Beat: Politics

Parents who planned to join Islamic State arrested in the Netherlands

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USPA News - Two couples in the Netherlands were arrested Friday after they made preparations to travel to Syria to join the Islamic State with their children, officials announced on Saturday. The arrests came just hours after the Dutch government unveiled new measures to stop people from joining the al-Qaeda splinter group.

The arrests were made on Friday evening after investigators received "strong indications" that two families in the town of Huizen, about 25 kilometers (15 miles) southeast of Amsterdam, were making preparations to move to Syria. Authorities believe both families intended to join the Islamic State, which declared itself an Islamic caliphate after seizing much of northeastern Syria and making huge gains in parts of Iraq. "The suspicion concerns the support of the armed fight of terrorist group IS and wanting to move to Syria with this goal. In this context house searches have been carried out," the prosecutor`s office said in a statement. "Four adults were arrested. This involves two men and two women between the ages of 30 to 34 years, all residents of Huizen." The Child Care and Protection Board also visited the residences of both families to ensure the safety of the children, after which the children were removed from their homes on the order of a juvenile court judge. One couple has an 8-month-old child while the other has five children ranging between the ages of 1 and 9. "As a human being and as mayor I am touched by these recent events," Huizen Mayor Fons Hertog said. "We work together in the interest of safety, and also in the interest of safety of the children involved. At the national level there is intense collaboration in the fight against terrorism. This also includes people who intend to travel to join a terrorist organization." The arrests came just hours after the Dutch government announced new measures to stop citizens from traveling to Syria and Iraq to join the Islamic State, and allowed the National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism (NCTV) to cancel the passports of the four people arrested on Friday. "The reason is to prevent the departure of these persons and their children," Hertog added.

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