

The Virgin Islands Consortium

St. Thomas Man Sentenced For Transporting And Harboring Illegal Immigrants And Bank Fraud

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ST. THOMAS -- Dean Baptiste, 53, of St. Thomas, was sentenced today on separate indictments charging conspiracy to traffic illegal aliens and bank fraud, United States Attorney Gretchen C.F. Shappert announced.

District Court Judge Curtis V. Gomez sentenced Baptiste to 18 months in prison. Judge Gomez also sentenced Baptiste to three years of supervised release for the bank fraud and four years supervised release for the alien smuggling. The periods of supervised release are to run concurrently. Judge Gomez ordered Baptiste to pay a \$200 special assessment, perform 400 hours of community service, and to pay restitution in the amount of \$11,197.47.

On November 21, 2017, Baptiste pleaded guilty to conspiring with others to bring into and harbor illegal aliens in the United States. On that date, he also pleaded guilty to one count of bank fraud. According to documents filed in court, Baptiste and others assisted individuals traveling from India to enter the United States illegally. The illegal aliens traveled from India to St. Kitts where they boarded commercial flights to Tortola, British Virgin Islands. Once in Tortola, they were transported by boat to St. Thomas, where arrangements were made to transport them to the mainland United States.

Court documents further showed that Baptiste obtained and altered a check not issued for his use or benefit and substituted the name of his business, D/M Computer Consulting Services. Baptiste subsequently deposited the check into his business checking account and withdrew the funds for his personal use.

The case was investigated by Home Land Security Investigations, and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Everard E. Potter.