

Hasan charged with 13 counts of murder

Nov 13, 2009

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WASHINGTON (Nov. 12, 2009) -- Military prosecutors have charged Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan with 13 counts of premeditated murder in the Nov. 5 attack at Fort Hood, Texas.

The charges fall under Article 118 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice and the case will be heard in the military system.

"These are initial charges, and additional charges may be preferred in the future, subject to the ongoing criminal investigation," said Chris Grey, spokesman for U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Division, during a news conference at Fort Hood today.

"Our investigation remains open and ongoing," Grey said. "We are doing everything possible, and we are looking at every reason for this shooting. We are aggressively following every possible lead."

Preferring charges is the first step in the process. "A charge is merely an accusation," Grey said. "The accused is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty."

Hasan has hired a lawyer. Under Article 118, the minimum sentence if he's convicted is life with the possibility of parole. The maximum sentence is death.

Life at the sprawling installation is returning to normal, and the mission of the post continues, said Col. John Rossi, a Fort Hood spokesman. Twelve gunshot victims remain in local hospitals, with one in the intensive care unit. All are in stable condition, the colonel said.

Experts in psychological trauma continue to deploy to the base. More than 100 behavioral health specialists have deployed to help with assessments and assist across the command. Critical-incident stress management teams, unit ministry teams, health specialists and family life consultants are among those who have deployed to the central Texas post.

"Collectively, they have made more than 3,000 individual contacts so far," Rossi said. "All of the

wounded have received the critical incident stress de-brief, and all those at the scene are receiving the same de-brief.

"Our goal is all that require, or desire, help get it," he continued. "We are guarding against any premature determination that all is OK."

Unit commanders and leaders are actively engaged in the recovery process, the colonel said.

"As part of our healing process, Fort Hood continues to responsibly and respectfully resume normal activities," Rossi said. "Our security posture remains vigilant, and our Fort Hood home is a great place to remain safe and secure. Units are returning from deployments as other units continue to train. The Soldier readiness processing center is re-established and is operational at this time."