

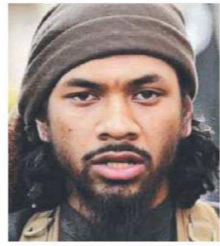
# Islamic centre's link to alleged terrorist

JOHN FERGUSON

A once-notorious Islamic centre was involved in the radicalisation of the man accused of being the nation's most feared terrorist, according to evidence in the committal hearing of Neil Prakash.

turned to radical Islam after the pair had attended al-Furqan in Springvale in Melbourne's outer southeast more than a decade ago. Mr Almatrah said he was troubled by the preaching session one Friday that Mr Prakash had attended, which he said had targeted his family's ethnicity. "It was very inflammatory against people who supported our community," he said.

He said the address had also referred to potential "spies" being present in the audience at the faith centre, which intelligence agencies focused on a decade ago as a potential location for encouraging terrorism. A second former friend of Mr Prakash's, Ibrahim Halligan, also had attended al-Furqan with the accused terrorist when there had



Prakash

appeared little changed physically from the most recent images of him after he was arrested in 2022. He was extradited from Turkey to Darwin in December 2022 and has been charged by the Victorian Joint Counter Terrorism Team with six terrorism-related offences following his time allegedly with Islamic State.

Mr Prakash has rarely been seen in years, appearing via video link before the Melbourne Magistrates Court, closing his eyes several times over a period of about 20 minutes before magistrate Rohan Lawrence ruled that the accused could be absent from proceedings until, or unless, he was committed to stand trial. Mr Prakash left the room after complaining he needed fresh air. The charges include him being an alleged member of a terrorist organisation, of advocating for terrorism and engaging in hostile activities overseas.

bourne Magistrates Court. The committal hearing is expected to last for about three days to test the evidence against him. A former journalist with The Australian, Paul Maley, also gave evidence about a series of communications he said he had with Mr Prakash that led to prominent articles published nearly a decade ago. Maley, an award-winning and respected reporter, outlined how he had received a series of threats while reporting on Islamic State during the worst of the Middle East crisis, including from Mr Prakash. He was questioned at length by defence lawyer Liz Morgan about what records he had kept of exchanges with Mr Prakash, what communications platforms had

been used, including Twitter and encrypted services. Ms Morgan told the court that the defence would seek to have Maley's evidence excluded from the case. The Australian has previously reported that Mr Prakash's citizenship was revoked in 2018 by former Home Affairs minister Peter Dutton. However, it was reinstated after a High Court finding that the laws used to strip him of his citizenship were unconstitutional. The Australian reported that Mr Prakash allegedly travelled to Syria in 2013 and was thought to have died in the Iraqi city of Mosul in 2016. A warrant for his arrest was issued in 2016. The committal hearing is expected to last three days and is continuing.

# Win for Musk in ban over footage

JOANNA PANAGOPOULOS ANGELICA SNOWDEN

A temporary order by Australia's eSafety commissioner to block Australians from viewing footage of the alleged terrorist stabbing attack of Sydney bishop Mar Mari Emmanuel has been refused, in a win for tech giant X.

In April, eSafety Commissioner Julie Inman Grant ordered X (formerly Twitter) to remove access to the video for Australian users, slapping the footage with a Class 1 classification, reserved for high-impact violent or child sex abuse material.

While X complied with a take-down notice, "geo-blocking" the content, Australian users with VPNs could still watch the attack on the platform and the tech company has refused to totally remove the footage from its platform.

In a brief court hearing on Monday morning, Federal Court judge Geoffrey Kennett said: "In this matter which I heard on Friday, the orders of the court will be that the application to extend the interlocutory injunction granted on the 22nd of April, 2024, as extended on the 24th of April, is refused, and that the cost of the application are reserved."

His reasons for the decision will be available at a later date. In a hearing on Friday, Tim Begbie KC, for eSafety, told the court the material posted online showed "actual graphic and shocking moments of that attacker (allegedly) repeatedly and violently stabbing" the bishop.

The commission was pushing for the power to enforce global take-down orders, arguing that worldwide censorship of offensive material was reasonable in light of the Australian parliament's online safety legislation. "This is not a proceeding about a free speech policy," Mr Begbie said. "X Corp itself can and does take that stance (to make footage inaccessible) when it wishes to."

He said "X's position is a fairly striking one" and referred in its submissions to one of its policy statements that posts must "continue to flow", evidencing X's pro free speech stance.

