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PRESS RELEASE

Goal delivery was done by Justice Franklyn Holder on September 28, 2012, bringing to an end the Demerara June 2012 Criminal Assizes.

ONLY six (6) trials were done during the June Assizes which commenced on June 5, 2012. An initial 234 cases were listed to be heard before Madam Justice Roxanne George and Justice Franklin Holder who both presided during the June Assizes.

Three (3) cases were heard by Justice George, two (2) for the offence of murder and one (1) for rape while another two (2) murder and one (1) carnal knowledge by Justice Holder.

In one of the murder trials, Justice George upheld a “no case submission” by Defence Counsel Richardson and directed the jury to return a formal verdict of not guilty. The State has appealed the decision by Madam Justice George to uphold the no-case submission. The accused was placed on self recognizance pending the appeal.

In the second murder trial, the accused pleaded guilty to the lesser offence of manslaughter and was sentenced to eight (8) years imprisonment.

In the rape matter, the jury returned an 11 to 1 majority verdict of not guilty in favour of the accused.

In Justice Holder's court, 3 trials were done, 2 for the offence of murder and one for the offence of carnal knowledge. In the two murder cases the trial judge upheld no-case submissions and directed the jury to return a formal verdict of not guilty while in the carnal knowledge matter, the trial judge ordered a retrial after a hung jury was returned.

Three (3) matters were nolle prosequi by the DPP, one for the offence of rape in which the victim did not wish to proceed. In the two other matters, one for manslaughter and another for rape, both of the accused died. The 3 matters that were nolle prosequi brought a total number of 9 cases to be disposed of during the June Assizes out of 234 listed to be heard.

In the Berbice June 2012 Criminal Assizes there were 43 cases listed for hearing by Justice James Bovell-Drakes. Six (6) matters were completed, 3 for murder, 1 for manslaughter, 1 for Carnal Knowledge, and 1 for abduction.

In the carnal knowledge case, the jury returned with an 11 to 1 not guilty verdict in favour of the accused. For the first murder trial conducted, the jury returned a unanimous verdict of guilty for both accused; in the second murder case, a retrial was ordered by the trial judge as a result of a hung jury while in the third murder case, the accused pleaded guilty to the lesser offence of manslaughter and was sentenced to 21 years imprisonment by the trial judge. The jury in the manslaughter case returned a unanimous verdict of not guilty for the accused.

In the abduction case, the accused was found guilty and had a two-year suspended jail sentence imposed on him.

Goal delivery was also done for the Berbice Criminal Assizes by Justice Bovell-Drakes on Tuesday September 25, 2012. A total of 49 cases are listed to be heard during the October Assizes which will open on Tuesday October 16, with Madam Justice Roxanne George.

Meanwhile, for the Essequibo May 2012 Assizes, 18 cases were listed but only one (1) case was heard for the offence of murder in which the accused pleaded guilty to the lesser offence of manslaughter and was sentenced to twenty (20) years imprisonment by Justice Winston Patterson. Justice Patterson subsequently retired from the Bench and no judge has since been assigned to the Essequibo Criminal Assizes which is schedule to open on Tuesday October 23 with 22 matters listed to be heard.

The Demerara October 2012 Criminal Assizes which commenced on Tuesday October 2 has listed 240 cases to be heard and is being presided over by Justice James Bovell-Drakes and Madam Justice Diana Insanally.

The matters listed include (76) murder, (11) attempted murder, (28) manslaughter, (19) wounding with intent, (6) unlawful wounding, (7) robbery under arms, (1) receiving stolen property, (2) break and enter and larceny, (4) causing grievous bodily harm, (1) malicious damage to property, (2) discharging loaded firearm, (2) unlawful possession of firearm, (1) possession of ammunition without licence, (2) common assault, (4) causing grievous bodily harm with intent to murder, (2) throwing noxious substances with intent, (74) carnal knowledge (of girls under 15 and 16 years), (40) rape, (17) buggery, (4) abduction, (7) indecent assault, (5) inflicting/assault causing actual bodily harm, (4) attempt to commit a felony, (8) incest, (2) assault, (1) larceny from person, (1) attempt to commit a misdemeanour, (1) possession for the purpose of trafficking, (2) trafficking in narcotics substance, (4) causing death by dangerous driving, (1) obtaining money by false pretence, (1) setting fire in dwelling house, (1) fraudulent conversion, (1) forgery, (1) larceny in dwelling house.