

Victorian election: Andrews 'cannot guarantee our safety', says Guy



Victorian Liberal leader Matthew Guy and his wife, Renae. Picture: David Geraghty

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Liberal leader Matthew Guy has warned that a Labor-Greens coalition could not keep Victorians safe, citing the latter's record of opposing anti-terror legislation in Canberra.

In the wake of terrorist Hassan Khalif Shire Ali's fatal stabbing rampage in Melbourne's Bourke Street on Friday, Mr Guy said that only the Coalition could be trusted on crime and national security. Shire Ali killed Sisto Malaspina, the 74-year-old co-owner of Melbourne culinary institution Pellegrini's, and injured two others, before he was shot by police in the incident, for which Islamic State has claimed credit.

"The Australian Greens have voted against every major strengthening of our anti-terror laws in the last (federal) parliament," Mr Guy said. He warned of the possibility of an Andrews Labor government forming an alliance with the Greens should they fall short of the number of seats required to govern at the November 24 election. "Tell me, how is an Andrews government, possibly in

coalition with the Greens, or relying on the Greens' support ... how are they going to keep us safe when they're beholden to the Greens?

Premier Daniel Andrews yesterday declared the Victorian government "stands ready" to co-operate with the federal government on deportations and visas, in a break from past responses to federal intervention on state law and order.

Mr Guy said Mr Andrews had four years to back the federal government on deportations. "It's my understanding that the government hasn't recommended a single person for deportation in four years. Now he says this is on the agenda," he said. When Mr Andrews was asked if his government had recommended serious criminals or suspects be deported, he said there were some but the discussions were confidential.

"The Liberals and Nationals have said now for three years: mandatory minimum jail time for repeat violent offenders and deportation for those who are not Australian citizens," Mr Guy said.

Shire Ali was a Somalian-born Australian citizen who police say had come here in the 1980s or 90s. While he had convictions for burglary, receiving stolen goods, possession and use of cannabis, speeding and driving an unregistered vehicle, he had never been convicted of any violent offences. He was known to counter-terrorism police and had his passport confiscated in 2015 when he tried to travel to Syria.

Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton yesterday attacked Mr Andrews and the state's judiciary for "soft sentencing" and not doing enough to clamp down on violent offenders.