Panel show presenter threatens legal action against ITV

BY LAURA POLLOCK

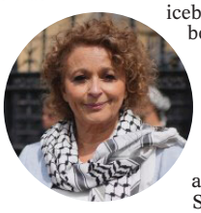
LOOSE Women presenter Nadia Sawalha has threatened legal action against ITV for taking her "on and off" the panel show, claiming she was dropped over her support for Palestine.

The 61-year-old TV personality claimed she was removed from the show following an "escalating campaign and smears" calling for her to be removed.

Along with the lawsuit, Sawalha launched a petition calling for ITV to publicly apologise and reinstate her on the panel show, which has already garnered more than 20,000 signatures.

In a video shared on Instagram, she said: "I want to say how sad I am that it's got to this. Believe me, I have appealed to ITV's hearts and minds, but to no avail.

"After I began speaking publicly in support of Palestine in December 2023, I became the target of an escalating campaign of smears, complaints, hostile media coverage and targeted calls to have me removed from Loose Women."



The panellist said she was removed from the programme in July 2026 and accused ITV of "forever changing the goalposts".

She said: "They couldn't guarantee they wouldn't take me off again, as it would depend on what was said, even though I'm hired for being an opinionated woman on a discussion show and I've never brought up or spoken about Palestine directly on the show.

"This is the tip of the iceberg of what's been happening."

The presenter launched a petition with the aim of showing there are "many more people with us than against us".

She added: "There are the teachers, doctors, nurses, charity and supermarket workers, and students who have also spoken according to their conscience and have suffered a similar fate as me. Enough is enough.

"We need to send a clear message to ITV and other groups and corporations that we won't be scared into silence, and no-one should be bullied out of their job for following their conscience and speaking out against brutal oppression."

Sawalha (left) joined the ITV show in 1999 as one of the original panellists alongside Kaye Adams, Jane Moore and Karren Brady. She took a maternity break in 2002 and returned to the programme in 2013.

ITV was contacted for comment.

'Let's spread message of what Islam stands for'



Scholar calls for action to stifle rising tide of Islamophobic extremism

BY STEPH BRAWN

A MUSLIM scholar living in Scotland has called for urgent action on the rising tide of Islamophobic extremism amid "emergency levels" of attacks.

Paigham Mustafa – who has been living under a fatwa for more than 20 years – has said there needs to be a national conversation about what Islam truly stands for and why misunderstanding of the religion is fuelling division.

He is also calling for greater learning within schools and wider society, arguing that education about Islam remains one of the most effective ways of reducing prejudice and strengthening community cohesion.

There have been some 70 attacks on UK mosques in the past year, about one every five days.

Hate crime against Muslims also grew 19% in the year to March 2025, according to the Home Office, to a record of 4476 reported incidents.

In the past few weeks, Amnesty International has said that Islamophobic attacks across the UK were "reaching emergency levels".

"Anti-Muslim hate crime has risen significantly, and mosques across the country have increasingly become targets of vandalism, arson and intimidation. We must have a national conversation about what Islam really teaches, and defuse the toxicity of bigotry," said Mustafa.

"The greatest tragedy is that Islam is too often defined by those who neither understand nor properly practise it. Extremists distort its teachings from within, while bigots misrepresent it from outside.

"Between these opposing forces, the authentic message of the Quran – peace, justice, mercy and human dignity – is frequently lost."

Mustafa has been living under a fatwa – a religious edict calling for "action to be taken against him" – for more than 20 years. This was organised by Glasgow Central Mosque and was issued against him because of his view that Islam should return to the teachings of the Quran.

In 2023, The National reported how Mustafa claimed the police have not "adequately addressed" the threat on his life after the force admitted to being institutionally racist.



Paigham Mustafa's comments come amid 'emergency levels' of Islamophobic attacks

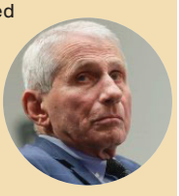
In 2021, Police Scotland said hate law does not apply to Mustafa's case as it requires an intention to stir up hatred against a group rather than an individual, but Mustafa said this raises questions about whether individuals are sufficiently protected from hate crimes committed by institutions.

With Mawlid al-Nabi, the commemoration of the Prophet Muhammad's birth, approaching later this month, Mustafa believes the moment offers an opportunity to kickstart a national conversation on anti-Muslim extremism.

"The antidote to hatred is understanding. When people encounter Islam through authentic scholarship rather than sensational headlines or social media, fear gives way to knowledge, and division gives way to dialogue," he said.

US Senate holds Fauci in contempt over Covid

BY GEORGE GAYNOR



A US Senate committee yesterday voted along party lines to hold Dr Anthony Fauci in contempt of Congress over his refusal to answer questions at a hearing on his handling of the Covid-19 pandemic.

It set up a referral to the Department of Justice for potential investigation over whether the country's top infectious disease official properly exercised his rights.

The vote came a week after Dr Fauci invoked his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination more than 100 times when he appeared before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, an episode that raised fresh legal questions about the ability of the US Congress to compel evidence from a previously pardoned witness.

Republican senator Rand Paul of Kentucky, the committee chair who pressed for the contempt finding, said that constitutional protection did not apply because Dr Fauci last year received a pardon from Joe Biden and thus did not have to worry about the threat of prosecution.

Dr Fauci and Democrats who opposed the contempt resolution said he had fear of self-incrimination given a public desire by Republicans to seek his prosecution.