

Reports link Islamic State Recruiter to Canadian Embassy in Jordan

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Canada's embassy in Jordan, which is run by Prime Minister Stephen Harper's handpicked ambassador and former top bodyguard, is being linked in news reports to an unfolding international terrorism and spy scandal.

The federal government refused to comment Friday on multiple Turkish media reports that a foreign spy allegedly working for Canadian intelligence – and arrested in Turkey for helping three young British girls travel to Syria to join Islamic State militants – was working for the Canadian embassy in Amman, Jordan.

Reports also say the suspect has confessed to working for Canadian intelligence and was doing so in order to obtain Canadian citizenship. The man previously travelled to Canada with the embassy's approval, said one report.

Canada's ambassador to Jordan is Bruno Saccomani, the former RCMP officer who was in charge of Harper's security detail until the prime minister appointed him almost two years ago as the envoy to Amman, with dual responsibility for Iraq.

The suspect in custody is a Syrian intelligence operative named Mohammed Mehmet Rashid – dubbed Doctor Mehmet Rashid – who helped the three London schoolgirls travel to Syria upon their arrival in Turkey, according to Yeni Safak, a conservative and Islamist Turkish newspaper known for its strong support of the government.

Other Turkish news outlets identified the man with slightly different spellings: Mohammed al Rashid or Mohammad Al Rashed.

Police arrested Rashid more than a week ago in a province near Turkey's border with Syria, multiple news agencies reported.

The initial police report says Rashid confessed he was working for the Canadian intelligence agency and that he has flown to Jordan to share intelligence with other agents working for the Canadian Embassy in Amman, various news outlets reported.

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