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Velinor Confirms Arrest of VIPD Officers, Denounces 'Any Engagement in Criminal Activity'

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Police Commissioner Trevor Velinor, center, on Wed. Jan. 13, 2021 addressed the arrest of St. Thomas police officers Shakim Mike and Tishaun Adams in connection with a drug bust in Florida. By. VIPD/FACEBOOK

Police Commissioner Trevor Velinor confirmed during a press conference that two V.I.P.D. officers were arrested in Florida last night for their involvement in a drug bust said to include over 300 kilos of cocaine. Speaking Wednesday, the commissioner expressed disappointed that officers had engaged in the illegal activity, but added he was glad they were caught.

"I denounce any engagement in criminal activity, specifically by law enforcement officers," Mr. Velinor said. "I understand that there are other Virgin Islanders being investigated in this matter,

and we'll continue to provide that support for our federal partners as they investigate this investigation."

[As reported by the Consortium](#), Mr. Velinor said St. Thomas Police Officers Shakim Mike and Tishaun Adams were arrested pursuant to an investigation involving the transshipment of narcotics. "They are both employed with the Virgin Islands Police Department," he said, adding that the arrests bring "a level of stress for us because we know better. These officers are 4-year officers with the Virgin Islands Police Department," the commissioner said.

The officers graduated from the Police Academy in 2016 and have served as members of the police department since, Mr. Velinor made known. There were said to be at least 6 people involved, including V.I. National Guard members. Mr. Mike and Mr. Adams are both said to be National Guard members, with one serving on the Guard's Counterdrug Task Force.

"This is an active, federal investigation led by the Homeland Security Investigations. The Virgin Islands Police Department will continue to cooperate fully in this investigation," Mr. Velinor said.

He said pictures of the officers in question would be provided to the media. "We'll keep you updated on the progress of this case but again, it is an ongoing federal investigation and the Virgin Islands Police Department continues to stand at the ready to support our federal partners as they continue to investigate."

Asked whether he was concerned that the community's trust in the department would erode because of the arrests, the commissioner stressed that a plurality of officers are in policing because they truly want to serve their community. "Most of the men and women in law enforcement are doing it for the right reasons," he said. "Occasionally you come across those individuals who have their own specific motivation and engage in illegal activity."

"I have said to our community that not everyone should be in policing, and where there are individuals who are demonstrating behaviors that's not consistent with our oath to protect and serve our community, I support us fully prosecuting them and also terminating their privilege to serve our community in this capacity," Mr. Velinor said.

The commissioner said the incident is not a reflection of the V.I.P.D., but instead "a reflection of two individuals who are part of the Virgin Islands Police Department who obviously engaged in criminal activity. I am glad that they were arrested. Any individual involved in criminal activity, whether you're in policing or not, you should be prosecuted. In this case I can say that it's good when an officer who is involved in unlawful activity is in fact brought to the appearance of everyone, and is in fact prosecuted based on an investigation."

He added, "I say that to say I wish no officer would engage in illegal activity, but where an officer chooses to engage in illegal activity, they should be prosecuted, and I, Trevor Velinor, is in support of the full gamut of the law in prosecuting individuals who are engaged in illegal activities."

According to sources who spoke to the Consortium on the condition of anonymity, a private jet flew into St. Thomas last night at the Jet Center, a fixed-base operator. The jet did not request pre-clearance from Customs and Border Protection (CBP) in the U.S. Virgin Islands. However, upon arrival to Opa-Locka County in Florida, the jet was searched and over 300 kilos of cocaine discovered.

One source told the Consortium that CBP officers were chasing the police officers, who were trying to evade capture, on the tarmac in Opa-Locka County.

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