

PRESS RELEASE

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Gun Violence Highlighted as Primary Crime Concern in Virgin Islands Ahead of Inaugural Anti-Crime Summit

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(Anti-Crime Summit Scheduled for 24-26 September 2025)

Crime in the Virgin Islands has risen by 13 percent over the past year, based on a comparison of the period from January to July, according to Acting Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Mr. Kenrick Davis, who confirmed that gun violence remains a major concern, but domestic violence is the leading contributor to the overall increase in reported crimes.

“This year alone, we have already recovered 16 firearms and hundreds of rounds of ammunition,” he announced, adding, “and if we consider that neither of these things is manufactured here, we don’t make guns, we don’t make bullets, but so much of it is around, then it is a serious cause of concern”. This indicates that there is a gun problem in the Virgin Islands, he declared.

The Ag. DCP Davis observed that the proliferation of guns and ammunition has contributed to incidents of robberies, burglaries, and murders. He explained these are the crimes that cause fear and the perception that crime is higher than it actually is. He recalled earlier years when the Territory would go as long as two years without a murder, noting that the present trend is at least one murder each year.

This concern will be a central focus of the Territory’s first-ever Anti-Crime Summit to be held 24th-26th September 2025 at the Multi-purpose Sports Complex. Government officials, non-governmental organisations, members of the business sector, community groups, churches, and students, are expected to take part in a series of panel discussions, working sessions and other engaging activities.

The Virgin Islands is regarded as a safe and peaceful community, known for its quality of life and hospitality. However, over the past 20 to 30 years, incidents of crime have been steadily increasing. “If I could just point to one subset of this, which is domestic-related crimes, that’s up by 21 percent in the same period,” the Acting Deputy Commissioner of Police revealed. “That is a serious cause of concern.”

He said this should point to the fact that crime is on the rise and the Virgin Islands is not as safe as it was 20-30 years ago, but it is not too late to do something about it. He said this should galvanise the interest of everyone.

“We should all be concerned about crimes increasing and certain crimes becoming a permanent part of our social reality,” Mr. Davis said. “I think crime is on the rise, but it is not at a stage where it is out of control, and we need to take action now to ensure that it doesn’t get to that level”.

The theme for the upcoming Virgin Islands Anti-Crime Summit is “Our Virgin Islands: Safe Communities, Prosperous Territory”. It is being organised through the National Security Council (NSC). The objectives are to start a national conversation on crime; discuss and agree what strategies can be used to combat and reduce crime; elicit a community call to action; and contribute to the development of a comprehensive National Crime Reduction Strategy.

The national conversation on crime in the Virgin Islands, which is open to the public, begins on Wednesday, 24th September at 5:00 p.m. The Summit continues on 25th September from 9:00 a.m. with cross-sector meetings with government, non-profit organisations, and civil society. Friday, 26th September is all about the youth from the schools around the Territory as they join in the conversation on crime and recommend solutions.

The public is encouraged to participate in the activities, as we collectively seek to reduce crime in the Virgin Islands.

About:

The Government of the Virgin Islands is committed to the principles of good governance, sustainability, and community partnerships, and will continue to implement policies and initiatives that strengthen public safety, foster social cohesion, and promote prosperity across the Territory.

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