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# Victim Temporary Blinded, Badly Wounded by Suspect Wielding Steel Bat

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**Mugshot of Shakim Gumbs. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**ST. THOMAS** — A 39-year-old man has been charged with third-degree assault after he allegedly hit a man multiple times with a steel bat.

Shakim Gumbs was arrested on September 28 after officers were dispatched to Rumar Road in reference to a reported assault. Police made contact with the alleged victim who stated that he was standing at the bus stop when an unknown black rasta attacked him. The man told police that prior to the attack, the alleged perpetrator had started yelling at him. The victim said he told the man to leave him alone and stepped out of the way when he advanced towards him with a knife.

According to the probable cause fact sheet, the perpetrator subsequently advanced towards the

man with a steel bat which he allegedly used to strike him three times, before fleeing.

The victim was transported to the Schneider Regional Medical Center via ambulance where he was assessed and treated for injuries sustained as a result of the assault. These included a laceration above the right eye, swelling and temporary blindness to that eye, two broken bones in his left hand and severe pain to the left shoulder.

A witness to the assault was able to positively identify the perpetrator based on the police department's arrest photo book. The witness further stated that the perpetrator, identified as Shakim Gumbs, is known to frequent the bus stop in question and has on several occasions threatened people who use the bus stop. The victim of the assault was also able to identify Gumbs from the arrest book and he was later arrested after police found him in the area of the incident. At the time he was located, Gumbs was in possession of the bat described by the alleged victim as the assault weapon.

On Wednesday, Gumbs appeared virtually before Judge Carolyn Hermon- Percell for an advisement hearing. Attorney Brenda Scales, appearing for the people, noted no objection to Gumbs being granted release on the posting of 10 percent of his bail which was set at \$25,000. However, Scales stressed that the defendant must be obligated to stay away from the victim.

While Scales highlighted that Gumbs has been arrested at least seven times, she noted that they were mostly minor offenses. Public Defender Mary Ann Matney further noted that the defendant had only been convicted once, for disturbance of the peace.

Matney asked that Gumbs be released on an unsecured bond as he was currently unemployed and unable to post any money. However, Judge Carolyn Hermon- Percell expressed concern that based on the allegations in the probable cause fact sheet, Gumbs appears to present a continuing disturbing presence in the public area of the bus stop.

The court was therefore concerned that he poses a danger to both the victim in the matter, and the wider community. As such, the Judge maintained that bail would remain set at \$25,000 but that Gumbs would be granted release on the posting of 10 percent thereof. As part of his bail conditions, the defendant is barred from having any direct or indirect contact with the victim and must maintain a minimum distance of 25 feet at all times. Gumbs is also prohibited from having any unlawful contact with any witnesses. The Judge also stressed that he must stay away from the bus stop in question and has been ordered to maintain a minimum distance of 10 feet from the bus stop at all times.

According to the Virgin Islands Code, if convicted of third-degree assault, Gumbs faces a maximum fine of \$3,000, imprisonment of not more than 5 years, or both. He is also charged with using a dangerous weapon during a violent crime, an offense which carries a maximum fine of \$10,000 and imprisonment of not more than 15 years. This penalty would be in addition to the penalty prescribed for the violent crime.