

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **OCTOBER 2011 Criminal Assizes.**

Gaol Delivery was done by Madame Justice Dawn Gregory on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2012 bringing to an end the Demerara October 2011 Criminal Assizes. Two judges, Justice Winston Patterson and Madam Justice Dawn Gregory, sat during the Demerara October 2011 Assizes to hear 206 matters. Each Judge had a list of 103 matters for hearing. Six matters were tried during this Demerara October 2011 Assizes in the High Court of Demerara.

Three trials were done by Justice Winston Patterson. A unanimous verdict of not guilty was returned by the Jury for two of these matters which were for the offences of Murder and Carnal Knowledge of girl under fifteen years. In the third matter which was also for the offence of Murder there was a Hung Jury and therefore this case will have to be done over.

Madam Justice Dawn Gregory also completed three matters which were presented before her. In one of the matters which was for the offence of Attempt to commit Murder the Jury returned a verdict of guilty and the accused was sentenced to twelve years imprisonment minus the time served since 2007 to 2011. In the other two matters which were for the offence of Murder the Jury returned a unanimous verdict of not guilty.

Of these six cases done for this Assizes there was one conviction despite there being strong evidence in the other five cases.

The DPP nolle prosequi five matters which were for the offences of Wounding with Intent, Carnal Knowledge, Attempted Murder, Rape and Causing Death by Dangerous Driving. The Wounding with Intent case was nolle prosequi because the victim died and Carnal Knowledge case because the victim migrated. In the Attempted Murder case the accused died and in the other two matters none of the witnesses attended court to testify when they were set. This brought a total of ten matters being completed and one matter to be retried in the High Court of Demerara.

At the same time Criminal Assizes were also being heard in the Counties of Essequibo and Berbice. During this time Madam Justice Roxane George sat as the judge in Berbice and Justice Bovell-Drakes sat in Essequibo.

There were fifteen cases listed for hearing before Justice Bovell-Drakes during the Essequibo October 2011 Criminal Assizes and one case for the offence of Manslaughter was completed. The verdict was not guilty.

During the same time the Berbice October 2011 Assizes was in progress and Madam Justice Roxane George completed three trials from a list of thirty four cases. One of the matters completed was for the offence of Murder and the accused pleaded guilty to the lesser count of Manslaughter. The accused was sentenced to eighteen years imprisonment. In the other two cases which was for the offences of Buggery and Indecent Assault, and Carnal Knowledge the jury returned not guilty verdicts for all counts in both cases.

During the year 2011 sixty one cases received attention. Fifty three cases were presented in court and eight were nolle prosequi by the DPP. Of these forty were from the Demerara Assizes, 15 from the Berbice Assizes and 6 matters from the Essequibo Sessions.

There were thirty one cases for the offence of Murder, two cases for Manslaughter, one case for incest, five cases for Rape, one case for Robbery under Arms, three cases for Causing Grievous Bodily Harm, twelve cases for Carnal Knowledge, one case for Buggery, three cases for Attempt to commit Murder, one case for Wounding with intent and one case for Causing Death by Dangerous Driving.

The January 2012 Assizes for Demerara will be opened on the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2012. There are 226 cases listed to be heard during the Session. Then the February Assizes for Berbice will be opened on the 7<sup>th</sup> February 2012 and the Essequibo Assizes on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2012.