



**IN THE GRAND COURT OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS  
CRIMINAL DIVISION**

**Neutral Citation Number: [2025] CIGC (Crim) 61**

**Case Number: IND. 59 of 2025 & GCS 1 of 2025**

**THE KING**

**V**

**ROMELL MILLWOOD**

**Appearances:**           **Mr. Ben Brown, Counsel for the Prosecution**  
                                  **Mr. Crister Brady, Counsel for the Defence providing written submissions and**  
                                  **Mr. Furniss at Court**

**Before:**                   **Hon. Justice Emma Peters**

**Sentence Ruling:**       **28<sup>th</sup> November 2025**

**SENTENCE RULING**

**Background**

1. The defendant falls to be sentenced today for two sets of proceedings resulting in his convictions in two trials – one in the Summary Court and the other a Judge Alone trial in the Grand Court.



2. The Grand Court trial resulted in the defendant being convicted of Wounding with Intent contrary to section 203 of the Penal Code. That incident took place on Seven Mile Beach in April of 2023.
3. The Summary Court trial resulted in the defendant being convicted of a number of offences committed in George Town in May 2025.

### **The Facts – April 2023 Wounding with Intent**

4. On the 19 April 2023 both the defendant and the victim were variously working or hustling (as Mr. Green, the victim put it) on Public Beach selling food and refreshments to tourists.
5. The victim was on the beach that morning with a friend and had just started to set up and then started to try to sell. As he was engaged with a tourist, he heard the defendant yelling. At first, he ignored him but then the defendant appeared and took his bag away. That led to a verbal exchange between the men.
6. The victim said that the defendant then said, “we don’t want no Jamaicans up this side selling” and Mr. Green responded that he did not want any trouble at which point the defendant gave him his bag back. Shortly afterwards he was approached again by the defendant who was shouting at which point he took the victim’s bag again and this time threw it in the sea. Mr. Millwood said to Mr. Green something about getting a “gun shot in his face”. At the point Green said that Millwood was “very up close right up in my face up to one foot away”.
7. At that point Green felt the first stab to his back. He turned round and was stabbed again on his left arm. Then he felt another stab to his lower back which was particularly painful. He turned around and saw the defendant who had a camouflage knife and was slashing again. He described the knife as a very sharp folding pocket knife with a 6-inch blade. The defendant then slashed the victim with the knife across the face.
8. The victim ran away, saw his friend and they got in the car and drove to hospital where the defendant was treated for his injuries of which the Court had the advantage of both medical evidence and photographs.



### **Sentencing Guidelines**

9. The relevant sentencing guidelines are contained at page 18 of the Cayman Islands Sentencing Guidelines for Violent Offences. The maximum penalty is life imprisonment.

### **Harm**

10. Harm is determined by the seriousness of injury in the context of the offence. The court must assess whether the harm caused was what would be normal for this type of offence or has gone beyond the level that would be regarded as normal. The offence of wounding – by its very nature – involves the infliction of serious injury, there are gradations of such injury.
11. The court heard the agreed medical evidence of Dr. Knight confirming that Mr. Green had a laceration to the face on his left cheek, a laceration to the left scalp/temporal region, a laceration to his left arm, and a laceration to the right posterior lower chest. The court further benefited from three photographs of his injuries taken whilst he was at the hospital. These photographs show the two significant wounds to the victim’s face and head, and the injury to the defendant’s left arm following stitching.
12. Mr. Green gave evidence as to his injuries and explained that he felt weak from the loss of blood in the immediate aftermath of the attack.
13. He provided a Victim Impact Report dated 11 July 2025. Within that VIR he set out the ongoing effects of the attack. He said that “the facial injuries, in particular, have permanently changed my appearance, affecting my confidence and interactions with others”, and that he continues to “struggle with self-esteem due to visible scarring.” He sets out his long-term psychological effects saying “emotionally, I have been deeply scarred by this attack. The trauma has taken away my sense of safety, peace, and trust in the world around me. I struggle with anxiety, flashbacks, fear of encountering the offender, hypervigilance, depression, and difficulty sleeping.”



