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**MEDIA ADVISORY: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO KILLING VICTIM WITH A MACHETE**

EL PASO, Texas (04/30/2025) – An El Paso man who was accused of breaking into another man's apartment and attacking him with a machete pleaded guilty to Murder, a first-degree felony. The plea hearing for Jan Carlo Castillo, 25, occurred Thursday, Apr. 17 in the 384th District Court with Judge Patrick M. Garcia presiding.

Brian Valentin Almanza, 34, was found dead on Sept. 12, 2023, by his former wife. She told El Paso police officers that they would message everyday, and she felt something was wrong when he didn't respond for two days. She went to his apartment on the 9100 block of Kernel Circle in the Lower Valley and found his door slightly ajar with signs of forced entry. She spotted him inside covered in blood and called 911. El Paso police said Almanza had multiple large slashes and lacerations over his body.

El Paso police used apartment complex surveillance video to identify Castillo as the perpetrator. Castillo, who had distinct arm and face tattoos, was seen walking towards the apartment the night of Sept. 11, then leaving shortly after, appearing to conceal an item in a bundle of clothing. Police officers spotted Castillo jaywalking on Alameda Ave. on Sept. 21, 2023, and arrested him after a short chase.

As part of the plea agreement, Castillo was sentenced to 45 years in state prison and waived all of his appellate rights.

"Mr. Almanza was brutally killed with no apparent motive," said District Attorney James Montoya. "His killer was apprehended thanks to the outstanding investigative work by the El Paso Police Department and the witnesses who were willing to provide information. My Office is committed to working tirelessly to ensure that dangerous defendants are removed from our community."

Assistant District Attorney Enrique Esparza represented the State of Texas in the prosecution of the case.

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