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Not guilty plea in sex case

VIRGINIA HENNESSEY

A Salinas man pleaded not guilty Monday to multiple counts alleging he sexually assaulted and severely injured a 3-year-old girl, charges that carry a potential life sentence. Salvador Marin Luna, 23, is charged with 10 felony counts, including four counts of sexual penetration, sodomy or oral copulation on a child younger than 10, which carries a minimum sentence of 15 years to life in prison upon conviction.

The girl was admitted to a Salinas hospital on June 29 with injuries to her groin and genital area. She was released to her parents six days later. Luna was arrested July 9 after a lengthy investigation by Salinas police.

Prosecutor Rolando Mazariegos declined to say how or if Luna is related to the girl, but said he is not her father.

At the prosecutor's request, Judge Adrienne Grover increased Luna's bail from \$410,000 to \$840,000, the amount established in the county's bail schedule. She gave defense attorney Brian Worthington leave to seek a bail reduction from Judge Larry Hayes, who will hear the remainder of the case.

A preliminary hearing is scheduled for Aug. 20 to determine if there is sufficient evidence to hold Luna for trial.

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