

Sydney Teen Charged Over Underworld Murder

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A 19-year-old man has been charged with the murder of underworld figure Dawood Zakaria, whose death earlier this year prompted New South Wales Police to launch a major task force against organised crime.

Zakaria, 32, was shot on May 25 while seated in a Toyota Hilux in Granville alongside solicitor Sylvan Singh, 25. The pair was ambushed by gunmen from a nearby Mercedes.

Zakaria sustained critical head injuries and later died in the hospital. Singh survived despite multiple gunshot wounds.

According to police, the intended target was alleged Alameddine associate Samimjan Azari, who was in the back seat with his bodyguard at the time. Investigators say the attack reflects the escalating cycle of violence linked to rival organised crime groups in Sydney.

In response to the shooting and other violent incidents, NSW Police established Taskforce Falcon within days. The unit was created to disrupt criminal networks and prevent retaliatory attacks that endanger the wider community. At its launch, authorities pledged they would “not tolerate these lawless thugs getting out there with their vendetta against each other and putting in danger members of our community.”

Detectives executed a search warrant at a Guildford home around 10:15 a.m. today, arresting the 19-year-old. He was charged with murder, participation in a criminal group, and multiple counts relating to drugs, weapons, and theft. The accused is due to appear before the Parramatta Local Court tomorrow. Police have withheld his name as legal proceedings remain active.

The shooting highlights the ongoing threat posed by Sydney’s criminal underworld, much of it linked to drug trafficking and violent reprisals. Police have connected a series of shootings in recent years to the rival Alameddine and Hamzy crime families.

Taskforce Falcon, staffed with intelligence analysts, firearms experts, and local police units, has been tasked with intercepting potential plots before they unfold. Authorities emphasise that community safety remains a priority as many of these confrontations have occurred in residential areas, placing bystanders at risk.

The NSW government has pledged additional resources for anti-gang operations, including expanded surveillance and strike force support. Officials argue that firm action is needed to deter youth involvement in criminal groups.

Legal experts note that while courts will determine guilt in this case, addressing root causes such as financial incentives, intimidation, and community pressures will be critical alongside law enforcement. Police have indicated that further arrests linked to the Granville shooting and other incidents remain possible as investigations continue