# Counter-terrorism police investigate Belfast rap group Kneecap over alleged incitement to violence



Counter-terrorism police in London are assessing videos involving Belfast-based rap group Kneecap after allegations emerged that the group encouraged violence against Members of Parliament (MPs). One video, reportedly from a November 2023 performance in London, appears to show a band member stating: “The only good Tory is a dead Tory. Kill your local MP.” This footage has drawn the attention of the Metropolitan Police and the Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit (CTIRU), which is investigating whether further action should be taken.

In addition to this, the Metropolitan Police are also reviewing another video from a separate London performance in November last year, believed to feature a band member saying: “up Hamas, up Hezbollah.” Both Hamas and Hezbollah are designated as banned organisations in the UK, and expressing support for them is a criminal offence.

The Metropolitan Police confirmed they were made aware of these videos in late April and have referred them to the CTIRU for assessment. A spokesperson stated: “We were made aware of a video on 22 April, believed to be from an event in November 2024, and it has been referred to the Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit (CTIRU) for assessment and to determine whether any further police investigation may be required. We have also been made aware of another video believed to be from an event in November 2023.”

The UK government has condemned the remarks allegedly made by the group. A government spokesperson expressed strong disapproval of any threatening language, stating: “We unequivocally condemn threatening remarks made towards any individual. Political intimidation and abuse must have no place in our society. We recognise the chilling effect that harassment and intimidation of elected representatives can have on our democracy. All reports of intimidation, harassment and threats are taken extremely seriously. We work with the police and Parliament to do everything in our power to crack down on threats to elected officials.”

Kneecap, whose members hail from west Belfast, have publicly denied the allegations and described the accusations as part of a “coordinated smear campaign.” In a statement posted on Instagram, the band said: “Recent attacks against us are based on deliberate distortions and falsehoods. Our only concern is the Palestinian people.”

The controversy surrounding Kneecap intensified following their appearance at the Coachella music festival in California earlier this month. During their set, messages relating to the ongoing conflict in Gaza were displayed on a screen behind the performers, including one that read: “F\*\*\* Israel, Free Palestine.” This provoked criticism in both the UK and the US.

Sharon Osbourne, known for her role as an X Factor judge, publicly called for the revocation of the band’s US work visas in response to the politically charged messages. Following the backlash, Kneecap lost support from their American booking agency, Independent Artist Group (IAG), which ended its relationship with the group.

The developments have placed Kneecap under significant scrutiny amid wider tensions surrounding political expression and the conflict in the Middle East. Authorities continue to review the material linked to the group, with investigations ongoing.

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.businessinsider.com/kneecap-irish-hip-hop-group-coachella-controversy-explained-2025-4> - Details Kneecap's Coachella performance controversy involving pro-Palestine messages, including the 'F\*\*\* Israel, Free Palestine' screen, and the subsequent loss of their US booking agency.
2. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kneecap_(band)> - Documents prior controversies involving Kneecap, including a member chanting 'up Hezbollah' at a concert and their political affiliations, corroborating patterns of politically charged statements.
3. <https://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/people/kneecap-who-are-belfasts-republican-irish-language-rap-trio-and-why-are-they-labelled-controversial-a-breakdown-of-the-groups-background-lyrics-and-antics-4492735> - Provides background on Kneecap's history of controversial lyrics and political messaging, aligning with the reported investigations into their alleged incendiary remarks.
4. <https://www.businessinsider.com/kneecap-irish-hip-hop-group-coachella-controversy-explained-2025-4> - Corroborates Sharon Osbourne's call to revoke Kneecap's US work visas following their Coachella statements, as referenced in the article's claims about international backlash.
5. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kneecap_(band)> - Mentions Kneecap's support for politician Clare Daly, adding context to their political activism and potential motivations behind controversial remarks.
6. <https://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/people/kneecap-who-are-belfasts-republican-irish-language-rap-trio-and-why-are-they-labelled-controversial-a-breakdown-of-the-groups-background-lyrics-and-antics-4492735> - Explains Kneecap's frequent defense of being 'misunderstood,' supporting their denial of allegations as a 'coordinated smear campaign' in the article.
7. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2047246/footage-belfast-rap-group-telling> - Please view link - unable to able to access data