

Trio charged over alleged terrorism plot

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Police have charged another three men over an alleged conspiracy to launch a terrorist attack on an army base in Sydney.

The men have been held in custody in Melbourne overnight and questioned about an alleged plot to launch a suicide mission on the Holsworthy Army barracks.

They have been charged with terrorism-related offences.

One of them, Wissam Fattal, 33, made an outburst in court before he was taken away.

He told Magistrate Peter Reardon "You call me a terrorist, I never killed a person in my life."

"Your army kills innocent people in Iraq and Afghanistan and Israel takes Palestinian land by force," Fattal said.

Fattal is charged with conspiring to commit an act in preparation for a terrorist attack.

He is already on remand on other matters, and will appear in court again in October.

Another man arrested yesterday, 25-year-old Nayef El Sayed from Glenroy, appeared in court on Tuesday charged with a terrorism-related offence.

El Sayed refused to stand before the magistrate, saying he stands only for God. He will stay in custody until another court appearance in late October.

It is alleged the men wanted to become martyrs and sought religious backing for their plan.

Yesterday the magistrate granted police an extra eight hours for each suspect, saying international terrorism strikes at the heart of democracy and authorities should be allowed to investigate fully.

Meanwhile, human rights lawyers say it will be difficult for the charged men to get a fair trial over the alleged conspiracy.

Susan Rimmer-Harris from Australian Lawyers for Human Rights says it will be hard for the men to be seen as innocent until proven guilty because of the media coverage of the case.

"I have problems that we're seeing leaks again about the investigation, which is also what we saw with the AFP in the Dr Haneef affair," she said.



Four men have now been charged with terrorism-related offences. (AAP: Julian Smith)

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"I just have a general concern these terrorism trials are always conducted so much in public and with so much theatre that you are always concerned that the people involved are not going to get a fair trial."

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd says he will take expert advice on whether the Somali terrorist group, al-Shabaab should be banned in Australia.

It is alleged the men arrested yesterday have links to the group, which is listed as a terrorist group by the United States.

Mr Rudd says it is constantly under review.

"Various governments around the world have acted in this respect," he said.

"We will make our own decision in due season and we will of course do so based on the expert advice of the agencies."

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