14. The Crown submits that the level of injury caused to the complainant is serious in the context of the offence. Mr. Green suffered several wounds to his face, head and body, all inflicted with a knife. The injuries required immediate medical intervention, including stitching, and will result in lifelong scarring. In the context of wounding, whilst it is accepted they may not sit at the very top end of “Greater harm”, it is submitted by the Crown that they plainly sit well within that category.

### **Culpability**

15. This case involved the use of a weapon, described by the complainant as a camouflage folding pocketknife with a blade of “maybe 6 inches”. “It was a very sharp blade”.
16. The defendant demonstrated hostility towards the victim based on his nationality telling both the victim and another witness in the trial that Jamaicans were not allowed to sell on that part of the beach.
17. For these two factors alone, the Crown submits that the case sits within Higher culpability.
18. If the Crown are correct as to that categorisation then the starting point for a Category 1 offence is 12 years custody, with a range of 9-16 years.
19. It is submitted that both the location and timing of the offence are significant aggravating factors. The offence took place at around 11am on Wednesday 19 April 2023 on the Public Beach area of Seven Mile Beach. The court heard evidence that there were numerous tourists at that location.
20. The attack took place as the victim was interacting with a tourist, collecting money from her having sold her a can of soda. The relevance of the location and timing are obvious. The stabbing took place in broad daylight, on a beach populated by tourists – people who would have likely been alarmed and frightened at what was taking place. Further, the Crown submits that the obvious risks of reputational and wider damage to the tourism industry of these islands is clear. The Cayman Islands maintains a reputation as a safe, welcoming, and idyllic vacation destination. Offences such as these undermine that reputation.



21. The offence is aggravated by the effect it has had on the victim. The Crown invites the court to note the impact as set out in the VIR where the victim says:

“One of the most painful consequences of this assault was my inability to provide for my children during my recovery. I was unable to work, which placed tremendous pressure on me mentally, emotionally, and financially. The emotional burden of seeing bills pile up while knowing my children relied on me was overwhelming. As a father, providing stability, food, and shelter for my children is a primary responsibility. Losing the ability to do so caused guilt, frustration, and a deep sense of failure—despite the fact that what happened was beyond my control. The financial impact of this crime has been devastating. My inability to work resulted in falling behind on rent, accumulating hospital bills, increased debt, and difficulty paying day to-day expenses.”

22. The Crown also point to the further aggravation of the defendant’s criminal record which includes convictions for weapon offences, violence and for threats to kill.
23. The prosecution submission is that therefore this offence falls towards the top end of the category range of 9 – 16 years custody. The defence accepts in their written submissions that the multiple injuries are serious and will result in scarring and psychological injury and that at the very least this is a high Category two offence.

**May 2025 Threats to kill, Possession of an offensive weapon, Affray, Possession of Ganja, and Failing to provide a specimen**

24. The defendant appeared before the Summary Court on 2 September 2025 for trial (after the wounding with intent trial) on the following charges:
- i. Threats to kill
  - ii. Possession of an offensive weapon (knife)
  - iii. Affray
  - iv. Possession of Ganja
  - v. Failing to provide a specimen



