

Tory peer and tech baron stripped of honours

ANNA GROSS

Conservative donor Lord Rami Ranger was stripped of his CBE yesterday following allegations he made derogatory comments about Pakistanis and harassed a journalist, in a rare case of an honour being forfeited.

Tech entrepreneur Lawrence Jones also had his MBE nullified after being sentenced to 15 years in prison for raping two women and sexually assaulting a former employee.

Revelations about his conduct emerged following a Financial Times investigation in 2019.

A notice published in the London Gazette yesterday stated that the King requested for Ranger and Jones's honours to be "cancelled and annulled" and for their names to be "erased" from their respective registers.

Among those who have had their titles stripped are disgraced film producer Harvey Weinstein, who had his honorary CBE annulled in 2020 following convictions for rape and sexual assault, and late Zimbabwean dictator Robert Mugabe.

Former Post Office boss Paula Venables also handed back her CBE earlier

this year following public anger over her involvement in the Horizon scandal.

A total of six people were stripped of their honours by the King yesterday.

Ranger, 76, owns a consumer goods company called Sun Mark International. He was awarded his CBE in 2016 for services to business and community cohesion and former prime minister Theresa May awarded him a peerage in 2019. He has donated about £14mn to the Conservative party since 2009.

The House of Lords opened an investigation into Ranger in 2022 after independent journalist Poonam Joshi accused him of intimidation and bully-

ing. In a string of social media posts, Ranger described Joshi as an "evil woman", a "disgrace", the "epitome of filth and garbage".

Although the Lords committee withdrew the whip from Ranger last year, it was restored last month.

Ranger was also criticised last year after writing to the BBC to complain about a controversial documentary about Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in which he demanded to know whether "Pakistani-origin staff were behind this nonsense".

He subsequently apologised and withdrew his complaint to the BBC.

He was separately embroiled in a legal dispute last year with members of the Sikh community after he described the campaign group Sikhs for Justice as "the enemies of India".

A spokesperson for Lord Ranger said he had "not committed any crime nor has he broken any law", saying he was "devastated" by the decision.

Jones was a successful entrepreneur who founded internet hosting business UKFast, and was awarded an MBE in 2015 for services to the digital economy.

He was found guilty of rape and sexual assault last year.



A spokesman for Tory peer Rami Ranger said he was 'devastated'