Barrister Bret Walker SC, representing X Corp with law firm Ashurst, told the court it would be a "matter of real concern" if the only way X could reasonably comply with a take-down order was to remove the content for users worldwide.

He said it was "remarkable" to consider "the only way to control what is available to end users in Australia ... (is) to deny it to everybody on earth."

Earlier, he said a statement of reasons supplied by the eSafety commissioner's office in support of their take-down notices looked "informal" under the Administrative Appeals Tribunal Act. "There are strong reasons to doubt the validity of the notice," he said. Mr Walker also pointed out that Mar Mari Emmanuel did not want the footage to be removed from online.

Meanwhile, the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression and the Electronic Frontier Foundation asked the Federal Court on Friday to allow them to intervene in the case between the eSafety Commission and X Corp to advance arguments on whether the take-down notice should apply globally. A case management hearing is set for Wednesday.

# Jewish hate speech surge alarms PM

JOE KELLY NATIONAL AFFAIRS EDITOR

Anthony Albanese has told the Labor caucus anti-Semitism was being expressed more openly than at any other time in his lifetime in response to a question from an MP concerned about rising hate speech towards Jews, including on university campuses. NSW Labor senator Deborah O'Neill posed the question in a caucus meeting on Monday, days after Australia voted in favour of Palestine's bid to upgrade its UN status on Saturday.

The Prime Minister praised the performance of Foreign Minister Penny Wong in responding to the unfolding Middle East crisis as "extraordinary" but said the issue was not a simple one. Mr Albanese said every life mattered in the Gaza war, reaffirmed the government's support for a two-state solution and that Labor needed to maintain its principled stance on the conflict.

However, pressed by Senator O'Neill on rising anti-Semitism, he said there was "no question" anti-Semitism was being expressed more openly than at any other point in his lifetime. Labor MP for Macnamara, Josh Burns, also issued a statement on the weekend saying he believed Australia should have abstained from the vote, noting Hamas was still holding more than 130 hostages and remained the governing authority in Gaza.

One Labor MP told The Australian the Prime Minister was concerned people did not understand the history of anti-Semitism and believed the Jewish community needed to be supported. Australia's UN General Assembly vote in favour of the resolution to upgrade the status of Palestine was at odds with the US, which voted no, and the UK and Canada, which abstained. The resolution contained no call for the removal of Hamas from Gaza or the release of Israeli hostages. Senator Wong said 143 countries backed the resolution, and that it retained the observer status of the Palestinian mission, with the "extension of some modest additional rights to participate in the United Nations forums."

"It did not give the Palestinian mission membership of the United Nations. It did not give the Palestinian mission voting rights at the General Assembly," she said.

ed Nations. It did not give the Palestinian mission voting rights at the General Assembly," she said. "What it did do, consistent with a two-state solution, was to express the General Assembly's aspiration for Palestinian membership of the United Nations, noting that this must be recommended by the UN Security Council, consistent with the UN Charter. It did not indicate the United Nations or Australia recognised a Palestinian state."

But Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council executive director Colin Rubenstein said on Monday the vote was "profoundly disappointing and completely misguided as a way to advance Israeli-Palestinian peace".

"Hamas must have no future role in governing Gaza ... it is ... militantly opposed to any two-state peace"

COLIN RUBENSTEIN ALIAC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

whatsoever that many Palestinians see UN recognition of 'Palestine' as a major national achievement made possible by Hamas's wave of barbaric mass violence on October 7," he said. "We are also out of step with our key allies. This includes the US, Argentina, Papua New Guinea and Czechia, which voted against, and the UK, Canada, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Ukraine, Fiji, and The Netherlands, which abstained, all clearly recognising the very counter-productive effects of this UN resolution."

Opposition foreign affairs spokesman Simon Birmingham said on Monday the vote represented a "profound shift" in Australia's position. "They've shifted the position in relation to a negotiated two-state solution to instead one where the government is telegraphing that a two-state solution could and should come before settlement of difficult questions," Senator Birmingham said.

# Leibler's lament at uni chief's response

Continued from Page 1

unacceptable," he writes. "I have communicated this to Ms Hansen personally and believe that it is incumbent upon me as a member of the council to also say so publicly in the interests of the university, its reputation and high standing internationally. I urge others to do the same."

