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Vehicle Stolen Thursday Night Used in Deadly Shooting at HH Tire and Battery

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Police guard HH Tire and Battery Entrance on Friday morning (July 31, 2020), following deadly shooting at the establishment. By. VI CONSORTIUM

ST. CROIX — A vehicle stolen Thursday night at the Altona Lagoon was used to carry out a deadly shooting at HH Tire and Battery Friday morning, according to police on the scene of the homicide.

The shooting incident appeared to be a planned hit, as the suspects of the carjacking not only stole the vehicle — a 2001 maroon Toyota Highlander — but applied dark tints to the vehicle's windows and windshield before it was used in the Friday morning fatal shooting, according to a police source who spoke to the Consortium on the condition of anonymity.

The Altona Lagoon incident occurred after 9:00 p.m. Thursday. The 911 emergency call center dispatched officers to the location at about 9:21 p.m., where they met with the victim who explained what happened.

The victim told police he was sitting in his vehicle when he was approached by three men. He told police that at least one of the three suspects was brandishing a firearm and was pointing it at him. The victim said he was then ordered to leave his vehicle, and his jewelry was also taken by the suspects, according to a news release issued by the V.I.P.D. Friday morning.

One of the three suspects stood 6ft tall, and was wearing a long-sleeved shirt and dark jeans. Another suspect was estimated to be 5 feet 6 inches tall and of a dark complexion.

The victim could not describe the third suspect.

HH Tire & Battery Homicide

At about 8:15-8:30 Friday morning, police were notified of a shooting incident at HH Tire & Battery, located near the now-destroyed Peter's Rest Adventist Church on the South Shore Road. Upon arrival to the scene, officers met a man sitting lifeless in what appeared to be a silver Toyota RAV4.

The man, who was an employee of HH Tire & Battery, sustained multiple gunshot wounds about the upper body and the vehicle was riddled with bullet holes.

Surveillance video from HH Tire & Battery which was leaked online anonymously, shows the RAV4 parking up at the establishment. As soon as the vehicle stops, what has since been confirmed to be the stolen 2001 Toyota Highlander, appears. Three men — the driver first — exit the vehicle and run to the parked RAV4. The driver goes up close to the driver's side of the RAV4 and starts to shoot. The other two men — one with a machine gun — shoot from a distance.

They all then hustled back to the 2001 Toyota Highlander and fled the scene.

The victim was identified by family members as 27-year-old Aaron Joseph.

The V.I.P.D. is asking the community for help in solving this crime. Anyone with information is asked to call 911, the Crime TipLine at (340) 778-4950, or anonymously to Crime Stoppers USVI at (800) 222-TIPS.