

Gosnell Murder Trial: Daughter of Woman Whose Mother Died of Abortion Testifies

The daughter of a woman who died after an abortion at a Philadelphia clinic testified on Tuesday at the murder trial of the clinic's owner about the final hours of her mother's life.

Karnamaya Mongar, 41, died on November 20, 2009, after undergoing the procedure at the Women's Medical Society in West Philadelphia. Kermit Gosnell, 72, the physician who owned the clinic, is charged with murder in the deaths of Mongar and seven infants.

Gosnell is accused of severing infants' spinal cords after they lived through abortion procedures. He faces the death penalty if convicted.

"My mom was complaining it was hurting, so they gave her an IV," said Yashodo Gurung, 26, of Woodbridge, Virginia, as she testified about her mother's experience at the clinic.

Gurung, a native of Bhutan who spent much of her life in Nepal, testified through an interpreter at the trial in Common Pleas Court.

"I remember they gave her pills two or three times," she said, "but I forget how many times they put something in the IV."

An ambulance took her mother to a nearby hospital, where she and other family members anxiously waited overnight, she said.

She testified that the next morning doctors told her, "We tried our best, but your mom's heart stopped working."

Prosecutors have said Mongar died of an overdose of anesthetics prescribed by Gosnell.

Gosnell has been in jail since he was charged in January 2011 after a grand jury probe. He is on trial on 26 charges, including the eight counts of murder.

The case has rekindled the debate in the United States about late-term abortions. Under Pennsylvania law, abortions can be performed up to 24 weeks.

A friend of Mongar's family, Damber Ghalley, said he spoke to Gosnell the morning she died. He testified that Gosnell told him "the procedure was done fine. I did not do anything wrong."

Also on Tuesday, a registered nurse from the city's Department of Public Health, Lorraine Matijkiw, testified about what she found at the clinic during inspections in 2008 and 2009.

The grand jury report that led to the murder charges against Gosnell was highly critical of unsanitary conditions it said existed in the clinic.

"When I walked in the lobby, it was really filthy," Matijkiw testified. "It smelled of urine. I did not see any cats, but I could smell cats," said Matijkiw, who was inspecting the clinic as part of a program for doctors to provide vaccinations to children.

"There was spilled junk all over," she said. "I saw things that were not right. They were not clean."