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VIPD Says it Has a Person of Interest in Sunday's Frederiksted Homicide

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Person of interest captured on surveillance video. By. VIPD

ST. CROIX — The V.I. Police Department said Monday afternoon that it has a person of interest in the shooting that occurred in downtown Frederiksted on Sunday, [which left 27-year-old Joseph Leonardo Clarke dead](#).

The police force released two surveillance-captured images of the suspect, who is seen brandishing a firearm. The V.I.P.D. is urging anyone who may recognize the suspect or may know of his whereabouts, to call the Crime TipLine at (340) 778-4950, or send an anonymous tip to Crime Stoppers USVI [here](#).

The shooting occurred outside the Yam Yam Restaurant Sunday afternoon. A 7-year-old minor who was in a passing vehicle was also grazed by a bullet.

The incident took place around the 5:00 p.m. hour. The 911 emergency call center received notification of the shooting moments later and immediately dispatched officers to the area, King Street, in response.

Upon arrival to the scene, officers found an unresponsive black male lying in the streets with multiple gunshot wounds, according to the release. Emergency Medical Technicians concluded that the victim did not have vital signs.

The victim was identified by family members. The minor, a boy, was treated at the Juan F. Luis Hospital and released.

St. Croix Police Chief Sidney Elskoe condemned what he described as senseless gun violence on the island. "We are again asking for information to solve this and other shootings," the chief said. "If you know that something is about to happen, we are urging you to let us know so we can stop it from happening."

Senator Kenneth Gittens, a former law enforcement officer, issued a release calling for action. "There is clearly a crisis in leadership at the Virgin Islands Police Department as law enforcement has not been able to quell the escalating war on our streets," he said.

"If the public had more confidence, law enforcement would have the information they need to end this senseless violence. I have repeatedly requested that a strategic plan be implemented to deploy our officers more effectively and to increase cooperation between our local law enforcement agencies. Our community is too small and too close for this to continue.

"I am calling for an immediate meeting of law enforcement and community leaders with Governor Bryan. My thoughts and prayers are with all the fearful and grieving families in our community and especially with the youngster who was injured in the Sunday evening shooting," the senator said.