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[2022] EWCA Crim 1718 IN THE COURT OF APPEAL CRIMINAL DIVISION

202100996/B2-202200767/B2



Royal Courts of Justice Strand London WC2A 2LL

Friday 2 December 2022

Before:

## LADY JUSTICE MACUR DBE

## MR JUSTICE HOLGATE

## SIR NICHOLAS BLAKE

REX V MOHAMMED SAGEER OMAR RAMZAN

Computer Aided Transcript of Epig Europe Ltd. Lower Ground, 18-22 Furnival Street, London EC4A 1JS Tel No: 020 7404 1400; Email: rcj@epiqglobal.co.uk (Official Shorthand Writers to the Court)

MR J SCOBIE KC & MR T FORTE appeared on behalf of the Applicant Sageer. MR J STURMAN KC & MR QURESHI appeared on behalf of the Applicant Ramzan. MR A KEELING KC appeared on behalf of the Crown.

# JUDGMENT

- LADY JUSTICE MACUR: On 11 February 2021 Omar Ramzan and Mohammed Sageer were each convicted of one offence of murder and one offence of manslaughter. On 12 March 2021 Omar Ramzan was sentenced to a total of life imprisonment with a minimum term of 22 years less time spent on remand. Mohammed Sageer was sentenced to life imprisonment with a minimum term of 20 years less time spent on remand. They both received a concurrent sentence of 9 years for the offence of manslaughter.
- 2. Mohammed Sageer appeals against his sentence by leave of the single judge. He applies for an extension of time in which to renew his application for leave to appeal against conviction. Omar Ramzan applies for an extension of time in which to apply for leave to appeal against his sentence and renews his application for leave to appeal against conviction after refusal by the single judge.

## The Facts

- 3. Saghawat Ramzan and his son, Omar Ramzan lived at 92 Pensnett Road in Brierley Hill. Wazeem Ramzan, brother of Saghawat, lived at 100 Pensnett Road. No 94 Pensnett Road was owned by the Ramzan family. No 94 housed a total of 268 cannabis plants; a Vietnamese gardener had been installed. There was the potential for a large number of lucrative harvests.
- 4. Saghawat Ramzan had an armoury of weapons in No 92 which included a large Panther crossbow, a smaller crossbow, a sword, knives and a knuckleduster. He was directly involved in the operation and controlled the security in relation to No 94. There was an elaborate system of CCTV cameras covering No 94 linked to his iPad.

- 5. The prosecution case relied substantially upon evidence that was downloaded from that same CCTV from which a storyboard was prepared.
- 6. Shortly before 3.30 am on 20 February raiders started gathering. About 17 people arrived in six vehicles. They had a sledgehammer and a crowbar with them. Saghawat Ramzan became aware of what was happening. He immediately alerted Wazeem Ramzan. He woke Omar Ramzan and they went outside armed with weapons.
- 7. Saghawat Ramzan had a large crossbow and a Samurai sword. Omar Ramzan had a large kitchen knife. Saghawat Ramzan fired the crossbow at one of the intruders who was standing by the shed at the end of the garden and missed him by a matter of inches. Omar and Saghawat Ramzan then chased the raiders; both of them possessed weapons.
- 8. Wazeem Ramzan appeared within a few minutes and together with Omar Ramzan went to the rear of No 94 in order, apparently, to 'flush out' the raiders. This caused the raiders including Khuzaimah Douglas to exit onto the side street through a window which they had smashed to gain entry to No 94.
- 9. Saghawat Ramzan, Omar Ramzan and Wazeem Ramzan then went to the front of the property. Wazeem Ramzan caught and rugby tackled Khuzaimah Douglas to the ground and from that point appears from the CCTV evidence to have had control of him, holding him in a headlock. Omar Ramzan kicked and stamped on him whilst Wazeem Ramzan held him. Saghawat Ramzan armed himself with a large crossbow and returned to the

scene.

