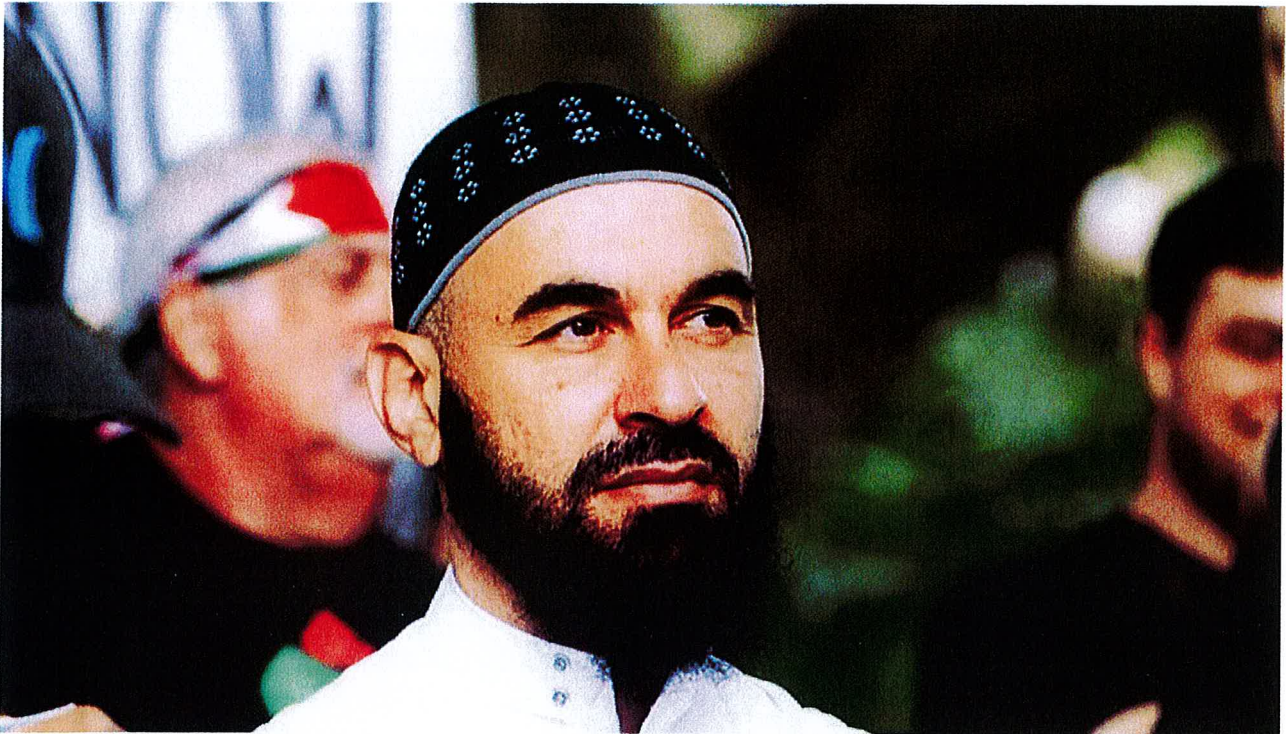


Muslim Vote convener warned by his education department employer over comments made on Sydney nurses

By Nabil Al Nashar Race Relations

Mon 24 Feb 2025 at 4:32pm



The NSW Department of Education has asked Sheikh Wesam Charkawi to work from home over breaches to social media and ethics rules. (Supplied)

In short:

Public service employees are being warned after a prominent Imam and student support officer in Sydney's west allegedly breached the education department's social media policy and code of ethics.

In an Instagram post on February 16, Sheikh Wesam Charkawi made comments on the response of some Australian politicians to the video showing two nurses threatening harm to Israeli patients.

He specifically criticised Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and NSW Health Minister Ryan Park.

Received by
Hon Chris Rath MC
Stephen Frappell
Date: 26 / 02 / 25
Resolved to publish Yes / No

Muslim Vote convener and public servant Sheikh Wesam Charkawi has been ordered to work from home for allegedly breaching the NSW Education Departments' social media policy and code of ethics.

In an Instagram post on February 16, Sheikh Wesam, commented on the two Sydney nurses threatening harm to Israeli patients in a video.

He criticised Australian politicians, branding their response as "selective moral outrage".

The Western Sydney Imam is a support officer at Granville Boys High School and a well-established youth leader in the Muslim community.

He is also a prominent figure at the helm of the "teal-style" Muslim Vote movement, aiming to unseat Labor frontbenchers like Jason Clare and Tony Burke in the fast-approaching federal election.

In an accompanying video in his Instagram post, Sheikh Wesam said the nurses' comments were "never meant to be literal or intended to be a threat to patient care", and that "in current times, in which genocide is unfolding live on our screens, emotions can sometimes get the better of anybody".

He criticised the "hypocrisy" of Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and NSW Health Minister Ryan Park for remaining "silent (or) hesitant when confronted with the most egregious acts of violence committed by Israel".

Neither the Prime Minister nor Mr Park's offices wished to comment on Sheikh Wesam's video.



Sheikh Wesam (pictured second from the left) had criticised the response from Australian politicians to the video of the Sydney nurses. (AAP: Dan Himbrechts)

The Prime Minister had described the video of the nurses as "disgusting, sickening and shameful" and later said the nurses did not deserve sympathy.

Sheikh Wesam said "the speed, intensity and coordination of the response from figures that have been otherwise largely indifferent, weak or outright complicit and enabling in the face of mass atrocities", was evidence of a "calculated double-standard".

Mr Park had called the video of the nurses "one of the most vile, shocking and appalling videos I have ever seen".

Sheikh Wesam said: "In Gaza, Muslim professionals have been deliberately targeted, bombed, executed while treating the wounded ... where were the health ministers to comment about this?"

In his post he described the response of politicians and media as, "an orchestrated model framework where outrage is not dictated by the severity of an action, but by the one who commits it".

"We refuse to accept a political a media landscape when Muslims are only visible when they are being condemned but invisible when they are being killed."

The NSW Department of Education directed Sheikh Wesam to take down the post from his Instagram and TikTok accounts.

At the time of publishing this article, the Instagram post remained up.

Public servants warned

Simon Draper secretary of the NSW Premier's Department and Kathrina Lo the NSW Public Service Commissioner addressed a letter to all public sector employees a day after Sheikh Wesam's video was published.

The letter read: "You have a duty to uphold the reputation of your department and the government sector as apolitical, impartial and professional."

The letter said this duty extended to employees in a "private capacity in public forums, on social media, or when engaging in political or social issues".

It also said: "You have a right to express your views and support causes, but always with a mind to how it might impact on your role as a public servant."

In a statement, a spokesperson for the department said staff had been made aware of their responsibilities.

"All NSW Department of Education employees have been reminded of their duty to uphold the reputation of the department as apolitical and impartial."

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