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Clarification: Gov't Offices and Public Schools in St. Thomas-St. John District to Close at Noon Thursday as UberSoca Revelers Takeover St. Thomas

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Feting on the Uber Soca Cruise.

Update: *Government House on Wednesday afternoon clarified that only government employees in the St. Thomas-St. John District have been given clearance to leave work at noon Thursday, a move taken to allow the UberSoca Cruise event to take place without traffic and other concerns. We've updated to story to reflect this clarification.*

Original Story: Governor Albert Bryan Jr. was in high spirits on Tuesday as he announced the accommodations that would be made for party cruise brand UberSoca's visit to the territory on April 13. Not the typical "Opening of the Day" celebration, this week's jump-up will begin at 2:00

p.m., with revelers moving from Fort Christian's Parking lot "all the way up to WICO."

To facilitate the event, public schools in the St. Thomas/St. John district will be closed from noon on Thursday, and non-essential government employees — only in the St. Thomas St. John-District — will be granted a half-day of administrative leave. This means that government offices in STT-STJ will close from noon on Thursday as well.

"We want people to participate in this, because no J'ouvert is good without the local action," said the governor, explaining why the decision was taken to close schools and government offices. He also cited traffic management concerns as contributing to the effort to empty downtown Charlotte Amalie of people who do not wish to participate in the festivities.

Governor Bryan welcomed the Uber Soca crowd, saying that he hoped this initial visit will lead to an annual event to the territory. "We're hoping that this opportunity to showcase our Virgin Islands...will really give us a world stage when it comes to competition in terms of feting," he said, noting that a stop in St. Croix has already been programmed for next year.

According to the V.I. Police Department, to ensure the safety and smooth flow of the event, several traffic restrictions will be in place:

- The roadway from Mandela Circle to Lucinda Millin Intersection will be closed to eastbound traffic.
- Veterans Drive to the Legislature will be closed to all vehicular traffic in both directions.
- Westward traffic from Mandela Circle will be directed to continue westward and onto De Beltjen Road.
- Eastbound traffic traveling from downtown will be directed towards Emancipation Garden and onto Norre Gade.

Motorists are advised to utilize alternative routes such as Alton Adams Drive and Valdemar Hill Sr. Drive (Skyline) to reach their destinations. Additionally, the public is encouraged to avoid the downtown area during the event, if possible.

Large trucks and tractor trailers are advised to cease operations during the Jouvert, as these vehicles may find it difficult to maneuver on alternate routes and are restricted from traveling on De Beltjen Road.

"We kindly request the public's cooperation and compliance during this event to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all," said the Police Department.