- 10. Mohammed Sageer arrived by car. He would have seen Saghawat Ramzan and Omar Ramzan surrounding Khuzaimah Douglas, who was still on the ground being held by Wazeem Ramzan. Saghawat Ramzan was holding the large crossbow which was loaded and being pointed in Khuzaimah Douglas's direction. Immediately Mohammed Sageer proceeded to kick Khuzaimah Douglas who was still on the ground. Saghawat Ramzan, at close range, aimed and shot a crossbow bolt at Khuzaimah Douglas but the bolt hit Wazeem Ramzan. He died as a result of that injury. Saghawat Ramzan was convicted of his murder, on the basis of transferred malice; the bolt was intended for Khuzaimah Douglas.
- 11. Omar Ramzan and Mohammed Sageer restrained Khuzaimah Douglas and punched him repeatedly. Saghawat Ramzan reloaded the crossbow and shot at Khuzaimah Douglas, for a second time causing his fatal injury. Khuzaimah Douglas died not far from that scene.
- 12. Whilst Saghawat Ramzan cleared away the weapons Omar Ramzan and Mohammed Sageer helped Wazeem Ramzan into Mohammed Sageer's car and drove him to hospital. Police attended at the hospital. Mohammed Sageer said he had been called and when he arrived at the location Wazeem Ramzan was on the floor and not breathing. He made no reference to Khuzaimah Douglas.
- 13. Omar Ramzan's case was that he had no knowledge of the cannabis operation next door

to his father's home. He had been awoken by a noise outside, saw intruders and heard his father run downstairs. He followed his father outside to protect the property and to help his father, acknowledging that he had first armed himself with a knife from the kitchen. He saw his father fire the large crossbow to frighten off an intruder at the end of the garden, he joined his uncle Wazeem Ramzan in going to the rear of the property but retreated because of the number of intruders. He went to the front armed with a small crossbow to deter the raiders. He saw Wazeem Ramzan grappling with Khuzaimah Douglas on the ground. A number of vehicles went by and one of them (a Toyota Yaris) reversed towards them. He became aware that his father was there with the large crossbow. He stamped on and punched Khuzaimah Douglas to defend Wazeem Ramzan. He became aware that Wazeem Ramzan had been shot with a crossbow bolt. He restrained Khuzaimah Douglas, believing he was still a threat to Wazeem Ramzan. He was not aware that Khuzaimah Douglas had been shot with a crossbow. He did not anticipate that his father would fire the crossbow at Khuzaimah Douglas.

- 14. Mohammed Sageer did not give evidence. His case was that he had not done anything which assisted or encouraged Saghawat Ramzan to shoot Khuzaimah Douglas, nor did he intend to assist or encourage him to do so by his presence. Having received a call for help from Wazeem Ramzan everything that he did was in lawful defence of Wazeem Ramzan.
- 15. The issues for the jury were the participation of Omar Ramzan and Mohammed Sageer in the attack upon Khuzaimah Douglas and whether they acted in defence of themselves or another, and whether they were rightly indicted in respect of the murder of Wazeem

Ramzan, by reason of transferred malice.

- 16. They were convicted of manslaughter in relation to the unlawful killing of Wazeem Ramzan but the murder of Khuzaimah Douglas.
- 17. Mr Sturman KC and Mr Scobie KC appear on behalf of Omar Ramzan and Mohammed Sageer respectively. They did not appear at the trial. They are assisted, in the case of Mr Sturman by Mr Qureshi and in the case of Mr Scobie KC by Mr Forte. Both junior counsel did appear below.
- 18. In view of the criticisms raised in the grounds of appeal, Mr Phillip Bradley KC, who appeared on behalf of Omar Ramzan at trial, was contacted in the course of <u>McCook</u> enquiries. He prepared a statement which has been lodged with the Court and reads, so far as relevant, as follows:

"I have been asked to comment as to why no objection was taken to the Judge's interventions. My observations are as follows:

During trial, I was conscious of the Judge's interventions.

At the time I made the judgment call not to object to the Judge's interventions because as paragraph 25 of the Perfected Grounds make clear, many of them were rooted in his settled view that, rather than struggling with Wazeem Ramzan, Mr Douglas was attempting to escape. Any challenge to that would have inevitably resulted in the Judge repeating his view and providing the reasons for it. That decision (as with any other in the case) was purely motivated by my duty to represent Omar Ramzan's best interests.

When drafting the Perfected Grounds, I carefully reviewed the Judge's interventions and, on reflection (and particularly given their number) felt that I should have intervened.

I make clear that I would have made this concession had I continued to have

conduct of Omar Ramzan's appeal."

