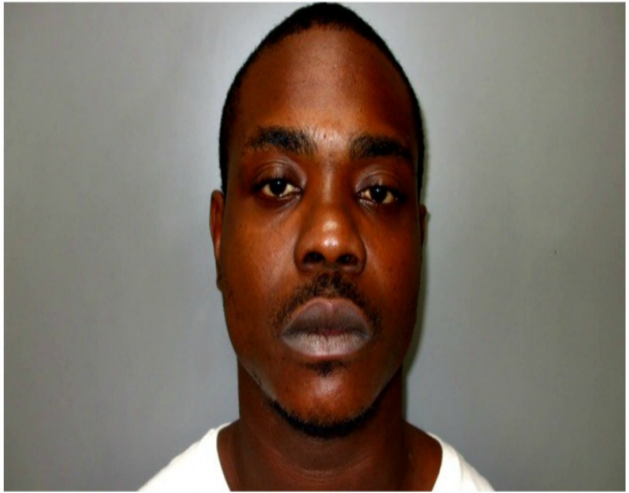


The Virgin Islands Consortium

St. Thomas Man Arrested For 2014 Homicide

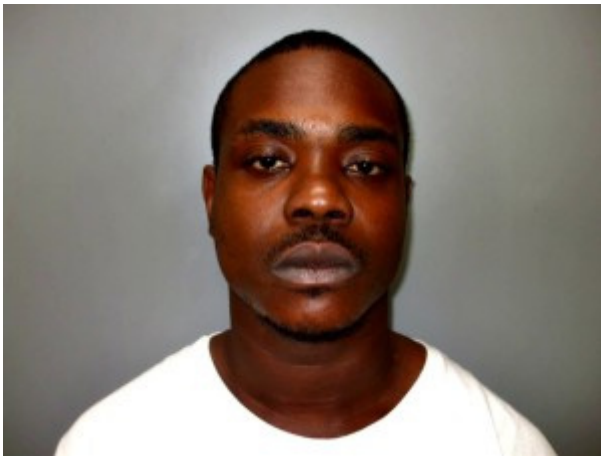
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Ernice Gilbert **April 19, 2015**



ST. THOMAS -- Mekel Blash of Nadir was arrested on Friday afternoon at 5:30 pm in connection with the January 19, 2014 homicide of James Malfetti, who was found dead in his apartment located in Boatman Road, St. John, with multiple stab wounds to his neck.

The victim, originally from Scotch Plains, NJ, had lived on St. John for about a year. The case drew heavy attention from [media outlets in the U.S.](#) with an angle that suggested the VIPD shared connivance in Malfetti's murder.



Mugshot of Mekel Blash, provided by the

VIPD

In a statement issued on February 12, 2014, former VIPD Commissioner Rodney Querrard told CBS News that the investigation into Malfetti's death was ongoing and that "the VIPD has taken all necessary steps from the day the victim was found, to process evidence at the crime scene."

Blash, 27, was charged with 1st degree murder, 2nd degree murder, 1st degree assault, 3rd degree assault, use of a dangerous weapon during the commission of a crime of violence, grand larceny and 1st degree burglary.

By the order of Judge Kathleen McKay of the Superior Court, no bail was set for Blash, and he was remanded to the Bureau of Corrections pending his advise-of-rights hearing.