# Northern Irish hip-hop group Kneecap to take legal action over antisemitism accusations after Coachella controversy



Northern Irish hip-hop group Kneecap plans to take legal action over what they describe as "false accusations of antisemitism" following a contentious performance at the Coachella music festival in California last weekend. The trio faced significant backlash after the final part of their second set featured three large on-screen messages that accused Israel of committing genocide and war crimes in Gaza.

The displayed slogans read: "Israel is committing genocide against the Palestinian people," followed by "It is being enabled by the US government who arm and fund Israel despite their war crimes," and concluded with "F\*\*\* Israel. Free Palestine."

The group's performance sparked strong reactions, including from television presenter Sharon Osbourne, who criticised Kneecap for "openly support[ing] terrorist organisations" and called for their US visas to be revoked. Osbourne, known for her roles on America's Got Talent and The X Factor, has stated on social media: "As someone of both Irish Catholic on my mother's side and Ashkenazi Jewish heritage on her father's side and extensive experience in the music industry, I understand the complexities involved. I urge you to join me in advocating for the revocation of Kneecap's work visa."

Kneecap’s manager, Daniel Lambert, revealed that members of the group have received "severe" death threats in the wake of the controversy. Despite this, the band has responded on social media, denouncing the backlash as a "co-ordinated smear campaign" based on "deliberate distortions and falsehoods."

The band stated: "For over a year, we have used our shows to call out the British and Irish governments' complicity in war crimes." They added that many Jewish people are "outraged by this genocide just as we are" and emphasised their determination not to "stay silent." They further announced they would be pursuing legal action against what they described as "malicious efforts" to undermine them.

Kneecap consists of Móglaí Bap and Mo Chara from Belfast, alongside DJ Próvaí from Derry, who regularly performs while wearing a balaclava. Despite the controversy, the group has developed a strong fanbase in the United States. Among the supporters who reacted positively to their Coachella statements was US rapper Macklemore, who simply wrote: "That it," and American-Irish comedian Des Bishop, who commented on social media: "They are all suddenly against free speech over here [in the US]."

The recent dispute adds to ongoing scrutiny of Kneecap. This week, the Metropolitan Police disclosed that counter-terrorism officers are investigating footage from a London performance at the Kentish Town Forum last November. The video allegedly shows a member of the band shouting "Up Hamas, up Hezbollah" while a Hezbollah flag was displayed, raising concerns given that both groups are banned in the UK and it is illegal to express support for them.

A Metropolitan Police spokesperson said, "We have been made aware of the video and it has been referred to the Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit for assessment and to determine whether any further police investigation may be required."

In addition to their music career, Kneecap's rise was chronicled in the 2021 Irish-language film "Kneecap," which garnered critical acclaim, including a BAFTA award for Outstanding Debut by a British writer, director, or producer for Rich Peppiatt, the film’s director and co-writer.

Regarding the band's visa status in the United States, a spokesman for the US State Department declined to comment due to privacy and confidentiality rules surrounding visa matters.

At the time of reporting, attempts to contact Sharon Osbourne’s representatives for further comment have been made.

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

## References

* <https://pa.media/blogs/pa-uplifting/kneecap-set-for-action-on-false-accusations-of-antisemitism-at-coachella-gig/> - This article corroborates that Kneecap plans to take legal action over false accusations of antisemitism after displaying critical messages about Israel during their Coachella performance, including details of the slogans shown and the backlash they faced, such as Sharon Osbourne's call for visa revocation and the death threats received by the band.
* <https://www.dazeddigital.com/music/article/66681/1/kneecap-address-coachella-controversy-palestine-smear-campaign> - This source supports Kneecap's response to the controversy, where they label the backlash as a coordinated smear campaign and claim their messages criticize mass slaughter in Gaza, emphasizing their stand against efforts to silence them.
* <https://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-65307383> - This BBC report details the public and official reactions to Kneecap's Coachella performance, including Sharon Osbourne's criticism and the discussion around the group's US visa status, supporting the claims of controversy and subsequent scrutiny.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2025/apr/25/kneecap-coachella-controversy-israel-palestine-music-festival> - The Guardian article confirms the content of the on-screen messages used by Kneecap at Coachella and covers the backlash, including statements from the band's manager about death threats, and outlines the legal and political context of the controversy.
* <https://www.met.police.uk/news/metropolitan-police-counter-terrorism-investigating-kneecap-video/> - This official Metropolitan Police update verifies that counter-terrorism officers are investigating a video from a London performance where Kneecap allegedly expressed support for banned groups Hamas and Hezbollah, aligning with the reported ongoing scrutiny.
* <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt14487774/> - The IMDb page for the 2021 Irish-language film 'Kneecap' confirms the band's rise and critical acclaim of the film, including its BAFTA award for Outstanding Debut, supporting the background information provided about the group and their cultural impact.
* <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14650373/Kneecap-action-against-critics-pro-Hamas-chants.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data