- 19. Mr Sturman KC, who appears before us on behalf of Omar Ramzan, makes clear that he does not aim any criticism against trial counsel. His submission is that regardless Counsel's lack of objection in the court below, if this Court comes to the conclusion that the interventions of the judge are such as to render the trial of Omar Ramzan unfair it should not only to grant permission to appeal but thereafter allow the appeal and quash the conviction.
- 20. The sole ground of appeal against conviction concerns what are said to be inappropriate judicial interventions. It is submitted that their nature and frequency are such to taint the trial environment to the detriment of a fair trial process and, in those circumstances, regardless of the weight of the evidence against the two applicants, the trial was irrevocably compromised.
- 21. In support of those submissions, a schedule of interventions and comments taken from transcripts of evidence has been produced which demonstrates how the judge "undermined" Omar Ramzan's evidence by questioning, repeated and persistent interruption and embarking upon what has been described as a "double act" with prosecution counsel. In short, the judge descended into the arena, asking questions that should properly be left to the prosecution to ask. The judge was thereby enabled to comment upon the evidence and indicate his view of it.
- 22. We are grateful to Mr Sturman KC who has referred us to the relevant entries within the schedule. He has made realistic concessions that some of the critique is perhaps

misplaced and miscategorised but nevertheless draws our attention to some 20 or more examples during the two days during which Omar Ramzan gave evidence before the jury when the judge is said to "assist the prosecution" or otherwise express incredulity at Omar Ramzan's responses.

- 23. Mr Scobie KC rides on Omar Ramzan's coat tails. Mohammed Sageer did not give evidence at trial. However, Mr Scobie KC submits that if we were to find that the trial in relation to Omar Ramzan to be unfair by reason of the interventions, then necessarily we must extend that to the co-defendant, Mohammed Sageer.
- 24. We see the force in that submission if we were minded to accept the submissions in relation to Omar Ramzan. Logically, if the trial process has been so tainted in respect of one of the secondary parties, then certainly that must taint the trial in relation to the other.
- 25. Mr Scobie KC goes further than Mr Sturman KC in criticising the judge, by suggesting that he had not only entered into the arena but took liberty in sarcastic comment and, as he describes it "dancing" with the applicant Omar Ramzan. In these circumstances it is not sufficient to say that Omar Ramzan was capable of withstanding such questioning and, as some examples demonstrate, making good response.
- 26. We have read the whole schedule with care and have considered it alongside the applicant's written submissions. Mr Sturman KC and Mr Scobie KC have been able therefore to limit their oral submissions to examples of the types of intervention they criticise.

## 27. Mr Sturman KC cites <u>R v Perren</u> [2009] EWCA Crim 348 in support in which Toulson

LJ (as he then was), stated:

"... it is for the prosecution to cross-examine, not for the judge. The ... right time for the prosecution to cross-examine is after a witness has given his evidence in-chief. It would be unthinkable for prosecuting counsel to jump up in the middle of a witness' evidence in-chief and seek to conduct some hostile cross-examination."

28. He continued in paragraphs 35 and 36:

"The appellant's story may have been highly improbable, but he was entitled to explain it to the jury without being subjected to sniper fire in the course of doing so. The potential for injustice is that if the jury, at the very time when they are listening to the witness giving his narrative account of events, do so to the accompaniment of questions from the Bench indicating to anybody with common sense that the judge does not believe a word of it, this may affect the mind of the jury as they listen to the account.

We have been driven in this case to the regretful conclusion that the nature and extent of the interventions over the three days in which the appellant gave his evidence deprived him of the opportunity of having his evidence considered by the jury in the way that he was entitled. The conclusion from that is that we do not consider that he received the quality of fair trial to which he was entitled."

29. Mr Sturman KC draws our attention in particular to that part of the judgment which

states:

"... if the court is driven to the conclusion that the defendant has not had a fair trial, when the matter is looked at in the round, the natural conclusion will be that the verdict is unsafe because our system of criminal justice is dependent upon the fundamental principle of the provision of a fair trial. To allow an appeal in such circumstances, even though the evidence for the prosecution may have been exceedingly strong, is not to allow an appeal on a technicality, but to allow it upon a fundamental principle which underlines our criminal justice system."

