



Public Comment Appendix for

Case 2023-018-FB-MR

Case number

Case description

In April 2023, a Facebook user posted a video that depicts a street procession in the Indian state of Odisha related to the Hindu festival of Hanuman Jayanti. The video caption reads “Sambalpur,” which is a town in Odisha, where communal violence broke out between Hindus and Muslims during the festival. These clashes were followed by arrests, curfew and suspension of internet services in Odisha.

The video starts with a depiction of the procession of people carrying saffron-coloured flags. The camera zooms in and shows a person standing on a building nearby, who then throws what appears to be a stone at the procession. In response, people from the procession start throwing stones back at the building. They also call for the person on the building to be “beaten” or “hit.” The content has been viewed about 2,000 times, has received fewer than 1000 comments and reactions, and has not been shared or reported by anyone.

Shortly after the events depicted in the video, Meta received a report from Odisha law enforcement, requesting that another video, identical to the one later referred to the Board, be taken down. This video had a different caption and was posted by a different user. Upon review, Meta found that this content violated the spirit of its [Violence and Incitement Community Standard](#). The policy rationale to the Violence and Incitement policy provides that Meta “aim(s) to prevent potential offline harm that may be related to content on Facebook” and that Meta “remove[s] content, disable[s] accounts, and work[s] with law enforcement when we believe there is a genuine risk of physical harm or direct threats to public safety.” This content was added to a Media Matching Services (“MMS”) bank which locates and flags for possible further action content that is identical or nearly identical to previously flagged photos, videos, and text.

However, the creator of the identical content deleted the video before Meta could remove it. Thereafter, Meta identified and removed this case's content, as described above, under its Violence and Incitement Community Standard. Meta explains that the content is violating, as it contains clear and accessible calls for high-severity violence. Under this policy, Meta prohibits “[t]hreats that could lead to death (and other forms of high-severity violence)...targeting people or places,” including “[c]alls for high-severity violence including content where no target is specified but a symbol represents the target and/or includes a visual of an armament or method that represents violence.”

Meta also explained that the content “was not shared to condemn or raise awareness” since there was no academic or news report context, nor discussion of the author's experience being a target of violence. Additionally, Meta noted that the caption does not condemn nor express “any kind of negative perspective about the events depicted in the video.” The company highlighted, however, that even if the content had included an awareness raising or condemning caption, Meta would still have removed it “given the significant safety concerns and ongoing risk of Hindu and Muslim communal violence.”

Meta referred the identical content to the Board, stating that this case is difficult due to the tensions between Meta's values of “Voice” and “Safety,” and because of the context required to fully assess and appreciate the risk of harm posed by the video. Meta asked the Board to assess whether Meta's decision to remove the content represents an appropriate balancing of Facebook's values of “Privacy,” “Safety,” “Dignity,” and “Voice,” and whether it is consistent with international human rights standards.

The Board selected this case to assess Meta's moderation policies and practices in contexts involving communal violence. This case falls within the Board's “crisis and conflict situations,” “hate speech against marginalized groups” and “government use of Meta's platforms” strategic priorities.

The Board would appreciate public comments that address:

- How social media platforms may be used to contribute to violence and discrimination against religious and ethnic groups in India and elsewhere.
- Insights into the socio-political context regarding the treatment of religious and ethnic groups in India, including the Indian government's policies and practices.

- How Meta's Violence and Incitement policy should treat video content depicting scenes of communal violence, and how to assess whether such content may cause or contribute to offline violence.
- How social media platforms should manage law enforcement requests for the review or removal of content that may not violate national laws but may breach platforms content rules.
- How social media platforms should incorporate law enforcement requests for content removal, especially requests not based on alleged illegality, into their transparency reporting.

In its decisions, the Board can issue policy recommendations to Meta. While recommendations are not binding, Meta must respond to them within 60 days. As such, the Board welcomes public comments proposing recommendations that are relevant to this case.



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Case number

The Oversight Board is committed to bringing diverse perspectives from third parties into the case review process. To that end, the Oversight Board has established a public comment process.

Public comments respond to case descriptions based on the information provided to the Board by users and Facebook as part of the appeals process. These case descriptions are posted before panels begin deliberation to provide time for public comment. As such, case descriptions reflect neither the Board's assessment of the case, nor the full array of policy issues that a panel might consider to be implicated by each case.

To protect the privacy and security of commenters, comments are only viewed by the Oversight Board and as detailed in the [Operational Privacy Notice](#). All commenters included in this appendix gave consent to the Oversight Board to publish their comments. For commenters who did not consent to attribute their comments publicly, names have been redacted. To withdraw your comment, please email contact@osbadmin.com.

To reflect the wide range of views on cases, the Oversight Board has included all comments received except those clearly irrelevant, abusive or disrespectful of the human and fundamental rights of any person or group of persons and therefore violating the [Terms for Public Comment](#). Inclusion of a comment in this appendix is not an endorsement by the Oversight Board of the views expressed in the comment. The Oversight Board is committed to transparency and this appendix is meant to accurately reflect the input we received.



Public Comment Appendix for

Case 2023-018-FB-MR

Case number

88

Number of Comments

Regional Breakdown

31	42	8	1
Asia Pacific & Oceania	Central & South Asia	Europe	Latin America & Caribbean
1	0	5	
Middle East and North Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	United States & Canada	

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14003
MR

Asia Pacific &
Oceania

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Ranjana

Kumari

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Centre for Social
Research

Yes

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

My observations

The role of social media in this story is significant as it has been instrumental in spreading information, ideologies, and videos related to the accused, it's not won't Facebook and Whatsapp but YouTube and others.

Mohit Yadav (Monu Manesar). On his social media feed, Monu Manesar has posted pictures carrying firearms and selfies with powerful government ministers, which have contributed to his popularity and influence among his supporters. Moreover, videos depicting alleged cow smugglers being heckled and chased, as well as other incidents of violence, have been shared on social media, further polarizing opinions about him.

Social media has also been used as a platform for Monu Manesar to deny allegations and present his side of the story. He has given interviews to Indian TV channels and shared statements, addressing the violence and murder

allegations.

The Indian press reports accusations that a video released by Monu Manesar, just two days before the religious procession, played a crucial role in inciting the violence. Muslim residents and politicians have blamed the video for igniting tensions in the Nuh district.

In the age of social media, information spreads rapidly, and narratives can be shaped quickly, influencing public perception. The power of social media to disseminate information and shape public opinion is evident in this story, where Monu Manesar's online presence and videos have had a considerable impact on the way he is perceived and the accusations against him.

Please go ahead and publish the content you have my consent for this .

With warm regards

Ranjana Kumari

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14008
MR

Europe

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Amit

Singh

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

1. Insights into the socio-political context regarding the treatment of religious and ethnic groups in India, including the Indian government's policies and practices.

Hindutva is an ethnic form of nationalism currently pursued by Hindu nationalist Prime minister Narendra Modi. Labeled as “partially free” and an “electoral autocracy,” India is currently governed by Modi, who was once shunned by Western governments due to his complicity in the Godhra massacres. Even though India's being a secular democracy provides constitutional safeguards to religious minorities, Hindu nationalists do not support the idea of religious equality. Hindu nationalism is radically far right, and given its belief in Hindu supremacy, it is a dangerous mix of religion and politics; it supports the discriminatory caste system, negates racial and religious equality, and disregards the discourse of human rights. Since 1925, The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has been India's staunchest proponent of

Hindu nationalism. The RSS is a parental organization of the current ruling party of India, the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP). Modi was a full-time RSS worker in the past, notorious for his complicity in the Godhra communal riots when he was the chief minister of the Gujarat state in 2002. Since Modi's ascendance to power in 2014, a consistent move to curtail freedom of speech, the right to dissent, freedom of press, and religious freedom has descended India into a state of "elective despotism." Since 1925, the right-wing Hindu nationalist paramilitary organisation Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has been its most staunch proponent. RSS is radically far-right, hierarchical, authoritarian, and founded on the premise of Hindu supremacy. Hindu nationalism seeks uniformity through the imposition of Hindi language, Hindu religion, Hindu mythology, and unquestioned loyalty to the nation. On different levels, it seeks to repress dissenting views, and to expunge religious pluralism and secularism from political discourse. Under Modi, India is fulfilling RSS' Hindutva mission to make India a Hindu nation. The RSS shaped Hindutva ideology similarly to the way the Nazis and Italian fascists shaped fascist ideology in the 1930s. Hindutva rejects the liberal democratic conception of nation and citizenship. It is anti-democratic, and inherently Islamophobic. The cult of tradition and male chauvinism dominates Hindutva fascist policies. Under Modi, Hindutva fascism has crystallised.

