

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Owner Of Panache Jewelers Shot To Death In Apparent Ambush And Robbery

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ST. CROIX -- The owner of the downtown Christiansted jewelry store Panache Jewelers was shot to death near the entrance of Mount Welcome this evening, according to V.I.P.D. Public Information Officer Glen Dratte. The Mount Welcome entrance is located on the right side of the road just before the traffic lights at the end of the Bypass heading east.

According to police sources, 49-year-old Kailash Banani had left his store and was headed home, when his vehicle was bumped from the back by another vehicle. Mr. Banani then stopped his vehicle, stepped out of it, and was suddenly ambushed by unknown assailants, apparently demanding money.

Mr. Banani, a well-known business man on St. Croix with two young children as well as a wife, was shot multiple times. Mr. Dratte did not say whether the suspects took money from the victim.

The 911 emergency call center was notified of the incident at about 6:23 p.m. When officers arrived on the scene, they met Mr. Panache unresponsive. He was transported to the Juan F. Luis Hospital by morgue attendants, Mr. Dratte said.

Police are asking anyone with information about the shooting to contact the Criminal Investigation Bureau at 340-778-2211. You may also contact Crime Stoppers USVI with an anonymous tip [here](#).

This evening's homicide was the second on St. Croix in 2019. The first took place at the Coconuts Nightclub located in Mount Pleasant West, on January 1.