- 30. Evaluating the effect of the interventions and the context of the trial on the whole, Mr Perren's conviction was quashed.
- 31. Mr Keeling KC, on behalf of the respondent prosecution, takes issue that the judge's interventions were, either individually or cumulatively, improper. He submits that we should have regard to context. The jury had previously viewed CCTV evidence, a storyboard had been prepared and a police officer had given extensive evidence as to what could be seen during various stills from the camera footage. Therefore, when the judge asked questions, often in terms of what could be seen on the CCTV, he was not introducing evidence into the case. However, he rightly concedes that if we come to the conclusion that the nature of the interventions were such as to drive us to the conclusion that the seen upended then, regardless of the strength of the evidence against these two applicants, their convictions must be set aside.
- 32. However, the majority of the interventions took place in cross-examination; only two of the interventions in the schedule took place during examination-in-chief. Neither of them was substantive. Omar Ramzan had been given the opportunity to give a narrative account and to put his case before the jury without intervention.
- 33. There was no informed criticism of the tone in which the judge made the interventions. Mr Scobie KC did so relying upon the terminology in the transcripts rather than from his

personal experience. In this regard we should note that no objection was taken at the time by King's Counsel on behalf of Omar Ramzan, despite the fact that there was ample opportunity for junior and King's Counsel to confer during any of the several breaks taken to clean the court during the Covid pandemic. Any objections could have been made in the absence of the jury who were given frequent breaks from the courtroom to assist in cleaning. Regardless of Mr Bradley's statement that, whilst on reflection he should have raised those objections, this was experienced trial counsel who, at the time of obviously had been of the view promoted by leading counsel now representing Omar Ramzan and Mohammed Sageer.

- 34. No criticism is made of the judge's summing-up in which the judge set out the defence case. This is a significant part of the trial process which should be seen as a whole. Once that review takes place, we can be left in no doubt that the convictions in relation to each of these applicants is safe.
- 35. We have taxed Mr Keeling with answering certain of the specific criticisms made of certain interventions as have been described as 'egregious' or 'certainly infelicitous'. In response he has referred us to the full transcripts of evidence, of which there are very many pages, and to place those criticised interventions into context.

#### Discussion

36. We consider that Mr Sturman KC makes a realistic concession that the sole basis of the application must be that Omar Ramzan was denied his fair trial; there was ample

evidence against him from the CCTV evidence obtained from the equipment installed by Omar Ramzan's own father. We note that Mr Bradley KC sought clarification regarding movement of cars and the number of raiders, but no other challenge was made to the CCTV evidence.

- 37. Omar Ramzan gave evidence over the course of two days. The transcripts of his evidence are extensive and form the context against which we must analyse the interventions of the judge.
- 38. The preparation of the schedule of asserted improper judicial interventions has greatly assisted our task. The schedule contains 28 entries, some of which are 'part and parcel' of one line of enquiry by the judge regarding individual topics. Some are incorrectly described.
- 39. We accept Mr Sturman KC's submission that some of the interventions were unnecessary and unfortunate. We do not find that the judge descended into sarcasm, but we are satisfied that on occasion some of his comments drawing attention to unchallenged evidence already before the jury, may indicate his own view of the evidence. Although Mr Sturman KC has not used the terminology, "tag match", we agree that there are occasions which do convey that impression.
- 40. However, we do not accept the same description to attach to each and every entry in the schedule and of those that we do consider to be 'unnecessary and unfortunate', we have regard to the larger picture. We accept Mr Keeling's submissions that the interventions

should not be seen in isolation. The schedule may by 'selective' pruning give the appearance of a far more interventionist approach than was actually so.

- 41. We bear in mind that these interventions were predominantly during the course of cross-examination. We are satisfied that the applicant Omar Ramzan was able, without any interruption from the judge, to give his narrative account in full. We regard some of the questions of the judge during cross-examination to be appropriate.
- 42. We are not satisfied that the trial environment was so compromised as to reach the high benchmark which must be demonstrated to establish this trial was unfair. We are corroborated in that view by reference to the summing-up which was fair and measured. Specifically, we note that the direction to the jury on the respective roles of judge and jury was given in full and in orthodox and explicit terms. In those circumstances, we may be satisfied that the jury approached the evidence in a fair and even-handed manner.
- 43. We dismiss the application for permission to appeal against conviction in the case of Omar Ramzan.
- 44. There is no additional ground of appeal raised by Mohammed Sageer. His application for permission to appeal against conviction is dismissed. We need not consider his application for extension of time in which to make the application.

#### Sentence

45. The sentence of Omar Ramzan was referred to the Court by the single judge on the basis

that he gave leave to Mohammed Sageer to appeal against his sentence.

