

3rd June, 2013

PRESS RELEASE:

April 2013 Criminal Assizes:

Goal Delivery was done on Monday 3rd June, 2013 by Justice Brassington Reynolds bringing to an end the Demerara April 2013 Criminal Assizes. This Assizes was presided over by three judges, Justice Navindra Singh, Justice James Bovell-Drakes and Justice Brassington Reynolds. A total of 219 cases were listed to be heard during this Assizes which commenced on Tuesday April 2, 2012.

Twelve (12) matters were disposed of during the Demerara April 2013 Assizes in the High Court of Demerara. There were ten (10) cases for the offence of Murder, one (1) for the offence of Rape, and one (1) for the offence of Incest.

Justice Navindra Singh disposed of eight (8) cases which were for the offences of Murder, Rape and Incest in which the following verdicts were reached:

1. One (1) Guilty
2. One (1) Hung jury
3. Five (5) Not Guilty
4. One (1) Dismissed for insufficient evidence

Justice James Bovell-Drakes completed one (1) case for the offence of Murder and the verdict was not guilty. While Justice Brassington Reynolds completed four (4) cases for the offence of Murder in which the following verdicts were reached:

1. Two (2) Guilty
2. One (1) Formally Discharged due to insufficient evidence
3. One (1) Not Guilty

During this time the Essequibo February Criminal Assizes which commenced on Tuesday 19th February, 2013 and continued during April and May, concluded on Tuesday 20th May, 2013. Twenty-two (22) cases were listed for trial during this session which was presided over by Justice Franklin Holder.

During this period two cases were disposed of, but Justice Holder completed one (1) matter while the other matter was nolle prosequi by the DPP.

The one case completed is for the offence of Attempted Murder in which the accused was found guilty and sentenced to ten years imprisonment.

The DPP nolle prosequi one (1) matter for the offence of Rape in pursuant of the 2013 Amendment of the Sexual Offences Act 2010. The DPP discontinued the charge so that this matter can have the benefit of the Amendment.

At present the Essequibo May 2013 Criminal Assizes is in progress. This Assizes was opened on the 21st May 2013 and a Murder trial is being heard.

At the same time Madam Justice Dawn Gregory sat in the Berbice February Assizes which opened on Tuesday February 5, 2013. Forty-five (45) cases were listed for trial during this session. During the months of April and May three matters received attention while five matters were nolle prosequi by the DPP for different reasons. This session will continue until June 17, 2013.

In the three matters, one of the accused was found guilty by the jury for the lesser offence of Manslaughter and was sentenced to ten years imprisonment while the accused in the second matter for the offence of Carnal Knowledge of a Girl Under 15 Years was ordered to face a re-trial after a hung jury was returned.

In the third matter for the offence of Murder, the accused was freed after the jury returned a unanimous verdict of not guilty of Murder and of the lesser offence of Manslaughter. The five matters nolle prosequi by the DPP were for the offences of Murder, Sexual Activity with a Child Family Member, Rape, Attempt to Commit Murder and Carnal Knowledge.

In two separate cases for the offences of Murder and Attempted Murder, the matters were nolle prosequi because the accused persons died while awaiting trial. The other three matters were nolle prosequi because the virtual complainants indicated that they no longer wished to proceed with these matters.

The Demerara June 2013 Criminal Assizes opens on Tuesday 4th June, 2013. There are 219 cases listed to be heard during the Session before Justice Navindra Singh and Justice Brassington Reynolds.

The Essequibo Assizes continues before Justice Franklin Holder and the next Berbice Assizes will start on Tuesday June 18, 2013 before Justice Dawn Gregory.