

# The Virgin Islands Consortium

## Public Schools in Virgin Islands Hit by Break-Ins, Solar Panels Stolen From Complex High

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Last weekend two public schools in the territory, Addelita Cancryn on St. Thomas and the St. Croix Educational Complex, were broken into, according to Governor Albert Bryan. The St. Croix Educational Complex was particularly impacted as more than 100 solar panels were stolen, the governor disclosed during a Wednesday press briefing.

According to the governor, the solar panels — meant to serve as a backup power supply for students and emergency shelter residents — were stolen from the St. Croix Educational Complex. This crime not only has a monetary impact but also puts the wellbeing of the community at risk in the event of a storm. "This is very selfish and really uncalled for," the governor lamented. He made a public appeal to the thieves to return

the stolen property and urged those with information about the theft to come forward to police.

The governor also took the opportunity to comment on the broader issue of criminality in the territory, pivoting from the break-ins to the tragic death of Detective Delbert Phipps earlier in the week. Phipps was fatally shot on Tuesday morning by a man awaiting trial for first-degree murder, causing deep sorrow across the community.

"The whole entire Virgin Islands community grieves this loss," Governor Bryan said, emphasizing the challenging and dangerous nature of law enforcement work. He commended the officers' professionalism in handling such a tragic incident and recommended that they seek mental health support to deal with the grief.

While recognizing the gravity of these incidents, the governor called for unity and collective resolve to overcome these challenges. He encouraged the community to support the law enforcement efforts and work together to ensure criminal offenders are brought to justice, emphasizing that this is the only way to create a safer society for all Virgin Islanders.