In India, pre-existing communal divisions between Hindus and Muslims have been exacerbated by Hindutva forces such as the RSS and its political wing, the BJP. Since Modi came to power in 2014, his administration has fed Islamophobic propaganda to the Hindu masses. This has led to the public demonisation of Muslims, and even normalised violence against them. Muslims have even been prosecuted for offering prayer in their own homes. A move to pass a Citizenship Amendment Bill, along with a proposed National Register of Citizens, are Modi's underhand attempts to exclude Muslims from Indian citizenship. The Nazis were obsessed with 'racial purity', striving for a pure 'Aryan' German race. Hindutva, too, is consumed by the idea of Hindu superiority. In 1966, Hindutv ideologue Golwalkar published a book alleging the 'purity' of Hindu blood. Today, the Indian Ministry of Culture is establishing a state-of-the-art genetic database to 'trace the purity of races in India'. In Modi's India, dissent at any

level meets with ruthless punishment. This is a clear symptom of a fascist regime. Modi is a 'predator of press freedom'. Under his government, freedom of the media and academic freedom have sunk to new lows. Under Modi, ancient Hindu-Muslim animosity has been effectively channelled to marginalise Muslims. This is to bolster Modi's pro-Hindu image, while simultaneously limiting dissenting voices. He supports the Hindu majoritarian view of the nation, and incites public emotions of Hindu pride and patriotism. Since Modi's populist call to Hindu nationalism, India's 200 million Muslims find themselves potentially on the brink of impending genocide. They are victims of everyday Islamophobia and hate speech. Hindu nationalists demand total assimilation of religious minorities. This withholds any special constitutional privileges which would allow minorities to keep their distinct religious identities. Minorities also carry the burden of having to prove their loyalty to the nation.

Narendra Modi has participated in religious ceremonies at Ayodhya and the Kashi Vishwanath temple. This indicates that India is gradually moving towards becoming a Hindu nation and thus abdicating its secular identity. In an Indian Hindu nation, the Muslim will be a second-class citizen. In their efforts to recover the lost glory of India, Hindu nationalists pursue a number of policies. These include securing the Babri mosque site for a Hindu temple and renaming places with Hindu names (often replacing Muslim names). Simultaneously, they have been stripping Jammu and Kashmir of its special status through the dilution of Article 370, and moving towards a new citizenship law with the potential to exclude Muslims from Indian citizenship. Bulldozing the homes of Muslim protestors has almost become a populist policy of Hindu nationalism in the Bhartiya Janta Party-ruled states of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. Acts of violence in full public view against Muslims have a certain appeal among core Hindu nationalist supporters. In many cases, parliamentary debate has been shut down, and laws passed without debate. In 2005, the US banned Modi from entry because he had failed to act against anti-Muslim riots in India. However, when Modi became prime minister in 2014, Western leaders gave him the red-carpet treatment, possibly to nurture business interests. Once Hindutva gained respectability in the West, it boosted the morale of its proponents, and

discouraged resistance.

Referencing ordinary Germans' moral justification of the mass murder of Jews during WW2, 'Nazi conscience' describes general apathy towards minorities' human rights, lack of respect for the lives of 'others', and the normalisation of violence against them. In India, Hindutva – Hindu nationalism – has bred such a conscience in ordinary Hindus, which justifies and normalises violence against religious minorities. Hindus inflict daily violence on Muslim minorities and Dalits. Few care to intervene. The Hindutva political narrative condemns past invasions by Muslim rulers and atrocities against Hindus in the Middle Ages. The partition of India in 1947, too, has rendered the Hindu majority hostile to Muslims. Constitutional privileges such as personal family rights for Muslims and religious grants anger the Hindu majority. They feel victimised and insecure – and Hindutva leaders manipulate these anti-Muslim sentiments for political gain. Violence has become an essential aspect of Hindutva politics. The Hindus have lost historical sensitivity towards religious minorities with whom they have lived for hundreds of years. Hindu nationalism in postcolonial India has benefited the BJP in elections. Modi's Hindutva state has played a key role in this process. State-sanctioned impunity for those involved in the lynching of Muslims has rewarded those responsible for inciting riots. And the State has constantly harassed those who have come out in protest against Hindu intolerance and Islamophobia. In large-scale riots such as those in Gujarat in 2002, and during the ethnic violence in Manipur, the perpetrators were Hindu extremists, and the victims primarily religious ethnic minorities. Big riots, moreover, usually happen with the complicity of the State machinery and the Hindu majority. Thus, the majority is not merely a passive onlooker, but freely participates in the ritual of violence. As long as public institutions and the mainstream media remain under the influence of the Hindu nationalist government, Nazification of the Hindu majority will continue unchecked. Alarm about the possibility of an impending Muslim genocide is already being sounded. To achieve communal harmony, the state must rid itself of Hindutva, and embrace constitutional secularism. But under the present nationalist government, this seems almost impossible

2.How Meta's Violence and Incitement policy should treat video content depicting scenes of communal violence, and how to assess whether such content may cause or contribute to offline violence.

Against the backdrop of previous discussion, it is confirmed Hindu nationalist government do not tolerate dissent and protests, but, dismantle and vilify dissenters especially those who disagree with national Hindu narratives promoted by Hindu radicals. For this purpose, cyber laws have been weaponized against dissenter with the promotion of fake news and misinformation by BJP IT cell. Modi government with clear intention to religiously polarize Hindus, directly and indirectly support Hindu extremists in starting the communal riots. Thus, Meta's policy shall be to remove such communally violent contents. Such contents could be in form of implicit or explicit contents spreading hatred against Muslim. Since mostly such contents comes from Hindu extremists, thus, immediately must be removed and user account be blocked. One needs to know, not only violent videos could cause riots, but innocent appearing contents, aid and abet in such violence. Those who review such contents, need to know the 'real intention' of the user, and must have in depth knowledge about socio-political situation of the country.

3.How social media platforms should manage law enforcement requests for the review or removal of content that may not violate national laws but may breach platforms content rules.

Under the Modi government, freedom of expression is limited on social media, government is hell bent to censor dissent, thus, for Meta's, it would be challenging to respect freedom of expression and dissent. Government clearly has ordered in many cases, to remove contents posted by opposition political party censoring democratic voices. I honestly believe, under the repressive regime of Modi, Meta cannot perform their functions effectively. As I wrote earlier, cyber is specially made to censor dissent while promoting violence on the different front. Law is subverted. Just look at the 'real intention' of the user, it shall be clear,

4. How social media platforms may be used to contribute to violence and discrimination against religious and ethnic groups in India and elsewhere.

Social media platform can contribute violence and discrimination against religious groups by spreading fake news, misinformation, rumors, coordinating attacks against them. Also, as seen in some cases in India, social media platforms under the pressure of government, ignore the violent contents and suppresses the democratic voices. Unfortunately, Facebook and Insta, in many cases, to save their business interstates, has sided with the government and has been instrumental in dismantling the secular democracy such as in India.

An expert having in depth knowledge about religious-ethnic violence in India shall be assigned in dealing with the review and removal contents.

