

The Virgin Islands Consortium

'I Am Under the Influence of Rum': Man Admits to DUI Following Accident With Police Cruiser

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Mugshot of Mahanaim Liburd. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. THOMAS — A man appeared before a judge in the V.I Superior Court Monday for driving under the influence and other charges.

Mahanaim Liburd, age 19, was arrested on charges of driving under the influence, illegal blood alcohol content and negligent driving. His arrest follows a report on October 16 of an auto collision on Rubena G. Gutliffe Drive.

According to the probable cause fact sheet, when police arrived to the scene, they observed a silver Ford Escape facing northward near the driveway of a retreat. A black male wearing a white T-shirt and black long pants was observed sitting near that same driveway. He was bent forward with his head between his legs, and was identified as Mahanaim Liburd — the driver and registered owner of the Ford Escape.

Officers also observed a blue Ford Explorer Police Cruiser, registered to the V.I.P.D. over the hillside a near distance away the driveway of the retreat. An officer advised Liburd of his constitutional rights before attempting to get a statement from him, Liburd stated, “I want to be straight up honest with you all guys. I want to hurry and get home because the sun hot. I am under the influence of rum. I was drinking a lot of rum...” Liburd further stated that he was speeding north uphill on Rubena G. Gutliffe Drive when he entered the opposing lane of traffic and into the path of the oncoming police cruiser. At that point, Liburd stopped speaking and hung his head between his legs and began vomiting.

Liburd eventually recollected himself and continued describing what had happened. He said the operator of the police cruiser then swerved away from him and went over the hillside. Liburd stated that he then returned to his lane, reversed, stopped his vehicle, exited it, and went to check on the operator of the police cruiser. The officer then advised Liburd that he would undergo a field sobriety test, which Liburd consented to and failed. He was subsequently placed under arrested for DUI.

In court on Monday, a judge ruled that Liburd would be allowed to post \$500 cash to secure his release. His driver’s license was suspended for 90 days, and Liburd has been barred from leaving the St. Thomas-St. John District without the court’s written authorization, pending his court case.