Mr Leibler also levelled criticism at the management of other universities, saying they should speak out and enforce existing policies instead of trying to "shift responsibility to the Attorney-General" by requesting clarification on the legality of anti-Israel chants.

When contacted for comment, the University of Melbourne did not respond specifically to Mr Leibler's criticism. "The university welcomes debate and peaceful protest on campus, provided it does not extend to violence, threat or intimidation," a spokeswoman said. "The University of Melbourne deplores and actively stands against all forms of racism, including anti-Semitism and Islamophobia."

The Australian National University appeared to be taking a tougher approach with student protesters. Late last week - as the university said disciplinary action had been taken following allegations of Nazi-inspired gestures at a student association meeting - administrators sent an email to encampment activists warning they would intervene unless protesters changed their behaviour.

"I am informally letting you know that I have received multiple reports and complaints that the encampment in which you are participating and your behaviours are potentially in breach of the student code of conduct," deputy vice-chancellor Grady Venville wrote. "The encampment is dividing our community and causing members of our community harm."

"I urge you to reflect on your behaviours and consider how you can respectfully protest without causing harm to other members of our community and to our campus." In a separate email to all staff and students, vice-chancellor Genevieve Bell said where "where debate has shifted to causing hate and hurt, we are stepping in".

Monash University said it had taken "formal action to exclude individuals, not affiliated with Monash, from university precincts to ensure safety and wellbeing of individuals".

It came as protesters - including pro-Palestine activist Mohammad Sharab who is not a student of the university and is currently on bail over charges of alleged kidnapping and assault -



DAVID CAIRD

Pro-Palestine protesters gather at Monash University in Melbourne on Monday night

spruiked a counter-protest for a Jewish community event that was scheduled to be held on campus on Monday evening.

"There will be a highly visible security and police presence on campus to ensure public safety, with Monash security working closely with Victoria Police and the event organisers," a university spokesman said.

On Monday, two teal independent MPs - Allegra Spender and Zoe Daniel - said they had written to Education Minister Jason Clare calling for "urgent action" to address anti-Semitism on university campuses.

In another incident, a protester gaterashed a nutrition science lecture at Deakin University to claim the university is developing weapons for Israel.

"Our university is helping to develop weapons that go to Israel," she said. "Those weapons are part of carrying out the genocide that's taking place right now in Gaza. We're protesting for our university to cut all ties with weapons manufacturers."

A Jewish student who attended the lecture and filmed the speaker said: "She decided to just walk in" she said. "She just stood up the front and shouted at us."

A Deakin University spokesman said the incident was under investigation.

# Rival groups face off on campus

TRICIA RIVERA

Tensions were running high at Monash University on Monday night as rival pro-Palestinian and pro-Jewish student activists staged events at the campus.

Palestinian students and their supporters issued a late afternoon call on social media for reinforcements, and activists gathered at the student encampment before a group marched towards a hall where the Jewish event was being staged.

The group were shouting chants such as "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free", "Albanese, Albanese, genocide won't go easy" and "Shame shame Australia shame".

Monash for Palestine, the organisers of the rally, said it was opposing a Jewish Yom Hazikaron memorial held on the campus to honour Israel's fallen soldiers and victims of terror.

The pro-Palestine group marched to the front of Robert Blackwood Hall, where the Jewish event was being staged, with some members shouting "bastard children" and "inbreds" at some of the people filing into the building

for the Israeli remembrance event.

The group has demanded the university cancel the event, apologise for "distress and harm" caused by planning to run the event and to cut "all ties" with Israel. The Palestinian protest began about 5:30pm at the Lemon Scented Lawns.

"We know this university isn't going to defend this encampment. We know the f.cking cops are not going to defend this encampment," a male speaker said to the group.

"We know that we are going to defend this encampment for as long as it takes and as hard as we have to."

Zionism Victoria executive director Zeddy Lawrence said Yom Hazikaron was a "very solemn" occasion and likened it to a Jewish Anzac Day.

"We encourage everyone who's coming along to not approach the encampment," Mr Lawrence told The Australian.

"We may not agree to what they're protesting about, we may not agree how they're disrupting life on campus, but as long as they respect us, we have no problem respecting them."

Mr Lawrence also highlighted that Sir John Monash was the founding member of the Zionist Federation of Australia.

"So if you have a problem with Zionism, one has to wonder why you're at the university named after former president of the Zionist Federation," he said.

In a statement, the Monash for Palestine student group said it refused to "tolerate events that commemorate institutions and their forces that are complicit in the genocide, oppression and displacement of Palestinians".