Link to Attachment

[PC-14008](#)

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14009
MR

Asia Pacific &
Oceania

Case number

Public comment number

Region

DEEPAK

NAYAK

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

Social media, which offers young people opportunities to stay connected with friends and family while meeting new friends, even from other cultures, also has a vast space to be misused for malicious intentions that destroy the social fabric of a society. Thus, the social media should have different ways to curb and contain religious and ethnic violence, including against Muslims and minorities in India and elsewhere, by curtailing the content duly passed by a special board, which should comprise experts on Peace and Conflict management who can distinguish and understand misinformation and hate in the garb of free speech. The general public, from different strata and groups, is carried away by misinformation and starts a hate campaign without verifying the actual facts.

Social media can censor the content written along with any viral videos that mislead the general public and are meant to incite Even though the post may be genuine but posted for malicious intentions should be deleted. Social media

should always be there for real awareness, not for instigating the public to unleash mindless violence.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14013
MR

Asia Pacific &
Oceania

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Withheld

Withheld

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Withheld

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

1. Social media does contribute to hatred, phobias and violence against communities by showing stereotypical contents and images about them. People reading bias contents and seeing images develop wrong notion about specific communities. Such images and contents are like slow poison which pollute minds of people.
2. Indian state does not discriminate against communities. But there may be people holding important positions, because of their biasness, discriminate against minority groups and communities.
3. It may use artificial intelligence to identify contents and image which can cause violence and hatred. Social media should advertise against uploading of such images. There should be zero tolerance against people uploading such contents.
4. in the larger interest, the platform content rule should be changed as far as possible. The moto should be "freedom with responsibility" and "restricted

freedom in the larger interest of the society".

5. Social media should have its own independent board to look into the matter on time basis.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14014
MR

Asia Pacific &
Oceania

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Amitabh

Kumar

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Social media
matters

Yes

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

This is just one example, Meta's content moderation team is missing the political culture nuance of India since a long time. Be it caste, be it dangerous organizations like Bajrang Dal, RSS, Gau Rakshaks, dangerous criminal gangs like Lawrence Bishnoi, Neeraj Bawana. Their content is viral on reels on a regular basis. We have informed the teams multiple times sadly no action. Most of the resources are spent in lavish events inviting ministers. Sadly content moderation is not improved.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14017
MR

Case number

Public comment number

Central & South
Asia

Region

PRADEEP

Commenter's first name

SAXENA

Commenter's last name

English

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

Organization

No

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

DID NOT PROVIDE

Link to Attachment

[PC-14017](#)

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14018
MR

Central & South
Asia

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Withheld

Withheld

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Withheld

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

Social Media platforms are increasingly becoming a space to deliver hate speeches, trolling, and scathing attacks against whoever is against majoritarian beliefs. In India, the attacks have been against minorities and the government has taken very little measure to combat this trend. In fact, they were even guilty of supporting these troll armies and communal agendas. So, it is important that social media platforms may be sensitized and strict and impartial vigil must be maintained by social media organizations to combat such evils. Most social media platforms are guilty of biases as they work in coordination with the government of that country. If the government is practicing or indirectly supporting hate speeches and communal attacks, then the social media organization are succumbing to pressure and toeing the line of the government. In a way, they are becoming biased and also becoming complicit. So, it is important that they develop such tactics that will allow them to be free and impartial and provide equal free space to the victims as well. Regarding sensitive videos, it is important for Meta to judge the criticality of the video for they need impartial people (they should not allow a diaspora of that accused

country to handle those situations) to judge the video. If the video is not directly violating the sovereignty and national law of that country but depicts violence against a particular community, it is important that the video needs to be curtailed. Contrarily, if a video depicts something which needs to be revealed to the world but is against the national law of that country, META needs to decide on the basis of making internet platforms spaces for freedom of speech and expression. If a video violates the rules of the community standard set up by META, it has every right to take down the video even if it does not violate the national law. But then it needs to maintain impartial and fair standards for all. It is important to judge the urgency and importance of the video before taking it down or declaring it as ultra vires. To maintain impartiality and fairness, it is important to have a fair understanding of the situation and intent for which the video has been published. For example, it may ask the accused person who had shared the video to come up with an explanation and if that explanation does not suffice, the video can be taken down. Just because a government or troll army has reported against the video, META should not take it down. Both intent and consequences must be judged to understand the reality.

[Link to Attachment](#)

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14020
MR

Case number

Public comment number

Central & South
Asia

Region

DR. GOURI
SANKAR

Commenter's first name

NAG

Commenter's last name

English

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

Organization

No

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

Please see the attachment file.

Link to Attachment

[PC-14020](#)

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14021
MR

Central & South
Asia

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Dr. Nandini

Basistha

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

There are ample evidences that social media platforms used to contribute to violence and discrimination against religious and ethnic groups in India and elsewhere. That can be through posting comments, videos, rumours or just trolling someone. We have secularism as a constitutional policy since independence. But no government was secular by nature and all tried to woo majority religion, i. e. Hindu sometimes in public, sometimes in disguise. Our policies are only in paper especially when the question arises for women. My comments are very general as I am not much aware of Meta's policy. Looking foreword to know better on this issue.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14022
MR

Europe

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Withheld

Withheld

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Withheld

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

document attached

Link to Attachment

[PC-14022](#)

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14023
MR

Central & South
Asia

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Withheld

Withheld

Hindi

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Withheld

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

भारत में सांप्रदायिक दंगों के संख्या लगातार बढ़ती जा रही है जो बेहद खतरनाक है। भारत जैसे विविधता पूर्ण बहुधर्मी देश में सदियों से लोग साथ रहते आए हैं। प्रेम और सद्भाव बना रहा है।

एक तरफ ब्रिटेन है जिसने एक भारतवंशी को अपना प्रधानमंत्री बना दिया है और दूसरी तरफ हम हैं जो धर्म के नाम पर लड़े जा रहे हैं। दुःख तो तब होता है जब सरकार में उच्च पदों पर बैठे लोग सांप्रदायिक दंगों को बढ़ावा देते हैं। अपने पद की मर्यादा भूल कर ऐसी बातें कहते हैं जिनसे सांप्रदायिक शक्तियों को बढ़ावा मिलता है। उड़ीसा में संबलपुर जिले में हनुमान जयंती के अवसर पर जो सांप्रदायिक दंगा हुआ वह भी इसी प्रकार सांप्रदायिक शक्तियों को राजनीतिक शह के कारण हुआ। सांप्रदायिक दंगों से किसी का भला नहीं होता बल्कि कई परिवार जीवन भर दुख भोगने को मजबूर हो जाते हैं।

हमारे पड़ोसी देश पाकिस्तान और श्रीलंका में जो हुआ वह हम सबने देखा है। यदि भारत में भी सरकारों में ध्यान नहीं दिया तो आगे समस्याओं का सामना करना पड़ेगा।

केवल सरकारों से ही इसका समाधान नहीं होगा। हर पढ़े-लिखे और जिम्मेदार नागरिक का भी कर्तव्य है कि वह लोगों को समझाये। धर्म के आधार पर लड़ना गलत है। प्रेम और सौहार्द से ही हम

सब मिलकर आगे बढ़ सकते हैं। यही नहीं इसके कारण भारत का स्थान विश्व में उंचाइयों तक पहुंचेगा।

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14024
MR

Asia Pacific &
Oceania

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Partha

Ray

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

1. First of all, for reporting all such matters of communal violence, one has to take into consideration the global scenario vis-a-vis the local scenario (India in this case).

Whether it is the Odisha incident or the most recent Nuh, Haryana incident, one aspect is explicit; that Muslims are not minorities in India, Christians indeed are. So, Meta should NOT portray Muslims as a minority community. Muslims have the audacity to attack a peaceful procession of the Viswa Hindu Parishad in Nuh, Haryana, killing in the process government cops on duty. The Christians did not do that, but the Muslims did. Why. Simply because of the fact, Muslims are NOT repeat NOT minorities in India. Anywhere in the world, where a religious or ethnic community killed members of the government security forces, have you ever seen the government embrace them with hugs and kisses? India is no exception.

