

Vybz Kartel sentenced to life

Dancehall artiste, Vybz Kartel, has been sentenced to life in prison for the murder of Clive 'Lizard' Williams.

Kartel, whose real name is Adidja Palmer, is to serve 35 years before he becomes eligible for parole. He and the three other men convicted for Lizard's murder were each given life sentences a short while ago by Justice Lennox Campbell.

Adidja Palmer – LIFE IN PRISON (35 years before eligible for parole)
Shawn 'Shawn Storm' Campbell – LIFE IN PRISON (25 years before eligible for parole)
Kahira Jones – LIFE IN PRISON (25 years before eligible for parole)
Andre St John – LIFE IN PRISON (30 years before eligible for parole)

Justice Campbell handed down the sentences after hearing impassioned pleas for leniency from lawyers representing the men.

On March 13, after 65 days of trial, a jury returned a ten to one guilty verdict.

On that same day, a fourth co-accused, Shane Williams was freed by the jury.

The defence has indicated that it will be appealing the verdict.

It has cited discrepancies, inconsistencies, missing data, and mismanagement in the collection of evidence as well as the integrity of the evidence.

Kartel's attorney, Tom Tavares-Finson says the defence has a fundamental issue with the decision of the trial judge to permit certain phone evidence, given the admission by the police that the instruments were being used after they were taken into their custody.

He says it is very significant that since the matter was heard, the Director of Public Prosecutions has ordered a change in the protocol as to how evidence is to be kept in the department.

According to the attorney, the police have also changed the protocol as to how telephones are to be kept.

Tavares-Finson said the Director of Public Prosecutions, Paula Llewellyn, has also asked prosecutor, Jeremy Taylor, to launch an investigation into the conduct of the investigators in the case.

"I am of the opinion that the department cannot investigate itself and any such investigation should be done by the Independent Commission of Investigations," Tavares-Finson said. Source: Jamaica Gleaner