"It is utterly appalling that the university would allow for such an event to proceed given repeated expressions as to how this event would impact the wellbeing of the university community, particularly Palestinian staff and students," the group said.

"The ongoing oppression faced by the Palestinian people at the hands of the IOF (Israeli Occupation Forces) is a reminder of the urgent need for justice and accountability. It is bizarre that the University will go ahead with an event that 'hero-washes' those accountable for blatant human rights violations towards the Palestinian people."

# CFMEU loses company-funded iPads bid

ERWIN HANNAN WORKPLACE EDITOR

CFMEU demands for union delegates to be supplied with company-funded iPads have been rejected by the Fair Work Commission, with employers saying the tribunal's "pragmatic" approach had addressed many of their concerns.

The CFMEU's construction division wanted employers to provide delegates with an iPad with mobile internet access, a telephone, access to a photocopier, stationary and email; and an airconditioned/heated facility to hold confidential discussions with union members.

The entitlements, which include five days' paid training leave, are standard in CFMEU enterprise agreements and the union wanted them added to the

industry award. The commission has proposed employers provide union delegates with a room or area to hold discussions; a physical or electronic noticeboard; electronic means of communication with employees; a lockable filing cabinet or other secure document storage area; and office facilities and equipment, including printers, scanners, photocopiers and Wi-fi.

The commission limits the number of delegates employers are required to provide paid training leave to one for every 50 employees. The draft term also limits the number of days delegates can attend employer-funded training to five days initially, then one day a year.

Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry's director of workplace relations Jessica Tinsley said the commission had refused the "ridiculous, ambit

'Workplace delegates should not be able to include themselves in any matter they choose to'

JESSICA TINSLEY ACCI DIRECTOR OF WORKPLACE RELATIONS

claims' made by unions. "ACCI is pleased to see many of its concerns addressed by the draft term, including giving certainty to employers about which matters delegates can involve themselves in," Ms Tinsley said.

"Workplace delegates should not be able to include themselves in any matter they choose to. The draft term limits the number of workplace delegates required to be provided paid training leave

and the number of days they may attend training," she said.

CFMEU construction division national secretary Zach Smith said the proposed rules "don't go far enough in giving delegates the best possible chance to advocate for workers' safety".

"We'll be seeking industry-specific provisions to ensure delegates get the rights they deserve because they save lives on construction sites," Mr Smith said.

"Construction is one of the most dangerous industries in Australia and union delegates are a critical part of stopping workers being ripped off or killed at work."

Acting ACTU secretary Liam O'Brien said unions were concerned the draft term showed an "apparent lack of flexibility in when and how leave is taken over a number of years".

# Drug case Aussie faces 20 years in Bali prison

An Australian man faces up to 20 years in a Bali prison and a fine of more than \$600,000 for allegedly attempting to sell crystal meth.

Police said the 49-year-old - referred to by his initials, TAS, but identified by Australian media as Troy Smith - was arrested on April 30 at his hotel.

He was allegedly found with 3.15g of crystal methamphetamine. His wife, a foreign national only identified by her initials, TIM, was also held but found not to be involved.

Mr Smith was charged with a "drug transaction", which means offering to sell or become a broker of narcotics, Ponco Indriyo, Bali police deputy director of drugs investigation said.

The charge carries a maximum prison sentence of 20 years

and a fine of 10 billion rupiah (\$622,000).

Mr Smith was also charged with drug possession, which carries a lower maximum sentence of 12 years and a maximum fine of eight billion rupiah.

Authorities made him take a urine test which came back positive for meth, the police official said. He had received a package carrying the meth sent by a friend in Australia, Mr Indriyo said.

A Bali police statement said the package contained "one Colgate toothpaste tube containing 3.15g of alleged crystal meth".

Mr Smith did not appear at the press conference but authorities in Indonesia typically parade drug suspects to the media.

## INDEX

- WORLD P8-9
- EDITORIALS P10
- LETTERS P10
- COMMENTARY P11
- BUSINESS P13-21
- TECHNOLOGY P16
- SPORT P22, 24
- PUZZLES P23
- TELEVISION P23

Editor-in-chief Michelle Gunn  
Editor Kelvin Healey

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CONTACTS  
Editorial bureaus: theaustralian.com.au/contact  
News, tips and comment: feedback@theaustralian.com.au

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