- 46. Mohammed Sageer's appeal against sentence proceeds on the basis that the trial judge categorised the offence to fall within schedule 21, paragraph 4 of the Sentencing Code, that gives a 25-year starting point, rather than paragraph 5 which gives a 15-year starting point. That is, the judge had failed to differentiate Mohammed Sageer's case from those present and with weapons already at the scene at the time of his arrival. There is no evidence that he brought a weapon to the scene, nor that, until he arrived at the scene, he would be aware that weapons were present and were intended to be used.
- 47. It is established by the chronology of events that Mohammed Sageer's arrival was after the first crossbow bolt was fired against an intruder by Saghawat Ramzan, and also that Mohammed Sageer's presence at the scene was less than 2 minutes prior to the fatal incidents taking place. Mohammed Sagger prays in aid the jury's verdict in relation to the death of Wazeem Ramzan to show that his necessary intent to found the conviction for murder would have been very short lived indeed.
- 48. Mr Sturman KC, upon review of the sentencing remarks concerning Omar Ramzan, also considered there to be an arguable ground of appeal against sentence and consequently made an application for permission to appeal sentence and an extension of time in which to do so. The reason for the delay is the change of representation. In the circumstances we look at the merits of the substantive applications.
- 49. The judge in his sentencing remarks said:

"This was, on any view, a truly appalling incident of considered violence by all three of you involving a lethal weapon to protect a criminal enterprise by exacting retribution and seeking to deter others, all this occurring on a public street in the early hours of the morning. Whilst I cannot be sure that you intended to kill, each of you certainly intended to cause extremely serious injuries. This is one of those cases where there is precious little difference between the different intents. Your actions, in fact, as I have said, caused the deaths of two people. Khuzaimah Douglas and Waseem Ramzan."

- 50. Subsequently he indicated that he was satisfied that all three of the defendants, Omar Ramzan, Mohammed Sageer and Saghawat Ramzan, were involved in cannabis production and stood to gain either directly or indirectly from it. Although Omar Ramzan, may not have been involved in the day-to-day running of the operation, the judge was satisfied that he was certainly aware of it and stood to benefit indirectly as a member of the family operation. He was ready and available to protect it should the need arise.
- 51. Mohammed Sageer was a good friend of Wazeem Ramzan and not only knew of the existence of cannabis but had some involvement in it and in that way stood to benefit, as evidence from his mobile phone made clear. The judge considered that it was no coincidence that Mohammed Sageer was on the scene within 4 minutes of having been summoned by Wazeem Ramzan and had immediately played an active and violent part in the assaults, deliberately aimed at seeking retribution. It was nonsense to suggest that Mohammed Sageer was there to protect Wazeem Ramzan.
- 52. The judge found that Saghawat Ramzan and Omar Ramzan were surrounding Khuzaimah

Douglas when Mohammed Sageer came upon that scene and he could not have failed to see Saghawat Ramzan standing over Khuzaimah Douglas holding the large crossbow which was loaded and aimed. At that stage it must have been clear to Mohammed Sageer that Saghawat Ramzan had brought the weapon to the scene and intended to have it available as a weapon and might use it. Mohammed Sageer had, without asking any questions, kicked Khuzaimah Douglas who was defenceless and being held on the ground.

- 53. Saghawat Ramzan had brought the crossbow to the scene. Omar Ramzan and Mohammed Sageer had each intended violent retribution to Khuzaimah Douglas for his part in the raid on the cannabis operation; each had seen Saghawat Ramzan armed with a crossbow and knew that he might use it. Omar Ramzan, knew that Saghawat Ramzan had already shot at the intruder in the garden and despite this he had stamped, kicked and restrained Khuzaimah Douglas, as did subsequently Mohammed Sageer. In that way both had assisted or encouraged Saghawat Ramzan and intended to do so in what proved to be the fatal shot.
- 54. Regarding the manslaughter convictions, the judge was satisfied that the jury were satisfied that at the time that Wazeem Ramzan was shot that there was an intention to cause really serious harm to another. They were therefore to be sentenced for manslaughter. There was a distinction to be drawn between the death of Wazeem Ramzan and Khuzaimah Douglas so far as the two secondary participants were concerned. The judge noted Omar Ramzan's age at the time of the offence (being 23) and commented, as Mr Sturman reminds us today:

"It is truly a tragedy that you have lost everything for which you worked very hard. You obviously had a very impressive academic career, doing extremely well in your degree and had started to qualify as an accountant with a leading firm. Clearly, you have lost much."

