



COUNTY OF FRESNO

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 4, 2021

Charges Filed Against Jovan Cortez in Connection with Collision Causing Multiple Fatalities

Jovan Adam Cortez (22, of Fresno) has been charged in a felony complaint in connection with a collision during the evening hours of May 1, 2021. The collision occurred at the intersection of North Avenue and Marks Avenue in an unincorporated area of Fresno County. Mr. Cortez has been charged with crimes including gross vehicular manslaughter while impaired, driving with a blood alcohol level above .08% causing great bodily injury, driving under the influence of alcohol causing great bodily injury, domestic violence, child abuse, and failure to stop at a stop sign.

It is alleged that Cortez was involved in a domestic disturbance. While driving away from the scene of the disturbance with a ten-month-old child in his back seat, Cortez drove through a stop sign and collided with another vehicle containing six individuals. Several occupants of the vehicle struck by Cortez were ejected from that vehicle, and the collision caused the deaths of a 45-year-old male and his 7-year-old son. Three other occupants in the vehicle hit by Cortez are alleged to have suffered great bodily injury, a 37-year-old female, an 11-year-old female, and a 7-year-old male. Two additional individuals are also alleged to have been injured in the collision, including the infant inside the vehicle driven by Cortez.

An investigation by the California Highway Patrol determined that Cortez was under the influence of alcohol at the time of the collision.

The complaint alleges that Cortez committed the crimes of:

1. Gross vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated [PC 191.5(a)];
2. Gross vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated [PC 191.5(a)];
3. Driving with a blood alcohol concentration above .08% and causing great bodily injury [VC 23153(b)/PC 12022.7(a)];
4. Driving under the influence of alcohol and causing great bodily injury [VC 23153(a)/PC 12022.7(a)];
5. Corporal Injury to Spouse/Cohabitant [PC 273.5(a)];
6. Child Abuse [PC 273a(a)], and;
7. Failure to stop at a stop sign [VC 22450].

If convicted of the charges and allegations, the Cortez faces a sentence of up to 22 years and 4 months in prison.

The case is currently being prosecuted by the Alcohol and Drug Impaired Driver Vertical Prosecution Program. Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

The media may email FCDAMedia@fresnocountyca.gov with questions.

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