25. He was convicted of those charges and committed to the Grand Court for sentence.
26. The offences took place on 25 May 2025 (whilst he was subject to a Suspended Sentence for another offence of violence) and stemmed from an incident at the McRuss Supermarket, Eastern Avenue, George Town.
27. The victim in that matter was Dindo De Borja, a female Filipino national who was not known to the defendant. At around 6:30pm that day, she attended the McRuss store to purchase a drink. Whilst stood in the queue to pay, the defendant approached her and said, “this is not the Philippines, this is the Cayman Islands” and “Filipinos should die, you will die tonight”. The defendant began to push the victim, saying “you don’t know me, I did ten years in prison, wait for me, you will die tonight”. The defendant then went to exit the store and waited near the door whilst the victim paid for her drink.
28. A knife was visible in the defendant’s right hand with a blade of approximately 4 inches. The defendant pointed the knife at the victim and said again “you are going to die tonight” whilst pointing the knife directly at her face. The defendant approached another customer, still with the knife in his hand.
29. The victim called 911 and firearms officers quickly attended and arrested the defendant near to Bananas Bar. The knife was not recovered, but the defendant was found in possession of a quantity of Ganja. He was arrested, and in response to caution stated, “stop talking to me”. He was taken to the custody suite where he was asked to provide a specimen of urine to which he refused.

### **Sentencing Guidelines**

30. The sentencing guidelines for the offence of making a threat to kill are contained at page 28 of the Cayman Islands Sentencing Guidelines for Public Order Offences. The maximum penalty is 10 years imprisonment.

### **Harm**

31. The victim feared the defendant might kill her. Nonetheless the Crown submits that the case falls within Category 2 harm.



### **Culpability**

32. There was a visible weapon, and accordingly the case sits within Higher Culpability. A category A2 offence carries a starting point of 3 years, with a range of 1 – 4 years.
33. The Crown observe that the case is aggravated by the obvious hostility to the victim by the use of the words “this is not the Philippines, this is the Cayman Islands” and “Filipinos should die, you will die tonight” and is further aggravated by taking place in a public supermarket in the afternoon. Once more the defendant’s antecedent history is an aggravating factor as is the fact that he was subject to a suspended sentence at the time.
34. It is therefore submitted that the offence sits at the top end of the range of the category.
35. The prosecution submit that the court should treat charges 2 and 3 (the possession of a knife, and affray) as part and parcel of the substantial threats to kill charge, given the principle of totality, and to avoid double counting and they suggest that it may be appropriate for no separate penalty on those charges, given the likely sentence on the charge of threats to kill.

### **Totality and the case for consecutive sentences**

36. The court must have regard to the principle of totality, and section 8(1) of the Criminal Procedure Code which sets out:

*“When a person is convicted at one trial of two or more distinct offences the court may sentence him, for such offences, to the several punishments prescribed therefore, which such court is competent to impose; such punishments when consisting of imprisonment to commence the one after the expiration of the other, unless the court directs that such punishments shall run concurrently.”*



37. These two sets of proceedings arise out of unrelated incidents, almost two years apart. The offences are wholly unconnected and are against separate victims. For those reasons, and having regard to the above principles, it is submitted by the Crown that a consecutive sentence is appropriate.
38. However, the principle of totality is a well-known and understood principle to which the court must have regard in ensuring that any total sentence is not unduly long or harsh but is, rather, just and equitable when the court stands back and looks at the total sentence.

### **Defence Submissions**

39. Mr. Brady in written submissions and Mr. Furniss at Court observe that the defendant is a man in his mid-thirties who recognises that he will be sentenced to a term of imprisonment.
40. The defence conceded that there are aggravating features that would be difficult to ignore in this case including the use of a knife to cause significant injuries to Mr. Green combined with his apparent hostility to Mr. Green due to his nationality.
41. They further accept that the impact on the national reputation of Cayman as a safe and idyllic tourist destination would undoubtedly be adversely impacted by such a vicious knife attack on a part of the beach known to be used by multiple short-term visitors to the island. The written submissions accept that this offence alone is properly towards the higher end of Category 2.
42. The defence has decided that they do not wish to delay sentence to seek any form of psychiatric or psychological report. However, they submit that there may be underlying and unresolved mental health reasons why the defendant has become involved in both sets of matters.
43. Mr. Brady invites the court not to consider that his pleas of not guilty to the charges should increase any potential sentence. Let me be absolutely clear – every defendant is entitled to have a trial. That is what he has done, twice. That can never be considered as an aggravating factor and I do not treat it as such. The only consequence of his decisions to take these matters to trial is that he cannot point to any



entitlement to any credit. Mr. Brady invites the court carefully to consider the principle of totality in arriving at its sentence and pleads for leniency.

