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Abaroa murder trial on hold as state examines potential new evidence

By: Diana Bosch



DURHAM—The Raven Abaroa trial will continue on Monday after the state announced it received potential new evidence to make its case.

Raven Abaroa is charged with first-degree murder in the stabbing death of his pregnant wife Janet Abaroa in 2005.

Assistant District Attorney Charlene Coggins-Franks said they included a PDA belonging to Raven Abaroa and the hard drive taken from Janet Abaroa's work computer. Before the judge ordered that the trial be put on hold, experts discussed the victim's exhumed remains.

Janet Abaroa's body was exhumed in July of 2010. The state showed jurors photos of the victim's eyes, clavicle and collarbone.

The defense filed a motion objecting the photos calling them "gory."

"I understand showing crime scene photos is necessary but I think it's unnecessary in this case to show these photos," Defense Attorney Amos Tyndall told Judge Orlando Hudson.

For the first time in the trial, Raven Abaroa's eyes swelled as the motion was argued. His head came down when the judge ruled in favor of the state.

Ophthalmologist Dr. Charles Zwerling examined the victim's exhumed eyeballs. On the stand, he tests uncovered the victim was wearing contact lenses.

On Wednesday, the victim's sister, Erica Bakey, said Janet's routine was to take her contacts out before going to bed.

Raven Abaroa told investigators Janet was getting ready for bed before he left for his soccer game the night she was murdered. The trial is scheduled to resume Monday at 9:30 am.

If convicted, Raven Abaroa could spend the rest of his life in prison.

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