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D.A. BROWN: BRONX MOTHER CHARGED WITH MURDER
IN SUFFOCATION DEATH OF TWO-WEEK-OLD SON

Alleged to Have Disposed Body in Queens Dumpster; Faces Up to Life in Prison

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown today announced that a Bronx mother has been charged with intentional murder in the suffocation death of her two-week-old son on New Year's Eve.

District Attorney Brown said, "The defendant's alleged suffocation of her innocent and helpless child was both heartless and heartbreaking – particularly when one considers that the child, who had been born prematurely, was given the best medical care in the world in order to have the opportunity of a full and rewarding life."

District Attorney Brown identified the defendant as Lucila Rojas, 25, of 2006 Cross Bronx Expressway in the Bronx. The defendant has been charged with second-degree murder, tampering with physical evidence, endangering the welfare of a child, and violating the Public Health Law for failing to provide a decent burial and disposing of a body without a permit. If convicted, the defendant faces up to 25 years to life in prison.

The District Attorney said that, according to the charges, on the afternoon of December 31, 2006, the defendant went to Jacobi Hospital, located in the Pelham Parkway section of the Bronx, to pick up her two-week-old son Anthony Rojas, who had been receiving medical treatment relating to his premature birth. After signing her son out of the hospital, it is alleged that the defendant placed a blanket over his face to prevent him from breathing and took a MTA bus from the Bronx to the Jackson Heights section of Queens. After exiting the bus the defendant allegedly placed the baby in a plastic garbage bag and dumped his body in a trash receptacle in the vicinity of 100th Street and Northern Boulevard.

According to District Attorney Brown, on Monday, January 8, 2007, the defendant reported her baby missing and told investigators that he had been taken from her at gunpoint while she was traveling to her medical appointment at Jacobi Hospital. She is alleged to have thereafter changed her story a number of times, finally telling police that she had left the child in the trash in Queens. The defendant is being held pending arraignment later today in Queens Criminal Court in Kew Gardens.

The District Attorney said that an intensive search is being conducted by Queens Homicide detectives at the Pennsylvania landfill where the Department of Sanitation would have taken trash from the location where the child was allegedly left in an effort to locate the baby's body.

The investigation was conducted by Detective Oscar Ferrufino of the NYPD's Queens Homicide Squad under the supervision of Lieutenant John Perdoch, Detective Carlos Infante of the NYPD's Bronx Homicide Task Force Police and assisted by Police Officer Christine Nolan of the New York City Police Department's 115 Precinct Detective Squad under the supervision of Lieutenant Anthony Mattola.

Assistant District Attorney Jeneen M. Wunder of the District Attorney's Homicide Investigations Bureau is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Peter T. Reese, Bureau Chief, Peter J. McCormack III, Deputy Bureau Chief, and Richard B. Schaeffer, Senior Trial Attorney, and the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Charles A. Testagrossa and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel A. Saunders.

It should be noted that a criminal complaint is merely an accusation and that a defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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