55. He went on to say this however:

"But this was no, sort of, momentary loss of judgment; you went out armed with a knife, knowing full well of the cannabis operation and the role that you were expected to play and which you then played fully and enthusiastically in supporting your father. You even then armed yourself with the smaller crossbow and you are seen to repeatedly stamp, kick, punch and restrain Khuzaimah Douglas in the way that has been described. Indeed, on the jury's verdict you clearly used your intelligence to give a false account to them."

- 56. There was no question but that the case fell within paragraph 4 of schedule 21 as interpreted in the case of <u>R v Mirza</u> [2020] EWCA Crim 1629 at [9]. The starting point was 25 years; the aggravation was the physical suffering caused but the starting point was reduced to reflect Omar Ramzan's lesser culpability than in the case of his father.
- 57. The judge was satisfied that Mohammed Sageer had been told by Wazeem Ramzan what was going on, and that he therefore arrived intending to cause violence to the raiders and to protect the cannabis. Since he had seen Saghawat Ramzan standing over Khuzaimah Douglas holding the large powerful crossbow and aiming it towards him, it must have been apparent to him that this weapon had been brought to the scene and was one which Saghawat Ramzan intended to be available to use as a weapon. The circumstances fell square within the case of <u>*R v Mirza*</u> at paragraph 9 which demanded a starting point of 25

years. However, he discounted the starting point to reflect the secondary role, subject to the aggravating feature that Mohammed Sageer had himself inflicted physical violence upon Khuzaimah Douglas. The judge took note of his family circumstances and also the loss of his friend (Wazeem Ramzan) during the course of the affray.

- 58. Mr Scobie KC submits that the chronology of events demonstrate that Mohammed Sageer was last to the scene and that he had not observed the first firing of the crossbow against an intruder towards the bottom of the garden. Consequently, there should be a greater differential between him and Omar Ramzan who was present throughout. The difference of 2 years is not sufficient to reflect that nor otherwise Mohammed Sageer's personal mitigation.
- 59. Mr Sturman KC places great emphasis upon Omar Ramzan's personal mitigation and blighted burgeoning professional career.

#### **Our Analysis**

- 60. Mr Sturman KC and Mr Scobie KC concede that the judge was entitled to make the findings he did. The judge was sentencing both applicants for an offence of murder and another associated offence of manslaughter. The judge rightly differentiated between the principal and secondary roles.
- 61. But Omar Ramzan was not only aware of his father's possession of several lethal weapons and seen him fire a cross bow at one of the intruders, but he himself also carried a knife at one stage and then replaced it with a crossbow. He and Mohammed Sageer

participated in the physical violence against Khuzaimah Douglas.

- 62. Nevertheless, we accept Mr Scobie KC's submission that the judge was wrong to categorise Mohammed Sageer's case in the light of *Mirza*. It is not established that he brought a weapon to the scene, nor can it be assumed that he knew that they would be in use when he arrived there.
- 63. Mr Keeling makes the realistic concession that this was not a <u>Mirza</u> case but rather that <u>R</u> <u>v Kelly</u> [2012] 1 Cr App R 56 is on point. That is, schedule 21 paragraph 4 does not apply to those convicted as members of a joint enterprise if they do not take, or know of a weapon taken to, the scene. However, the starting point of 15 years indicated by Schedule 21, paragraph 5, may nevertheless be increased in circumstances in which an offender becomes aware of the use of a weapon and continues to participate in the attack in any event.
- 64. It is clear that the correct starting point for the offence of murder for Omar Ramzan was25 years and for Mohammed Sageer it was 15 years.
- 65. Omar Ramzan's sentence has obviously been reduced from the starting point. His potent personal mitigation counts for little in the circumstances. However, the judge rightly reduced the starting point of 25 years to reflect his secondary participation and, the dominant adverse influence of father, Saghawat Ramzan in the cannabis farm enterprise.
- 66. We consider that the reduction made from the starting point was sufficient. Accordingly,

his application for permission to appeal against sentence is refused. The application for an extension of time falls away.

- 67. Mohammed Sageer's appeal against sentence is rightly brought on the basis that the judge erred in taking the wrong starting point but must fail in the ultimate result. As indicated above, personal mitigation counts for very little in circumstances such as these. Mohammed Sageer joined in inflicting violence against Khuzaimah Douglas who was then at the point of a crossbow bolt. The starting point of 15 years is rightly increased to 20 years in the circumstances of and reason for his participation as found by the judge.
- 68. His appeal against sentence is dismissed.

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