2. The Government of India (GoI)'s policies and practices conform to the best practices in a democratic set up (not the best international practices, I should say, as no other so called democracies of the world, USA, Canada, Germany included, has such a policy in place). GoI pays for Muslims' pilgrimage to Mecca and Madina, something that it doesn't do for its Hindu majority. Your media should have highlighted this fact, rather than highlighting those that you have normally been doing, to keep yourself FLOATED.

3. Which video content are you talking about? Who has given you the right to upload communally sensitive videos taken by some anonymous persons (Hindu or Muslim). You are NOT the Human Rights Commissioner of India, neither of the world. You are there simply to make money. You are neither the savior of anyone nor the killer of any. Your aim is to make money. Before reporting about India, why don't you report about the atrocities committed by the police against the BLACKS, predominantly Muslims from African States, in the United States? Your reporting is, therefore, highly biased/prejudiced.

4. Incorporate the law of the land. Every country has its own history and ethnicity. Meta is not GOD to standardize norms, b'coz it doesn't have the mandate in the first place and it is a profitable organization, in the second.

[Link to Attachment](#)

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- MR
PC-14025

Case number

Public comment number

Central & South
Asia

Region

Tapan

Commenter's first name

Mohanty

Commenter's last name

English

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

Organization

No

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

Attached Separately

Link to Attachment

[PC-14025](#)

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14029
MR

Central & South
Asia

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Withheld

Withheld

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Withheld

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

India's past consists of brutal deaths and mayhem ensued by communal violence since the partition times. It is not surprising for a social media user like me to see content being shared for the purpose of initiating hate towards a religious community in order to gain popularity. In today's global world we need to understand and take care of the information that is being shared. Muslims are the minority religious groups and while some of the said news regarding them harming someone from another community might be true but in most of the cases it is the result of individual biases and false information consumed by users on social media platforms.

Truth be told, more than 90 % of social media users do not bother to confirm the news source with an authentic media outlet or any academic published article but consider whatever user ABC is posting on their platform as set in stone i.e. be it misinformation that is being shared, will be accepted as truth without considering or questioning the motives, propriety or authenticity. The reason being no one in today's fast paced world has enough time to ponder over the

situation. Users read/watch a source of information, comment on it without actively going into the ins and outs of the issue and scroll down.

Around May 30, a brutal case of violence in which a minor girl was stabbed by her boyfriend on an open street came into light which raised major concerns about the safety of women though there was one more side to it, that is, branding Muslim men as killers. Throughout this year so many cases like this have happened and I have personally seen violent hate speech being said about the whole Muslim community in the comment section of such social media posts. While such crimes are unforgivable and criminals should face strict charges by the law enforcement authorities, but in such cases the whole Muslim community is considered as a reciprocator and as if collectively sharing the moral values with these perpetrators. These attitudes and misinformation cannot be condoned in any shape or form through social media.

The issue is how much freedom should a social media user have in such cases. It is a complicated issue as it might perpetuate harm to the freedom of speech. However, my suggestion would be that everytime such information is shared, the social media platforms should flag it as a "maybe fake" title. Nowadays some videos have sensitive content warnings but that is not enough. Along with it there must be an additional line written that clearly should mention that "the content that you see might be fake or edited and posted for the sole purpose of ensuing violence, please do not consider this authentic unless our team checks it once." This, according to me, is an ethical method.

After doing that, the meta team must actively collaborate with the local media agency's, intellectuals with a sound academic knowledge in the due field to verify the truth and government authorities if necessary. After taking these precautionary measures, due action should be taken. The active participation in such cases is of immediate importance since in India these situations take a turn for the worse in a matter of a few minutes. It in turn impacts the collective psyche of the population involved. The government responds to this by banning the internet in the respective area which in turn affects the livelihood of so many people who rely on the internet to earn money. Such actions are

humanitarian as it has a positive impact on the overall well being of users that share the same social media platforms as well as it reduces the propagation of misinformation in the real world saving lives of many from the violence and chaos.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14030
MR

Central & South
Asia

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Gurpreet Singh

Khurana

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

India is a country that is very diverse and complex with a wide divergence of faiths, cultural ethos and values. Any malevolent individual, Indian or foreign, may today use the social media to set ablaze this immense vulnerability of India, and thereby stymie the growth of its comprehensive national power.

Conversely, any individual or organization - foreign or domestic - that is keen to see India's emergence as a consequential power in the fluid geopolitics of the world today, must restrain from using the social media to report or highlight events or developments exemplifying India's divisiveness (period). Whereas such reporting is often claimed to have been undertaken for the 'good' of India to 'reform' modern India, and such claim may even be true in its spirit, the claimants have no clue of the immense destructive power of social media in this context. To portray ourselves to be very wise and learned, we often prophesize the destructive effects of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the future, but ignore similar effects of social media that are actually occurring right now.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14031

Europe

MR

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Withheld

Withheld

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Withheld

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

1. I write as a member of a research team who has conducted a decade of research into the mechanisms and effects of discrimination and disinformation upon minority communities in India and elsewhere; and an individual who has worked for more than two decades on the connections between media representation and violence, from the holocaust to the Rwandan genocide and more recently Myanmar, Sri Lanka and India. This includes focus groups, interviews, expert interviews with law enforcement, journalists and legal experts, policy study in regard to hate speech, surveys, textual analysis of hate speech and multiple case studies of racial, caste, sexual, gendered and religious violence. Under the current Indian regime of Narendra Modi, both in India and the diaspora, widespread social prejudice against groups such as Muslims, Christians and Dalits thrives and is encouraged as a way of maintaining electoral power. This prejudice, which circulates both face to face in communities and through national and local media, as well as social media is accompanied by violence and embodied by a view of these communities as underserving of citizenship, sub-human, lower than animals, enemies of Hinduism, dangers to

the Indian nation, dirty, polluted by meat-eating, promiscuous and treacherous/prone to terrorism. Violence and prejudice against Muslims, Christians, Dalits and intersections of these (ie. Adivasi and Dalit Christians) now drive both socioeconomic and socio-spatial discrimination and are being further fuelled by the spread of malicious, orchestrated misinformation, disinformation and hateful material on WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook and other social media platforms. In India, there is a plethora of evidence that these “rumours” frequently acts as triggers and focal points of equally co-ordinated mob violence that is later characterised by members of the ruling party and by BJP and RSS-sympathetic media outlets as inter-communal rioting or spontaneous and proportionate responses to “hurt Hindu religious sentiments”.

2. The troubling exclusion and discrimination against members of Muslim and Christian communities in employment ensures that young women, boys and men from these communities may have to travel long distances or migrate from their homes to find work, to carry out their jobs (such as transportation of goods and/or animals) or to engage in day labour far from home: such patterns leave them even more vulnerable to attack and violence when isolated and travelling; while girls and women from these communities are also routinely subjected to ever more vicious forms of public shaming, rape, gang-rape and sexual assault and/or murder, often by members of Hindu upper and middle castes.

3. The fact that socio-spatial discrimination and exclusion ensure “ghettoes” and “ghettoization of urban and rural space” makes it easier for members of upper and middle caste Hindu mobs to gather and target residential areas with concentrations of Dalit, Muslim and/or Christian homes. The phenomenon that triggered the current comment has been escalating across BJP controlled states in the past five years, and we have tracked these in states such as Madhya Pradesh and UP. Violent mobs of Hindutva supporters under the hollow pretence of being “religious pilgrims” or “processions” march through Christian or Muslim neighbourhoods accompanied by vile abuse and slogans against the local Christian or Muslim communities. Occasionally, goaded beyond belief, a young person from the local community will throw a stone. This event is then used by the mobs, and by organised politicians who support them to incarcerate

and torture local Muslims, and to bulldoze and destroy their homes and neighbouring homes using zoning and building permission laws unfairly and in discriminatory ways. Even when the local communities remain silent bystanders to their own goading or annihilation, videos are used to create the impression that Muslims or Christians “attacked” the peaceful Hindu procession, and to call for open violence against them. Attached to these fake videos the kinds of words, comments and language are frequently even more inflammatory catalysts. Please take note: to call these events “Hindu-Muslim” tensions is as absurd and horrific as it would have been to call the Warsaw Ghetto uprising an “attack” against the majority community, or Jewish-Gentile tensions.

