

The Virgin Islands Consortium

BVI Man Receives Eight-Month Sentence for Role in Human Smuggling Operation

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Air and Marine Operations (AMO), Customs & Border Protection By. CBP

ST. THOMAS — Boney Chinnery, a 22-year-old resident of Tortola, British Virgin Islands, has been sentenced to eight months in prison for his involvement in a human smuggling operation, United States Attorney Delia L. Smith reported Wednesday. Chinnery was convicted for failing to stop his vessel when approached by law enforcement and giving false statements.

The evidence presented at trial revealed that on the evening of October 31, 2022, around 9:00 p.m., Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine agents were performing their

routine border security patrol between the U.S. and British Virgin Islands. When they reached Coral Bay, St. John, the agents spotted Chinnery's vessel, which was operating without navigation lights - a violation of maritime regulations.

Despite several warnings and attempts to halt the vessel, Chinnery adamantly refused to comply. He further escalated the situation by accelerating his vessel and operating it evasively, seemingly attempting to avoid capture by the agents.

Eventually, the agents were able to disable the vessel, and upon boarding, they discovered Chinnery along with six other individuals who were attempting to gain illegal entry into the United States.

Homeland Security Investigations handled the investigation into this case, which is now being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Natasha L. Bake.