### **The Defendant's Antecedent History**

44. Mr. Millwood was born in 1991 and has a number of convictions. He was first sent to prison for a violent offence (AOABH) in 2010. His offending in the few years that followed was mainly drug offences and acquisitive crime with an offence for possession of a prohibited weapon in 2016. He was imprisoned for threats to kill in 2016. Further drug and weapon offences followed in 2018 as did a further AOABH for which he was imprisoned in 2018. He was then given a suspended sentence for common assault in 2023 of which he is now in breach.

### **Social Inquiry Report**

45. Although the defence decided not to await a new report, before sentence the Court sought and was assisted by the provision of an earlier report. The defendant was born in Cayman to Jamaican parents although he found out when he was 12 that his father was not who he had believed him to be. The family home was unsettled and dysfunctional and they were sometimes evicted. He was expelled from school. Even in 2014 he was assessed as having a high likelihood of reoffending. The defendant can justifiably point to his childhood as being a source of the difficulties that have led to his offending.

### **The Court's Conclusions and Sentence**

46. Dealing first with the wounding with intent offence. This was a vicious, sustained and public attack on the victim on Public Beach in the middle of the day when it was packed with tourists and all of that motivated, it would appear, by the victim's nationality.

47. The victim was stabbed or slashed with the knife several times including to his face. He speaks as to the impact those injuries had on him at the time and also the impact that they continue to have on him. The scarring is something that has caused him a great deal of pain and anxiety and impacts to this day on his self-esteem.



48. When it comes to considering the issue of harm, I must consider carefully what is said on this issue in the Cayman Islands Sentencing Guidelines. When deciding on whether injuries caused during an offence amount to injuries that are justifiably placed into greater harm because they are serious in the context of the offence, the Sentencing Guidelines point the reader to note 4 which states as follows:

*Even within the level of harm necessary for each offence, there will be gradations. When determining whether the harm caused was serious in the context of these offences, the court will assess whether the harm caused was what would be normal for this type of offence or has gone beyond the levels that would be regarded as normal. Since the sentence levels will be higher (for some offences very much higher) as a result, the type of harm or violence that will justify placing an offence in the higher category will be harm that is significantly above the level of harm which is the norm for these offences.*

49. The Cayman Island Court of Appeal gave some further assistance in determining this issue in their judgment in the case of *Woodhouse v R CICA* (Crim) Appeal 008/2024. I have been guided by that judgment in considering this issue.
50. Dr. Knight sets out the injuries caused to this victim. There were four separate lacerations caused by this sharp knife wielded by the defendant. The photographs show some of those wounds. The wounds to the face and the head are particularly obvious in the photographs and, as was apparent at trial and from the VIR, continue to cause the victim difficulties from the scarring including a scar under his eye across the front of his face. He talks of the pain and sensitivity those wounds still cause and the fact that his facial appearance has been changed. His confidence has been understandably affected.
51. The question that I must address is whether the injuries inflicted are significantly above the level of harm which is the norm for an offence of wounding with intent. I accept that a charge of this sort will include wounds that were life threatening. But I consider that when the several wounds inflicted include scarring which is life altering that such wounds must also be considered carefully as to whether they are significantly above the level of harm which is the norm for an offence of this sort.
52. I conclude that when just one of the 4 wounds caused is such that every day for the rest of his life the victim will look in the mirror and see that impact, that is life altering and that is, in my opinion, greater



harm. It is not at the top of that range I fully accept. In fact, when one considers the ranges for both a category one and a category two offence, they cross over at the 9 year point. So, if I am wrong that it amounts to greater harm then I certainly consider it would be at the top of a lesser harm offence.

