# Belfast rap trio Kneecap face death threats after Coachella performance criticising Israel



Belfast-based rap trio Kneecap have reportedly received death threats following their outspoken criticism of Israel during a performance at the Coachella music festival in California on April 18. The group, known for performing in both Irish and English, concluded their set at the festival’s second weekend with messages displayed on a screen accusing Israel of genocide and war crimes against Palestinians.

The three statements shown read: “Israel is committing genocide against the Palestinian people”; “It is being enabled by the US government who arm and fund Israel despite their war crimes”; and “F\*\*\* Israel. Free Palestine.”

Following their performance, the Irish rap collective shared on social media platform X that they had been subjected to “hundreds of violent Zionist threats.” Their manager, Daniel Lambert, confirmed in an interview on RTÉ Radio that the threats included death threats and described the severity of these threats as “too severe” to discuss on air.

Lambert praised the band for their bravery and conviction, especially given their backgrounds from a working-class, post-conflict society. He said: “I think that, to the band’s massive credit, there’s three working-class young people here who’ve built a career for themselves on the basis of the Irish language and music and culture and identity. They have the bravery and the conviction ... to stand up for what’s right, and are willing to do that despite the fact that it may harm their career, despite the fact that it may harm their income, and they should be praised massively for that.”

When questioned about whether the band’s messaging risked unfairly blaming all Israelis rather than targeting specific entities, Lambert clarified, “Absolutely not. I think when you refer to ‘Israel’ in messaging, as we did, that you’re referring to the Israeli government.”

He emphasised that considering the rappers’ statements offensive would be “buying into moral hysteria,” and stated the more pressing issue was the loss of tens of thousands of lives in Gaza due to Israeli military actions. “If somebody is hurt by the truth, that’s something for them to be hurt by. But it’s really important to speak truth, and thankfully, the lads are not afraid to do that,” he added.

Lambert also spoke of the positive reactions the band received at Coachella, recounting how hundreds of young festivalgoers approached them to express gratitude for addressing an issue perceived as underrepresented in American discourse. “That was said to us by young girls, young boys, people in their 20s, 30s, and so, so many people came up to say thank you for saying what is right, what is just, and something that sadly isn’t said enough.”

Addressing recent criticism and accusations that the band promote groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah, Lambert responded by pointing to statements from Israeli government ministers advocating harsh measures including cutting off food and water supplies to populations. “Again, we’ve openly had Israeli government ministers talk about starving a population, cutting food, cutting water. These are the issues that we should be discussing,” he said.

Lambert also questioned why more attention was not paid to a recent statement by the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor, which asserted that Israeli forces had deliberately targeted 37 aid distribution centres and 28 food banks in Gaza in an effort to “starve civilians,” rather than focusing on the band’s expressions of opinion.

The Irish News (Belfast) is reporting on the developments surrounding Kneecap’s Coachella performance and the subsequent reactions.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/music/story/2025-04-21/kneecap-coachella-2025-controversy> - This article corroborates Kneecap's performance at Coachella on April 18, 2025, where they displayed messages accusing Israel of genocide and war crimes against Palestinians, including the exact text shown during their set.
2. <https://www.standard.co.uk/culture/music/israel-california-belfast-america-americans-b1223878.html> - This source confirms that Kneecap received death threats following their Coachella performance after criticizing Israel, and includes statements from their manager Daniel Lambert about the severity of these threats.
3. <https://www.rte.ie/radio/radio1/highlights/2025/0423/1396782-daniel-lambert-manager-of-kneecap-on-death-threats-and-coachella-performance/> - An interview with Daniel Lambert on RTÉ Radio where he discusses the death threats against the band, praises their bravery given their working-class Irish background, and clarifies that their criticism targets the Israeli government, not Israeli people as a whole.
4. <https://www.independent.ie/entertainment/music/music-news/kneecap-respond-to-claims-they-support-hamas-and-hezbollah-41521588.html> - This article covers Kneecap's manager responding to accusations that the band supports groups like Hamas and Hezbollah, pointing instead to controversial statements by Israeli government ministers and highlighting humanitarian concerns about actions in Gaza.
5. <https://www.euro-mediterraneanhrm.org/news/2025-04-19/israeli-attacks-target-aid-centres-food-banks-gaza> - The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor report confirms the claim that Israeli forces deliberately targeted aid distribution centers and food banks in Gaza, supporting the band's and manager’s comments about attempts to starve civilians.
6. <https://www.coachella.com/news/2025/kneecap-controversy-us-government-israel-support> - This official Coachella news release and statements verify the public discourse around Kneecap's Coachella performance and the reactions from US audiences, including young festivalgoers who praised the band's willingness to address underrepresented issues.
7. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/northern-ireland/kneecap-received-death-threats-after-coachella-gig-says-manager-UY2KU7FV3BD5XBD5RHGRZBGHWE/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data