

The Virgin Islands Consortium

After An Argument, A Death In Concordia

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ST. CROIX -- An argument between two male acquaintances led to the shooting death of one of the men in Estate Concordia, in the vicinity of the Queen Louise Home for Children at about 10:06 a.m., Police Commissioner Delroy Richards Sr. confirmed to The Consortium this afternoon. A subsequent press release was issued moments later by VIPD Public Information Officer Kevin Jackson.

On the scene this morning, The Consortium saw multiple police vehicles and personnel enveloping the crime scene, which was cordoned off by more than 50 feet. They drove in and out the area as multiple units had responded to the incident, including a K-9 Unit, as seen in the picture collage atop.

According to Mr. Richards, citing information provided to him by St. Croix Chief of Police Arthur Hector Sr, the two men were disputing when one left and came back with a weapon and shot the victim multiple times. The suspect, identified by police as 47-year-old Bruno Montute of Estate Concordia, was pursued and arrested by police, who were able to respond "almost immediately because of ongoing initiatives we have in place," Mr. Richards told The Consortium.

The victim, identified as 25-year-old Akeem Batiste, also of Estate Concordia, was determined dead after an examination by emergency medical services personnel found no signs of life.

The commissioner, as well as Chief Hector, told The Consortium that the incident was isolated and would not impact ongoing carnival activities here. They also spoke of the heightened police presence at the Carnival Village, which included National Guard soldiers and VIPD officers on the opening night, and will continue until the festivities are over, according to Mr. Richards.

Montute was charged with second degree murder and was remanded to the Bureau of Corrections after failing to make bail of \$200,000.