



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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Saudi psychiatrist arrested on child sex tourism charges
Suspect allegedly traveled to California to molest a two-and-a-half-year-old girl

SACRAMENTO – A 37-year-old Saudi psychiatrist made his initial appearance in federal court here this afternoon to face charges that he traveled to Vallejo, California, yesterday to molest a two-and-a-half-year-old girl after exchanging numerous emails with an undercover agent posing as the toddler's father.

Nabil Al Rowais, who entered the United States on a nonimmigrant visa issued in Canada, was arrested last night by agents with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the California Bureau of Investigation at a motel in Vallejo, California. He is charged in a criminal complaint with traveling in foreign commerce with the intent to have sex with a minor, a charge that carries a minimum sentence of five years in prison and a maximum penalty of up to 30 years. Magistrate Judge Dale A. Drozd ordered Al Rowais held without bond pending his next court appearance May 12.

According to the affidavit filed in the case, an undercover agent posing as the father of a toddler daughter exchanged numerous emails with Al Rowais in which the suspect expressed a desire to travel to California to sexually molest the child. When the suspect, who claims to be a practicing psychiatrist, arrived at the Vallejo motel for the agreed upon meeting yesterday evening, he was taken into custody. The case is being prosecuted by the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of California.

The initial lead in this case came about as a result of an ICE investigation known as Operation Babynet, a probe targeting an El Dorado Hills man who ultimately pleaded guilty to molesting his infant daughter and distributing the images over the Internet.

After receiving the lead, ICE agents teamed with the California Bureau of Investigation, the Sacramento Sheriff's Department, and the Sacramento Police Department to investigate the allegations. The agencies are members of the Safe Streets Task Force, an ongoing initiative partnering federal, state, and local agencies to target violent street gangs and child sex predators.

“Whether a sexual predator is on the Internet exploiting our virtual borders or is an alien who has preyed on children, ICE is using all of its law enforcement authorities to identify them and bring them to justice,” said Rick Eaton, assistant special agent in charge of the ICE office of investigations in Sacramento. “We are working with our law enforcement partners to do everything possible to prevent the exploitation of children both here and abroad.”

“This is an excellent example of a cooperative law enforcement effort to address a very serious threat to our children and the investigators in this case did an outstanding job in protecting public safety,” said Craig Buehler, Chief of the California Bureau of Investigation. “Investigating and apprehending sexual predators who use the Internet to prey upon our youth is one of the California Bureau of Investigations’ top priorities.”

Al Rowais’ arrest is part of Operation Predator, an ongoing ICE enforcement initiative to identify, investigate, arrest and, in the case of foreign nationals, deport child sex predators. Since the initiative began almost two years ago, ICE agents have arrested more than 7,800 individuals nationwide, including almost 2,000 here in California.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.