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Governor Bryan Extends State of Emergency to April 30, Stay-at-Home Order, Business Closures Remain in Effect

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS — During Monday's Government House press briefing, Governor Albert Bryan Jr. announced he is extending the State of Emergency, as well as the stay-at-home order; the closure of non-essential businesses territory-wide and limiting restaurants to take-out and pick-up orders only, through April 30 in further efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Additionally, the Governor ordered the closure of all beach restaurants, effective immediately, in an effort to curtail people gathering in groups and ignoring the call for social distancing.

As of Monday afternoon, 180 persons have been tested, with 126 coming back negative, 30 testing positive and 24 cases still pending. Of those who tested positive, 11 are on St. Croix, 17 are on St. Thomas and two are on St. John.

"We have been fortunate, but we have been vigilant thus far," Governor Bryan said. "But don't be lulled into a false sense of security that we will be exempt from this virus. We will not be exempt from this virus."

Once again, Governor Bryan stressed the importance of complying with social distancing guidelines and staying at home unless it is absolutely necessary to go out as the best way to "flatten the curve" and stop the spread of COVID-19, also known as Coronavirus.

He also specifically called out convenience stores and gas stations that are not taking measures to keep people from congregating and gathering in groups.

"Let me warn you, or promise you, any establishment found in violation of this statute will be subject to closure and/or permanent revocation of said business license. This is not a joke,"

Governor Bryan said. “We are wasting valuable resources in sending our officers out there to curtail this type of activity. If we catch you, we’re going to shut you down.”

Governor Bryan also said his Administration already has begun preparations to issue the federal stimulus funds, which he estimated at $40 million to $50 million, as soon as they become available from the U.S. Treasury.

“But this will not be enough. We have a long and treacherous road ahead,” Governor Bryan said. “We are fighting this virus two disasters at a time – one on the health care front and one on the economic front.”

Governor Bryan’s next update on the Territory’s Response to the COVID-19 virus is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday.

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