4. Since 2015, there have been more than two hundred of lynching documented in India by rights groups and local law coalitions, and thousands of discriminatory home demolitions for Muslims. Many of these incidents further victimise individuals from discriminated groups (Dalits, Muslims, Christians, Adivasis) based on allegations of cow slaughter, cow trafficking and cattle theft or stone throwing as in the recent incidents. In one horrific incident, a Muslim man who had a sacred number tattooed on his arm had his wrist and hand severed by a group of Hindu men as he was travelling in search of work.

5. What many of these incidents have in common is that large mobs of Hindu vigilantes who use peer-to-peer messaging applications such as WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger or open group posts on Instagram and Facebook to spread lies about the victims’ communities and intended victims, and use discriminatory misinformation against particular communities, language groups or ethnic groups to mobilise, defend, and in some cases to document and circulate images of the mob violence as an embodiment of civic action to protect the locale or the nation. It is this pride in mob murder, and lack of attempt to hide their actions, that in particular characterises the recent spate of violence and hate speech against Muslims and Christians in India and for which many social media companies and media outlets must accept a share of responsibility.

6. International human rights organisations which have been reporting on

and documenting the violence and oppression of Christians, Dalits and Muslims in India have increasingly come under threat and faced harassment from the Indian government. Respected international human rights organisation Amnesty International has had to halt their operations in India as their bank accounts have been frozen in what is seen as an aggressive move by the Indian government against human rights defenders. This has also been the experience of individual journalist and the rare news outlets that continue to elude Indian government control. Independent editors or investigative reporters find their homes under surveillance and raided ostensibly for “tax” evasion, a government speak for shutting them up. Please examine the cases of journalist and news anchor Ravish Kumar and the fact checker Mohammed Zubair.

7. It is in this context that we can be confident in saying that social media is precipitating pogroms, atrocities and lynching against minority communities in India. Hate speech, misinformation and disinformation that circulates on social media in India are closely linked to hate speech, misinformation and disinformation that circulate via mainstream media outlets supported by the ruling party and the government and in some states by state governments or relatives of politicians in state or central government. Posts are manipulated and tailored towards citizens of particular Indian states and language groups – for instance framed as being against “illegal migrants from Bangladesh” in Assam, or against “urban Naxals and terrorists” in Delhi, Mumbai or Karnataka – there is a continuum between the formats, types of hate speech and content of posts on mainstream and social media in multiple vernacular languages, Hindi and English.

8. Everyday forms of hate speech and incitement are “normalised” and “domesticated” when mainstream media such as Republic TV and Sudarshan News, social media platforms and cross platform apps such as ShareChat, TikTok, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp allow the perpetrators of these discourses to remain online and in public view, thus contradicting their own stated policies as has been the case in India (and Sri Lanka) in the last seven years. We use the word “allow” advisedly, since companies such as Twitter and Meta have multiple reports from secular and non-aligned readers and stakeholders reporting the hate speech and documenting the crimes attached

but decide not to remove the content when it is clearly linked to powerful Indian government handles and interests. Analysis of over a thousand forwarded WhatsApp messages in 2019 found patterns in the data suggesting that hateful WhatsApp messages work in tandem with ideas, tropes, messages and stereotypes which circulate more widely in the public domain, in family and community conversations and in the mainstream news media.

9. The same perpetrators of hateful speech against Muslims, Christians and Dalits and other minority groups, often with either overt or concealed ties to the Indian RSS/BJP repeatedly flout the regulations on incitement and get away with it because of the support extended to them by the ruling party and by mobs on social media and in the streets. This sends a strong message to other perpetrators and vigilantes that any Islamophobic, anti-Christian or Dalit-phobic content will not only be tolerated but will be protected and rewarded as a form of loyalty to the BJP and RSS cause of Hindutva. It increases the likelihood of discrimination, murder and communal violence. What none of this is, in any but the most twisted or naïve political analysis is “Hindu-Muslim tensions”. The Oversight board needs to take note and provide Meta’s governance and policy teams and teams of moderators with much more honest, brave, stark and clear instructions on what is an existential threat to Muslims and Christians in India by the ruling dispensation, aided and assisted by social media.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14032
MR

Asia Pacific &
Oceania

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Withheld

Withheld

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Withheld

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

I think there is vast misinformation that is shared on social media that causes harm and in cases, violence. India is a prime example of rumors, disinformation shared on social media that has created problems for communities. The north-eastern state of Manipur currently facing ethnic violence is a prime example. In many cases, Meta has bowed to government pressure and pulled down posts. In some cases, it has stood its ground and that is laudable and willing to challenge governments in courts. But the problem is not going to cease anytime soon. A better way has to be found out to delete posts that incite trouble and violence deliberately and with malicious intent.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14033
MR

Europe

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Withheld

Withheld

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Withheld

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

Any news outlet that shows & encourages physical violence has to be immediately condemned & emphasised as inhuman. There are too many people who can be manipulated to believe that this is the correct action & not that it's unlawful & against all human rights. People can & do prejudice, especially if all the facts & circumstances are not presented correctly.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14036 Central & South
MR Asia

Case number Public comment number Region

Ankit Shukla English
Commenter's first name Commenter's last name Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT No
PROVIDE

Organization Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

India has a culture of tolerance and peaceful coexistence of people having different faiths for centuries. But, I want to specifically mention two examples as a 90's kid. In the decade of 1990, there was no common use mobile internet, broadband internet in homes or 'direct-to-home' TV services. There were TV cable services at homes for Television entertainment. Power cuts are frequent in remote locations like SAIL company township in Bhawanathpur, Jharkhand, India. When power cuts during international cricket matches in which team India playing, every cricket lovers congregate at SAIL cable office of all age groups (followers of different faiths) ,which has power backups and cable service on even if there was power cut in the township. A Muslim brother used to bring his own TV set to that place and everybody enjoy rest of the match together. This brought a special kind of bonding among people of different faiths in a small place. One another example of my ancestral village in Bihar,

"kawwals" (consisting mainly of muslim artists) were invited to marriage functions for entertainment, which again brought special kind of bonding and cohesion among people of different faiths.

I have given these examples here because these physical points of contact among people of different faiths have been vanished or shrank due to adoption of new technology and innovations like 3G, 4G ,5G mobile internet services, DTH TV services and its universal access. There are still physical points of contact between people of different faiths, ethnicity, ideology, political affiliations, etc at workplaces, educational institutions, etc. Now , most of the physical points of contact among diverse people have been shifted to 'virtual points of contact ' like applications and platforms of Meta.

Meta's Violence and Incitement policy is not proactive in nature. It reacts when complaints come from users or public authorities. Rightly so, because it is very difficult to identify rogue and inciting content among humongous content posted on these platforms by users. But still, use of Artificial intelligence can automatically identify photos and videos containing weapons, certain acts of physical harm, unlawful gestures or physical activity, which can be identified suo motu and action can be taken against those posts violating Meta's Violence and Incitement policy.

Proactive steps by Meta must also include adding section called "Harmony " on all its platforms and applications. In this section, users can submit contents pictures, videos, stories related to or promoting harmony among people of different faiths, ideology, ethnicity, nationality and political affiliations. In Harmony section, content s related to or promoting Harmony between human and other animals/species/plants/nature must be accepted by Meta and selected to be published in this section . This step can successfully remove "vital isolation " from 'virtual points of contact '.

