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Second Man Arrested Over Firebomb Attack on Melbourne Synagogue

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– Categories: Breaking News



Victoria Police have arrested a second man in connection with the firebombing of the Adass Israel Synagogue in Ripponlea, located in southeast Melbourne. The 21-year-old suspect from Werribee is alleged to be one of three individuals involved in the targeted arson attack that alarmed Melbourne's Jewish community and triggered a high-level counterterrorism investigation.

Police conducted coordinated raids across several Melbourne suburbs on Wednesday, including Toorak, Airport West, Point Cook, Hadfield, Weir Views, Coburg, and Werribee.

Several electronic devices were seized and are currently undergoing forensic analysis. In a statement, Victoria Police alleged that the man was involved in breaking into the synagogue and igniting the fire.

Deputy Commissioner Wendy Steendam called the arrest “a significant breakthrough” in the ongoing case. “Today’s arrest is a demonstration of our continued efforts to bring those responsible to justice,” she said. Steendam confirmed that two suspects have now been charged and noted that more arrests may follow. She also stressed the value of community support, stating, “Public assistance has been absolutely critical to this investigation.”

Chief Commissioner Mike Bush spoke about the broader implications of the attack, stating, “People have the right to be safe and to feel safe, especially in their places of worship. That’s not up for negotiation.” He reaffirmed the department’s commitment to identifying all those responsible for instilling fear and causing harm. “We’re determined to bring them to justice,” he added.

The firebombing occurred in the early hours of December 6, forcing worshippers to flee as the building caught fire. Investigators linked a 2020 Volkswagen Golf used in the suspects’ escape to two additional crimes on the same night: a drive-by shooting in Bundoora and a separate attack on the Lux nightclub. A different suspect had previously been arrested for stealing the getaway vehicle.

Victoria Police’s Counter Terrorism Command (CTC) is leading the investigation, alongside forensic teams and specialized law enforcement units. Senior officers are expected to give a press briefing later on Wednesday.

The string of antisemitic incidents has had a profound impact on Melbourne’s Jewish population. While authorities report substantial progress, the case highlights the ongoing need for vigilance and strong enforcement to ensure places of worship remain secure and protected from those who seek to harm.