

logo not found or type unknown

Officer Allegedly Held in Chokehold During Escape Attempt by Suspects Following Traffic Stop; Two Taken Into Custody (Update)

Crime / **Published On March 16, 2022 04:03 AM /**

Staff Consortium **March 16, 2022**

Image not found or type unknown



From left, Rakhim Rabsatt and Raheem Smith. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

Update: March 17, 2022: Raheem Smith and Rakhim Rabsatt appeared for advisement hearings on Wednesday where the charges for possession of a firearm were withdrawn. During the hearing, a VIPD officer stated under oath that — contrary to the original VIPD report — no weapon was actually recovered on the afternoon of the incident.

Judge Paula Norkaitis did however find probable cause to charge both men with aiding and abetting and interfering with a police officer discharging his duties. Smith was additionally

charged with assaulting an officer, while Rabsatt who was identified as the individual who allegedly held the officer in a chokehold was charged with first-degree assault.

During the hearing, attorney Carl Williams revealed that Smith was scheduled to leave St. Thomas to return to Georgia but missed his flight as he was in police custody. The attorney asked that the defendant be permitted to return to his home and work in Georgia. The judge eventually ruled that Smith's bail would be set at \$7,500 with provisions for the posting of 10 percent.

While he must surrender his passport, the judge indicated that the court would be willing to consider a motion to allow Smith to travel and relocate. However, she stressed that the appropriate documentation must be filed to ensure that he can be found to answer to the charges against him. Meanwhile, bail for Rabsatt was set at \$30,000 with 10 percent provision. Upon his release, he will be placed on house arrest with electronic monitoring for the pendency of the matter.

Original Story: An officer was allegedly assaulted while performing duties during a traffic stop matter on Monday in St. Thomas, the V.I. Police Department has announced. The V.I.P.D. said the suspects were plotting an escape but were eventually thwarted and taken into custody when backup assistance arrived.

According to V.I.P.D. Director of Communications Glen Dratte, officers were conducting a traffic stop on a vehicle with heavily tinted windows on the Hospital Line Roadway on Monday. The officers stopped the vehicle and asked for its legal documents. While one officer was awaiting the documents from the driver, another officer asked the two males to step out, Mr. Dratte said.

The officer conducted a pat down for safety reasons, at which point one of the male suspects started pulling away. According to the officer, a scuffle then ensued as he tried to take the male into custody. As the struggle continued, another male suspect came around the vehicle and grabbed the officer into a chokehold, causing him to almost lose consciousness, the V.I.P.D. said.

The officer observed one of the male suspects throwing a firearm into the vehicle while the other male who held the officer in a chokehold told the driver to drive off.

However, other officers arrived on the scene to assist and they were able to subdue the suspects and take them into custody.

Rakhim Rabsatt, age 32 and Raheem Smith, age 25 were both arrested for possession of an unlicensed firearm, third-degree assault, delaying and obstructing justice, and resisting arrest.

In February, Rabsatt was [arrested with multiple firearms, ammunition and drugs during a traffic stop](#).

Unable to make bail of \$75,000 each, they were remanded to the Bureau of Corrections pending their advisement hearing.

It was unclear as to whether the driver was charged.

The Criminal Investigation Bureau is asking anyone with information about this incident to call 911, the C.I.B., or the Office of the Police Chief at (340) 774-2211. You may also send anonymous tip to Crime Stoppers USVI [here](#).