The question of 'voice ' and 'safety ' is important for virtual platforms of Meta. But answer lies within the question itself. If you do not take actions against the content which can cause riots, massive violence, physical and mental harm to individuals, loss of lives and property, deteriorating law and order situation;

then it would stifle 'voices ' of a lot of individuals who cannot post their contents due to internet ban, curfew due to restrictions imposed by public authorities to contain violence and restore law and order, all because of the "rough voice" of inciting posts of few individuals. Thus, in India there is concept of reasonable restrictions within the clauses of "freedom of expression " in the constitution of India. As the issue of spreading awareness and news , only registered media companies follow the law of the land completely. Individual users either do not know about the rules and laws of publishing content or just ignore them without analyzing the implications of their posts. So, 'peaceful voice' of many must prevail over 'rough voice ' of few users. During internet ban for days, months also heavily damage service based businesses and transactions. So, these arguments should be included in Meta's Violence and Incitement policy.

Thank you.

Ankit Shukla

[Link to Attachment](#)

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14037
MR

Central & South
Asia

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Withheld

Withheld

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Withheld

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

Social Media's Potential Impact on Conflict and Discrimination

In a globalized world, the immense influence of social media platforms can inadvertently contribute to the amplification of conflict and discrimination against religious and ethnic groups. This phenomenon is not limited to India but has implications worldwide. While these platforms serve as powerful tools for communication and information sharing, they can inadvertently facilitate the spread of harmful content due to their far-reaching accessibility and ease of use. To address these concerns, social media companies must adopt a sensitive, collaborative, and context-aware approach.

A clear and comprehensive definition of violation is essential; the ability to assess content within its context is critical, distinguishing between content that incites violence, glorifies it, or serves legitimate purposes such as news coverage/educational awareness.

Swift removal of content explicitly calling for violence against religious or ethnic

groups is imperative. This includes content that directly instructs or encourages harm.

Indirect calls for violence through symbolism, imagery, or language should not be overlooked. Such content should also undergo careful review.

Evaluating potential harm and real-world impact is paramount. Factors such as historical context, ongoing tensions, and potential to exacerbate violence should be accounted.

Understanding the intent behind sharing the video content is equally important. Distinguishing between content shared to raise awareness or condemn violence and content shared with malicious intent is crucial.

Efforts to contextualize the video content, such as providing captions, descriptions, or links to reputable news sources, should be considered when making removal decisions.

Transparency is a fundamental principle. A clear appeals process should be established, allowing content creators to contest removal decisions with the opportunity to provide additional context or evidence.

Balancing the prevention of offline violence with the principles of freedom of expression requires a nuanced approach. Social media platforms, including Meta, should continuously refine their policies through collaboration with relevant stakeholders to effectively address the complex challenges presented by video content depicting scenes of communal violence.

Managing Law Enforcement Requests for Content Removal

In the Indian context, managing law enforcement requests for content removal that may breach a social media platform's content rules, even if not violating national laws, demands a delicate equilibrium between upholding platform policies and respecting local regulations. To navigate this challenge, social media platforms should adopt the following strategies:

Develop transparent and well-defined content rules that outline violations of

platform guidelines, ensuring accessibility for users.

Establish user-friendly reporting mechanisms that allow users to flag content they believe breaches platform policies. Clear guidelines for reporting content that may not infringe on national laws but violates platform rules should be provided.

Implement a transparent content review process that informs users about the steps involved and potential outcomes. This clarity emphasizes that content removal decisions are based on platform policies rather than legal considerations alone.

Foster direct communication with law enforcement agencies, fostering collaboration while maintaining the platform's independence. The platform's role in addressing law enforcement requests should be clearly defined.

Consider content labeling in cases where removal may not be warranted but concerns exist. Contextual information can help users understand the content's nature and intent.

Ensure a robust appeals process that allows content creators to contest removal decisions. Independent review teams should oversee appeals to ensure impartiality.

Encourage an ongoing dialogue with relevant government bodies to discuss content policy challenges and potential solutions.

[Link to Attachment](#)

[PC-14037](#)

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14038
MR

Europe

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Withheld

Withheld

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Withheld

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

DID NOT PROVIDE

Link to Attachment

[PC-14038](#)

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14040
MR

Case number

Public comment number

Central & South
Asia

Region

Priya

Commenter's first name

Kannan

Commenter's last name

English

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

Organization

No

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

DID NOT PROVIDE

Link to Attachment

[PC-14040](#)

Case 2023-018-FB-
MR

Case number

PC-14046

Public comment number

Central & South
Asia

Region

Shankar

Commenter's first name

Mepparambath

Commenter's last name

English

Commenter's preferred language

CARES

Organization

Yes

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

DID NOT PROVIDE

Link to Attachment

[PC-14046](#)

Case 2023-018-FB- MR
PC-14049

Case number

Public comment number

Central & South
Asia

Region

Karti

Commenter's first name

Chidambaram

Commenter's last name

English

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

Organization

No

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

DID NOT PROVIDE

Link to Attachment

[PC-14049](#)

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14050
MR

Central & South
Asia

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Withheld

Withheld

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Withheld

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

Prior to basic laying of recommendations to social media platforms and highlighting how such platforms can be used for illicit intent, it is important to underline that social media platforms are an open space which can be used for spreading information for both positive and negative motives. Therefore, what the debate around social media should focus on is not just the responsible management of these platforms by various stakeholders but inculcating a sense of responsibility amongst the users as well. The policies should also focus on how users should be educated to use these platforms in a responsible manner and not to get swayed by any sort of triggering content they come across on social media. Emphasis on users' responsibility does not undermine the fact that social media platforms have been used to spread rumours and hate speech against religious and ethnic groups, leading to mob attacks and violence. Such platforms have been grossly misused to also fuel majoritarian radicalisation and exclusionary nationalism, which can undermine the religious freedom and diversity of the country. On the other hand, divisive and bombastic rhetoric by certain users over social media platforms can also wrongly amplify the effects of

government policies and actions that target religious and ethnic minorities, creating a climate of fear and perceptions of discrimination. There is a reason, for instance, why internet services are blocked in the areas affected by ethnic or religious violence. Meta's Violence and Incitement policy should treat video content depicting scenes of communal violence with caution and sensitivity, and consider the context, intent, and potential impact of such content on the affected communities and the public safety. Meta should assess whether such content may cause or contribute to offline violence by monitoring the local situation, consulting with experts and stakeholders, and applying a human rights-based approach to balance the values of safety and voice. Meta should also manage law enforcement requests for the review or removal of content that may not necessarily violate national laws but may breach platforms content rules by respecting the rule of law, challenging overbroad or unlawful requests, and prioritizing the users' rights to freedom of expression and privacy. Lastly, any video clip, which depicts the scenes of public gatherings of religious, political and civil disobedience nature must be closely monitored by the R&D teams. There should be cautious monitoring that these clips are not posted, out of context, incite violence and hatred and/or morphed to spread rumours and misinformation regarding that gathering which may result in fear psychosis in public generally and in a community or a group particularly.

[Link to Attachment](#)

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14051
MR

Central & South
Asia

Case number

Public comment number

Region

RAHUL

TRIPATHI

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

Response by Rahul Tripathi, Professor, Goa University, India

1. Social Media has deep penetration and expanse that may be used to transmit images or visuals which may be either taken out of context, or may actually transmit material which is actually inflammatory and prone to arouse the latent feelings of suspicion and hate that exist. This applies as much to a society like India's or elsewhere.
2. Socio political context of religious and ethnic divisions has always been a sensitive issue, but has seen a clear exacerbation in the recent years with the political messaging by the ruling party and the government. This has severely affected neutrality of state institutions.
3. Meta's Violence and Incitement policy should first and the foremost factor in the diversity and plurality that exists in India and acknowledge that there are bound to be multiple opinions on a single matter. In a charged

atmosphere such as the current one, it would be advisable for Meta to border on the side of caution and pre-empt with an in house technological expertise (I am sure the same exists) as to what matter could be incendiary and take it off, rather than waiting for individuals or state agencies to point them out.

