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**MENTAL ILLNESS AND CRIMINALITY:
RIGHTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL.**

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CHAPTER ONE

MENTAL ILLNESS: A PSYCHIATRICAL OBSERVATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The brain is a fragile yet a complex organ in a human body. Its functions and importance are invaluable for any defect in its metabolic structure would severely affect one's action, personality, character and behaviour. Yet, the mind itself is subjected to diseases and illnesses as other parts of the body do which affect its normal functioning. Such illnesses or diseases are often regarded as mental diseases or mental illnesses.

An important area needed to be ventured into in attempting to establish any causal connections and relationships between mental illness and criminality. Such causal factors can be grouped into three major parts viz psychiatric considerations, biological considerations and social environmental considerations. Under this chapter, emphasis will be laid on the psychiatric observation as to the differences of mental disturbances in which the magistrates, judges and the panel juries would have to be acknowledged. A thorough

understanding on their parts as to the contributions of each factor would be quite beneficial and in certain respect, essential in dealing with mental patients that come before them in the court.

1 PSYCHIATRICAL CONSIDERATION

Mental disease has been studied for many generations, yet, much disagreement still prevails regarding definitions, classifications, causes, methods of diagnosis, therapy, extent in the general population and frequency in the criminal population. It would seem proper if we were to discuss the various types and categories of mental disturbances. This is true for the magistrates would have to consider the nature of the mentally disordered person and hence, provide a proper remedial undertaking rather than to strictly adhere to the penalties imposed under the criminal law.

A The State Of Psychoses

The major characteristics which psychotics have in common is complete breakdown or severe impairment of the means of communication. They lose contact with reality. They sometimes are completely isolated from the values of their social groups and infact, do not maintain membership in