53. I consider that this is, based on the injuries inflicted, greater harm but for this reason on its own towards the bottom of that range. I conclude that lifelong facial scarring can properly be put into such a category.
54. So far as culpability is concerned, this was an attack with a knife which on its own would justify putting the offence into higher culpability. I also note that this attack was motivated by hostility based on the victim's nationality. That is not in itself listed in the protected characteristic criteria but on an island where a multitude of nationalities live alongside Caymanian people in harmony, any hostility based upon nationality must be deterred.
55. I conclude that this is an offence in category one which has a start point of 12 years and a range of 9 – 16 years.
56. The defendant's antecedent history, which I have already set out, is also an aggravating factor in relation to both sets of proceedings.
57. The attack was on Public Beach in the middle of the day. Public Beach is where many tourists, particularly day visitors coming off cruise ships, spend the day. The Cayman Islands has a reputation in the Caribbean for being safe and secure and its reputation therefore enhances the tourist industry and the resultant economic benefits that it brings. Such frightening and serious attacks have the capacity to cause real harm to the tourist industry and to harm the reputation of the Cayman Islands.
58. I have already said that I accept that the injuries alone do not take me up past the bottom of the category one range but once I apply these culpability factors and the additional aggravating factors, I conclude that a sentence that is at the start point for a category one offence is justified and proportionate. That is 12 years.
59. I turn then to the other offending, also involving a knife and committed almost exactly two years later.



60. The victim of the threats to kill was a person not known to the defendant. It is clear that when he first threatened the victim inside the supermarket that victim had done nothing to cause such a threat and the only cause appears to have been the fact that the victim was a Filipino. The defendant left the store and waited for the victim before again threatening her with a knife and repeating that “you are going to die tonight”.
61. Give the fear that the victim said she suffered this is a category 2 harm case.
62. The knife was visible as the defendant made his threats and as such this is Higher Culpability. The hostility was based on the victim’s nationality which I consider to be a further obvious aggravating factor. Once more the antecedent history is a relevant aggravating factor
63. The starting point for that offence is therefore 3 years imprisonment within a range of 1-4 years. I see no reason on the facts to depart from that start point.

### **Totality**

64. I consider that all of the other offences of which the defendant was convicted in respect of that incident ought to run concurrently with each other properly to take account of totality.
65. The offence of threats to kill was committed two years after the wounding and whilst subject to a suspended sentence. Whilst they have worrying similarities, the offences are unconnected and involve different victims. For all of these reasons I consider that a consecutive sentence is called for.
66. However, I conclude that it is appropriate to make a discount to the sentence for the threats to kill offence to ensure that the principle of totality is properly applied. I intend to reduce the sentence for the threats to kill to take account of that principle and to ensure that the sentence that I pass is just and proportionate when I stand back and look at the total. That being so I shall reduce the sentence by 50% to take account of totality.

67. That takes me to 12 years for the wounding and 18 months for the threats to kill. I will further reduce each of those sentences to take account of the personal mitigation relating to the impact on this man of the way in which Mr. Millwood was let down and failed by his family in his childhood.

68. So, the total sentence that I pass today is:

- (i) Wounding with Intent – 11 years and 6 months imprisonment.
- (ii) Threats to kill – 12 months imprisonment consecutive.
- (iii) Possession of a knife – 6 months imprisonment concurrent.
- (iv) Possession of Ganja – 1 month imprisonment concurrent.
- (v) Affray – No separate penalty.
- (vi) Failure to provide a specimen – No separate penalty.
- (vii) I activate one month of the 10 week suspended sentence that the defendant has breached by the commission of the 2025 offences but order that also run concurrently

69. Therefore, the total sentence that I pass today is 12 years and 6 months imprisonment.

70. The time the defendant has spent remanded in custody will count automatically towards those sentences.

71. I order forfeiture and destruction of the recovered Ganja.

**Dated the 28<sup>th</sup> day of November 2025**



**The Hon. Justice Emma Peters  
Judge of the Grand Court**