4. It is a tough balance to maintain between law enforcement requests and platforms content rules, but perhaps a self regulating code could be developed by social media platforms (like the ones by editor's guilds or private broadcasters) and try an ensure that these converge with the national laws to the best extent.

5. While one is not too sure about the idea of Transparency Reporting, it may be a good idea perhaps to have a clear distinction between content that is incendiary and therefore has to be taken off and the one that may convey a wrong (fake) or contrarian opinion, but does not fall in the category of potentially volatile material. The former in my view could be incorporated as per the request of the law enforcement agencies, for the latter usual disclaimers of Meta not being responsible could apply.

Link to Attachment

[PC-14051](#)

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14052
MR

Asia Pacific &
Oceania

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Withheld

Withheld

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Withheld

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

Social media has wrecked havoc on Indian psyche so much so that its consumption has transformed consumers into extreme hate and violence, based on fakes.

The sufferers are poor people from every community rather I would like to say poor humans.

The manipulation of psyche using social media may put Goebbles into lowest rank in their art.

No doubt social media has several advantages and their misuse puts all its advantages into useless category, when people loose life or become homeless or they are demonised.

Oversight board should not allow even one life to be destroyed based on its use.

Social media misuse in many places has backing of the powers that be.

There is no hope of good sense prevailing when politicians use and play with common mans emotions to stay in power.

Subscription based access to social media will bring accountability and easy tracebility instead of ad revenue based free accesswhich allows several accounts is dangerous.

Good sense will not prevail going by competitive oneup manship among all consumers. Price based access is the only solution to curtail misuse.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- MR
PC-14053

Case number

Public comment number

Asia Pacific &
Oceania

Region

Withheld

Commenter's first name

Withheld

Commenter's last name

English

Commenter's preferred language

Withheld

Organization

No

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

Such video should not be circulated that may provoke violence or hatred! To
awaken the government some video may be allowed with proper explanation!

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- MR
PC-14054

Case number

Public comment number

Central & South
Asia

Region

Ramnath

Commenter's first name

Bhat

Commenter's last name

English

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

Organization

No

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

DID NOT PROVIDE

Link to Attachment

[PC-14054](#)

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14055
MR

Central & South
Asia

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Anita

Anand

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

Social media brings to citizens attention incidents of violence and conflict among communities in India. This is a good thing. However, in the current political climate, especially since the current government came into power, it is clear that posts in social media that capture the so-called violence be fact checked. And that since push for things Hindu and Hindutva are prime in every media, posts that feature events and organised by them be watched carefully. And posts /clips that show (falsely in most cases) of minorities being violent, should be fact checked and screened. Meta's Violence and Incitement policy can keep in mind that minorities in India are a very small percentage of the population. Historically, it's the majority Hindus that have oppressed minorities and continue to, this time aided and abetted by the government. While a complete ban on such posts/videos is not a good idea as we would not get to know about the incidents, but we need mechanisms to sift through the propaganda and false reporting and the manipulations possible with technology. Given that law enforcement agencies have been coopted by the

present government, it then falls on social media platforms to form their own rules about what can and cannot be posted. And they can and should do this, proactively.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14056
MR

Asia Pacific &
Oceania

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Ratnadeep

Chakraborty

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

The Honest
Critique

Yes

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

1. By enabling the dissemination of provocative content, hate speech, and disinformation, social media platforms may unintentionally lead to violence and discrimination against religious and racial groups. There's a strong correlation between the trajectory from online hate speech to an act of offline violence. Conflicts in the real world can result from such content because it can inflame resentments, reinforce stereotypes, and encourage antagonistic narratives. Harmful ideas might spread faster and instigate violence towards particular groups because of the rapid distribution of content to a large audience. Social media has frequently been used in India to incite intercommunal conflict. For instance, a series of racial riots broke out in Delhi in 2020 as a result of the propagation of false information and hate speech on social media. Over 50 people were killed and many more were displaced as a result of these riots. Research by Network Contagion Research Institute shows that social media played an important role in mobilizing people through the misinformation that resulted in the September 2022 violence between Hindu and Muslim

communities in Leicester, UK.

2. Religious and ethnic disputes in Indian society have historical roots and are frequently fostered by political, social, and economic causes. The policies and practices of the Indian government have a substantial impact on these dynamics. Policies can either encourage interfaith unity and inclusivity or contribute to marginalization and prejudice, depending on the strategy used. The administration has struggled to strike a balance between religious freedom and public order. In India, there has been a growing sense of Hindu nationalism in recent years, resulting in heightened tensions between Hindus and Muslims. The Indian government has been accused of supporting certain fringe Hindu nationalist groups and failing to take appropriate precautions to avert communal bloodshed. However, the government under the recently introduced Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita Bill included an explicit provision for mob lynching and specified punishment ranging from seven years in prison to the death sentence for anyone convicted of the offence.

3. Meta's conflict and Incitement policy should be applied with caution to video content exhibiting scenes of communal conflict. Such content should be scrutinized for explicit demands for extreme violence, symbols or graphics depicting violence, and significant dangers of offline harm. Context is important, particularly the absence of condemnatory language or the intention to raise awareness. The impact on real-world situations should be considered, and platforms should remove content that poses significant dangers to public safety, even if it is not overtly unlawful. The book 'Social Media and Hate' by Shakuntala Banaji and Ramnath Bhat argues that though the platforms like Meta have policies to counter hate speech, the effectiveness of the policies vary. The policies should be a little proactive and the team should be able to take down videos faster.

4. Social media platforms should evaluate law enforcement demands for content review or removal that do not violate national laws but do violate platform rules by comparing them to their community standards. Platforms should prioritize their own content policies and the risk of harm over adherence to specific national regulations. The decision-making process should be guided by

transparency, accountability, and alignment with their own principles.

5. To incorporate law enforcement demands for material removal into transparency reporting, social media companies should publish the nature of the requests, the frequency with which they are made, and the results. This reporting should include context, such as whether the information violates community norms even if it does not violate local laws. In order to sustain user trust and freedom of expression, platforms should emphasize their commitment to preserving user safety while also maintaining a clear line between appropriate moderation activities and government overreach. The law enforcement companies will understand the socio-political context better and which content isn't suitable for mass consumption. Often the social media companies aren't able to moderate content through their AI technology because some of them require human intervention, hence the Law enforcement should work in association with the social media companies to take down the propaganda messages soon after they are posted. Most of the time, there's a huge delay in taking down such content and they are downloaded and circulated over WhatsApp and Telegram groups.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14057
MR

Asia Pacific &
Oceania

Case number

Public comment number

Region

manvendra

singh

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

SM platforms create images and videos to convey their message of hate and incite violence

Manipur and it's civil violence is evidence of how the government and its policies are encouraging strife and hate.

Any video of violence must first be checked for content before it is online. Most videos promote hate.

All law enforcement officers must be consistent and fair in asking for removal of content.

Requests must be analysed for fairness while being implemented.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- MR PC-14058 Central & South Asia

Case number Public comment number Region

Hira Saleem Zainab Durrani English

Commenter's first name Commenter's last name Commenter's preferred language

Digital Rights Foundation Yes

Organization Response on behalf of organization

Full Comment

Digital Rights Foundation Pakistan (DRF) welcomes the opportunity to comment on case 2023-018-FB-MR regarding the Video of Communal Violence in India State of Odisha.

Submission Author: Hira Saleem, Zainab Durrani

Submission date: 15-08-2023

India is home to a diverse religious population, including the largest Muslim population in the world, as well as Christians and Buddhists. However, communal violence has been on the rise in recent years in India, with 378 such incidents reported by the National Crimes Record Bureau in 2021.

