

The Virgin Islands Consortium

V.I.P.D. To Hold Press Briefing At 3:00 P.M. Today Following Shooting Of Baby In St. Thomas

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Staff **December 15, 2016**



ST. THOMAS -- Government House and the Virgin Islands Police Department sprung into action on Thursday following the [shooting death of a 1-year-old child](#), who died on Wednesday night in the vicinity of Contant Knolls.

Governor Kenneth Mapp [condemned the killing](#). He also authorized a \$10,000 reward for witnesses to come forward, and said the recent killing had shocked the community, even as his administration continues to take steps in quelling criminal activity.

"The harder we work to curtail these violent acts, the more brutal they become, which is so shocking to the conscience of people of good will," Mr. Mapp said. "I am asking my

police commissioner, the attorney general and their federal law enforcement colleagues to aggressively step up their initiatives and focus on those persons in the territory known for their involvement in criminal activity, gun and drug possession.

“I want the law enforcement community to do whatever it takes to bring the perpetrator of this senseless act of violence to justice. I am authorizing a \$10,000 reward to any person who provides meaningful information that will lead to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for the death of this infant.”

The V.I.P.D. scrambled and called a press briefing that is to take place at 3:00 p.m. today, according to a press release the force's public information officer, Glen Dratte, issued this afternoon.

The press briefing will be held at the Alexander Farrelly Justice Complex here. Speaking at the briefing will be Assistant Police Commissioner Curtis Griffin, St. Thomas Police Chief Jason Marsh, and Virgin Islands Clergy Peace Coalition Pastor, Samuel Weeekes.

A child's life is cut short

A mother must live with the horror of witnessing the death of her 17-month-old baby, who was killed after being struck in her left chest by a bullet on Wednesday night while they traveled in a car in the vicinity of Contant Knolls, on the road near the St. Thomas Taxi Association, V.I.P.D. Public Information Officer Glen Dratte confirmed to The Consortium just after midnight.

The information was relayed to Mr. Dratte by Mr. Marsh, who was on the scene after the incident, and followed the victims who survived the shooting to the Roy Lester Schneider Regional Hospital.

The incident occurred just before 10:00 p.m. last night, according to Chief Marsh. He said someone came up to the vehicle (it was not clear whether this person was on foot or in another vehicle), and opened fire on the car that the victims were traveling in, leaving the driver and the girl child, after being shot in the left chest, dead. The young child was pronounced dead at approximately 10:50 p.m., according to V.I.P.D. Media Specialist Sakeeda Freeman. The female victim was at the hospital, but she was not injured, according to Ms. Freeman.

Chief Marsh, who was at the hospital in the wee hours of Thursday, said the male victim was in stable condition.

Talk of the incident erupted on social media late Wednesday and early Thursday, with residents decrying the incident. The child's image was even shared online.

St. Thomas has led this year with homicides, with this latest incident bringing the island's total for 2016 to 31, according to data provided by the V.I.P.D., seen below. In contrast, St. Croix has seen 25 homicides this year, bringing the territory's total this year to 56, up 25 percent year-on-year.

The V.I.P.D. is asking anyone with information that may lead to the arrest of crime perpetrators to contact the Criminal Investigation Bureau at (340) 714-9801. You can also contact 911 or Crime Stoppers USVI, [where your tip could net you a payday](#).

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