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NEWS RELEASE
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MAN CHARGED IN ATTACK ON TODDLER AND THREE ADULTS ALONG I-215

MURRIETA – Today, May 13, 2015, a Sun City man was charged in connection with the attack on a group of people – including an 18-month-old child – at their disabled vehicle along Interstate 215 in Menifee.

Nicholas Lopez Garcia, DOB: 2-10-71, has been charged in case SWF1500737 by the Riverside County DA's Office with seven felonies and one misdemeanor. Among the charges are one count each of attempted murder and attempted kidnapping – both involving the toddler, felony child endangerment, four counts of assault with a deadly weapon, and a misdemeanor count of resisting arrest. There are also sentencing enhancements of inflicting great bodily injury.

If convicted as currently charged, Garcia faces a sentence of about 25 years to life in prison. He is being held at the Southwest Detention Center in Murrieta in lieu of \$2 million bail.

Garcia appeared at the Southwest Justice Center in Murrieta on May 13, 2015, for arraignment and, through his court-appointed public defender, entered not guilty pleas to all counts. Judge Mark Mandio set a felony settlement conference for May 21, 2015, in Dept. S204.

The incident happened about 1:30 a.m. Monday, May 11, 2015, after the victims had stopped along northbound 215 near Newport Road due to a flat tire. The defendant reportedly ran up to their disabled vehicle, broke out one or more windows and tried to pull the toddler out of the car. When he was unable to do so, the defendant is accused of then stabbing the child with what is believed to be a freeway sign paddle marker. Adults in the vehicle – including the child's mother and father – came to the toddler's defense and were also reportedly slashed or cut with the paddle marker by the defendant.

The victims were able to flee and call 911. When California Highway Patrol officers arrived, Garcia was still at the scene and resisted arrest before officers were able to finally restrain and arrest him.

The toddler and three adults who were injured were treated at a nearby hospital for their injuries – none of which are believed to be life-threatening.

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