# Northern Irish rap group Kneecap investigated by counter-terrorism police over controversial lyrics



Northern Irish rap group Kneecap are under investigation by counter-terrorism police following controversial footage that surfaced of the band allegedly calling for the death of British MPs. The group, scheduled to perform at this year’s TRNSMT festival in Glasgow Green on Friday, 11 July, are being scrutinised after a video from a November 2023 gig appeared to show one member saying: "The only good Tory is a dead Tory. Kill your local MP."

Further controversy stems from additional footage from a November 2024 performance at the Kentish Town Forum, where a band member is heard shouting "up Hamas, up Hezbollah," accompanied by the display of a Hezbollah flag. Both Hamas and Hezbollah are proscribed organisations in the UK, and expressing support for them constitutes a criminal offence.

A spokesperson for the Metropolitan Police confirmed they were made aware of the videos, stating: "We were made aware of a video on April 22, believed to be from an event in November 2024, 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. We have also been made aware of another video believed to be from an event in November 2023." The police are currently assessing both videos to establish if further investigation is warranted.

The Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit (CTIRU), operating within the Met’s Counter Terrorism Command, is responsible for identifying extremist material online and is conducting the assessments. Should the material be found to breach UK law, a police investigation will be undertaken.

Kneecap, comprised of Liam Og O Hannaidh, Naoise O Caireallain, and JJ O Dochartaigh, have been embroiled in controversies beyond the UK. Earlier this year at the Coachella festival in the United States, the group displayed messages accusing Israel of genocide against Palestinians and criticised the US government's support for Israel. This led former X Factor judge Sharon Osbourne to call for the revocation of Kneecap's US work visas, describing the band’s statements as "projections of anti-Israel messages and hate speech." Osbourne, who has Irish Catholic and Ashkenazi Jewish heritage, expressed her concerns on social media and urged action against the band, saying, "I urge you to join me in advocating for the revocation of Kneecap's work visa."

Following the backlash at Coachella, Kneecap's UK sponsor and booking agency, Independent Artist Group (IAG), dropped the band. The members' US visas reportedly are no longer valid, and they are currently seeking new sponsorship ahead of a sold-out North American tour scheduled for October.

In response to the mounting criticism and the investigations, Kneecap have alleged on social media that they have been targets of a “co-ordinated smear campaign” and defended their performances as efforts to "call out" the conflict in Gaza. The band hinted at the possibility of legal action amid what they describe as "malicious efforts" against them. Their manager, Daniel Lambert, also revealed that the group has received "severe" death threats following the Coachella appearance.

The TRNSMT festival, where Kneecap is set to perform on the opening night, will be headlined by American rapper 50 Cent. The band's participation comes as the investigations continue, with authorities assessing the legal implications of their public statements and actions during live performances.

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