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**Construction Company Owner Convicted of Criminally Negligent Homicide  
in Death of 5-Year-Old Girl Struck by Pillars Following Wall Collapse**

*Defendant Built Dangerously Flawed Stone Fence in  
Violation of Numerous Provisions of the NYC Building Code*

Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez, together with New York City Department of Investigation Commissioner Jocelyn E. Strauber and New York City Department of Buildings Commissioner James Oddo, today announced that the owner of a Nassau County construction company has been convicted of criminally negligent homicide and other charges after a wall he built collapsed on a child, killing her.

District Attorney Gonzalez said, “This is a heartbreaking instance where a young child was needlessly and senselessly taken from her family because this defendant chose to ignore safety protocols by violating numerous provisions of New York City’s building code, building a heavy stone fence and failing to secure it. Hopefully, today’s verdict will send a message that dangerous and sloppy work by contractors will have serious consequences.”

Commissioner Strauber said, “There is no excuse or tolerance for flouting the building code in New York City, conduct that can lead to dangerous conditions, fatal outcomes and, as this case shows, a criminal conviction. I thank the Brooklyn District Attorney’s Office and the City Department of Buildings (DOB) for their partnership on this significant investigation that found the defendant had no DOB permit to construct a wall and built it without steel reinforcements, a violation of code, leading to the wall’s collapse and the tragic, needless death of a five-year-old girl.”

Commissioner Oddo said, “The death of Alysson Pinto-Chaumana was completely preventable. Simply put, if this contractor had obtained permits for the work to build this railing, and adhered to our city’s construction code regulations, this young girl would still be alive today. Since this terrible incident occurred, and a second similar fatality in 2021, the Department has conducted significant outreach to homeowners and industry professionals to get the word out about the dangers of shoddily constructed stone balustrade railings. I would like to acknowledge the hard work of District Attorney Gonzalez’s office, and our partners at the NYC Department of Investigation, for securing a meaningful conviction in this case, sending a strong message that we aren’t going to stand by as unscrupulous contractors endanger our children by cutting corners on the job.”

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Nadeem Anwar, 48, of Valley Stream and his company, City Wide Construction and Renovations, Inc., also of Valley Stream. Anwar was convicted today by Brooklyn Supreme Court Justice Danny Chun of criminally negligent homicide, first-degree offering a false instrument for filing, and second-degree falsifying business records following a bench trial. The defendant will be sentenced on August 14, 2024.

The District Attorney said that, according to the investigation, on August 29, 2019, at approximately 8:23 p.m., Alysson Pinto-Chaumana, 5, was with her mother and several friends while they were visiting a friend at 444 Harman Street, a three-story building in Bushwick, Brooklyn.

The group was outside waiting near the front door on an enclosed patio next to a granite wall that fenced in the patio and had a base of heavy stone pillars topped with stone horizontal

plates. Suddenly, the pillars and a horizontal plate fell inward onto Alysson, crushing her skull and causing her death.

An investigation into the collapse determined that the defendant, a licensed contractor, who was hired to renovate the façade of the property and build the wall in September 2018 committed numerous violations of the New York City Building Code. Although he was licensed as a contractor in Nassau County, he was not authorized to file for work permits with the NYC Department of Buildings and had another contractor file the application for the work on the façade, but not for building the wall.

The defendant did not acquire a DOB permit to build a stone wall at 444 Harman Street, which was required, nor did he have a licensed engineer or architect conduct a post-construction analysis of the wall's stability as required. A row of stone pillars must have at least one pillar every 48 inches with a steel reinforcing bar anchoring that pillar to the base. All of the pillars must also be secured to the base with an engineer-grade adhesive. The horizontal plates must be secured to the pillars with engineer-grade adhesive.

A DOB engineer who responded to the collapse observed there were no steel reinforcing bars in any of the pillars. Furthermore, he determined that there was no engineer-grade adhesive securing any of the wall's component parts. Therefore, he determined, the wall was highly unstable and held together mostly by its own weight and gravity, an egregious violation of multiple provisions of the Building Code. The engineer described the conditions as "imminently perilous to life."

The case was investigated by New York City Department of Buildings Director of Forensic Engineering Unit, Marco Frias, PE, and New York City Department of Investigation Chief Investigator James McElligott, under the supervision of Senior Inspector General Gregory Cho, Deputy Commissioner/Chief of Investigations Dominic Zarrella.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Adam Libove, Deputy Chief of the Public Integrity Bureau, and Assistant District Attorney Pamela Murray, Deputy Chief of the District Attorney's Frauds Bureau, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Michel Spanakos, Deputy Chief of the District Attorney's Investigations Division, and the overall supervision of Assistant District Attorney Patricia McNeill, Chief of the Investigations Division.

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