Social media platforms have become crucial tools for communication and information sharing across the world. However, given this widespread outreach into individuals' everyday lives, it has at times become a tool to spread violence

and trigger unrest. A similar incident took place in April 2023, where Meta failed to identify violating content that instigated communal violence in Sambalpur, Odisha. The incident emphasizes the need for regulatory measures to prevent the dissemination of such harmful content leading to social unrest with multiple arrests and suspension of internet services. However, another video the content of which was indistinguishable from the first, identified by Odisha law enforcement, was later reported and removed.

Freedom of expression is a crucial element of human rights. However, it is important to note that the public interest serves as a basis for permissible limitations to this right as per Article 19 of the ICCPR which lays out the three-part test widely accepted as the international standard. This includes prohibition of incitement and violence, which was clearly demonstrated in the video mentioned above. It is imperative that Meta must reconsider its automated system, which currently fails to identify such violent content that escapes notice and scrutiny because users do not report it, or smartly tweak the captions to evade detection.

The sizable gap can be bridged with human reviewers who have viable local context to contribute to better analyses of content and the repercussions of such videos, especially with regards to ethnic and cross-border violence. In the past, such content on social media has increased tensions between India and Pakistan, increasing violence in both countries against their minorities. This has primarily come about given the Muslim minority in India (14.2% of the population) and the Hindu minority in Pakistan (1.9% of the population) face severe repercussions should damaging content showing their counterparts across the border be published and widely shared. A damning example was a public call for violence against Christians in Pakistan by representatives of the banned outfit Lashkar-e-Jhangvi following the burning of the Quran in Sweden.

The fact that the content was removed only after an explicit report by the LEA highlights a flaw in the system, i.e. that the automated mechanism in place may be too dependent on reporting and unable to pick up on violent content. This goes against the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, particularly s.7 (a) which places upon states the responsibility to engage with

business enterprises to help them identify, prevent and mitigate human rights-related activity risks. Hence, the detection system must include a human aspect, not solely AI-based systems, which sometimes fail to identify violent content and its repercussions. However, Meta should ensure that such human reviewers conducting such "risk assessment" or "volatility assessment" should be unbiased, not reproduce personal and political bias, or instill racist stereotypes into their reporting. This underscores the importance of human reviewers as the issue at hand involves a hyperlocal setting and environment leading to the specific trigger and occurrence of communal violence in Odisha.

Digital Rights Foundation, on the other hand, is concerned with maintaining the right to freedom of expression in relation to the second video, which was removed at the request of the law enforcement agencies (LEAs) and the pressing urgency under the pretext of "security". Hence, Meta should be more cautious when evaluating removal requests by LEA as the freedom of expression of the individual in some countries is routinely attacked by LEAs. There is a careful balance that needs to be struck between moderating content based on its nature as opposed to doing so on the basis of governmental pressure. In this instance, the takedown appears to be justified, given the possibly violent ramifications of leaving the content intact.

However, in processing a takedown request by LEAs, various factors should be considered, including whether the request has a legitimate ground; the decision must be made based on the high evidential threshold, the geopolitical and the historical context between the creator of the content and the state.

Meta's Community Guidelines regarding "Violence and Incitement" fall within the exception of international human rights law (IHRL), which includes hate speech, and is only permissible under IHRL if it meets the tripartite test found in Article 19(3) of ICCPR, which provides for a legitimate purpose, and requires for the action in question to be both necessary and proportionate. It can safely be said that moderating online content is a difficult task because content may offend or disturb from the perspective of specific individuals, which does not conclude that it can or should be restricted or removed unless it amounts to hate speech, violence, or propaganda for war. Hence, with regards to the second

video, removing the same was the correct decision by Meta.

We are of the view that social media platforms should conduct human rights impact assessments periodically, and due process should be considered. There should be complete transparency regarding the volume and instances of content removal undertaken on the request of LEAs, along with a detailed ledger on the total number of content removal requests they have received, including rejected requests. The Meta transparency reports stand to offer further clarity on the exact requests they receive from LEAs and the category of people against whose accounts these requests have been initiated, specifically for human rights defenders, members of religious and gender minorities and other marginalized communities. Currently, the breakdown only includes the total number of data requests from governments and the percentage of cases where 'some data has been produced'. The release of more detailed reports will only strengthen Meta's policies and trust in the platform.

In this specific instance regarding communal violence we feel the risk of threat to life is accelerated that Meta's decision to remove the content no matter what caption or purpose it carried was well-founded. However, such instances of public and historical importance can be archived and subsequently allowed in permissible contexts, i.e. for academic, archiving, and human rights reports, once the immediate violence has abated.

Link to Attachment

[PC-14058](#)

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14059
MR

Asia Pacific &
Oceania

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Robin

McClellan

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

I strongly believe that Meta is right -- indeed, the Meta must -- remove content such as the video referred to in this case. The primary reasons are to avoid promulgating violence and hate crimes. Unfortunately, millions of people now turn to platforms such as Meta for their guidance on what is right, and what is acceptable. The platforms have a responsibility to do everything they can to stop the spread of posts that encourage violence. In South Asia, and particularly India, this is especially crucial right now, as the fans of anti-minority prejudice and hate are being flamed. Requests from law enforcement agencies to remove or block posts should be taken seriously, and respected in the case of posts that call for violence and targeting specific groups. This is, of course, more complicated if the request is to block posts that call for the organisation of purportedly peaceful gatherings.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14060
MR

Asia Pacific &
Oceania

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Rajani

Rao

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

It has been known for long that humans always overestimated the good and underestimated the bad. The reason being that we are optimists and risk takers or else we would not have survived in the wild as hunter gatherers. Education and civilisation was thought to have increased our understanding of the world better and science should have put us onto the path of identifying risks better. However whatever we take, we seem to know of the real consequences only in the aftermath and not in the stage of prevention. A typical example would be the knowledge that peace is better than war is known only after a war. Europe (post WW I and II, tries its best to prevent war) almost is/was perpetrating a war elsewhere with their obsession "of the prevention of war" and we can see that very well in Ukraine and Russia's case. However in the case of technology we have been super confident that a new tech will replace the flaws of the current tech. I completely have lost faith in this especially when I see the lives of young peoples being tailored around social media influencers and we stare helplessly at the black hole we are going into. We have lost the ability to love what we have

and love fiercely what we want to protect too. In such times, I don't have the confidence that companies like Meta (which are nothing but stocks held by people like me) will do anything proactively to create a better society than they found themselves in. Today they have created a market of hatred and they thrive in it, profit from it and would not bother to listen to people. Is social media the only reason for the violent hatred forms? No -we had TV prior to that but social media has allowed things to be magnified, viral and perpetrators to remain anonymous at best and hidden behind grey walls of Tech policy (or lack of it) at worst. Moral compass of humans is lost and I do not believe that tech will help restore it or can emulate the moral compass. However, its commendable that this platform to voice exists and here is my voice. Weather it matters is for the universe to decide. We are at war each day in some corner of the world or within our own minds. We need to find peace within and outside. Om Shanthi.

[Link to Attachment](#)

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14062
MR

Case number

Public comment number

Asia Pacific &
Oceania

Region

Rahul

Commenter's first name

Chandawarkar

Commenter's last name

English

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

Organization

No

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

DID NOT PROVIDE

Link to Attachment

[PC-14062](#)

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14063
MR

Case number

Public comment number

Central & South
Asia

Region

Karti

Commenter's first name

Chidambaram

Commenter's last name

English

Commenter's preferred language

G67

Organization

Yes

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

DID NOT PROVIDE

Link to Attachment

[PC-14063](#)

Case 2023-018-FB-
MR

Case number

PC-14064

Public comment number

Central & South
Asia

Region

Raheel

Commenter's first name

Dhattiwala

Commenter's last name

English

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

Organization

No

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

DID NOT PROVIDE

Link to Attachment

[PC-14064](#)

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14065
MR

United States &
Canada

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Narayanamoorthy Nanditha

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Center for
Information,
Technology, and
Public Life,
University of
North Carolina,
Chapel Hill

Yes

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

Social media platforms, in recent years, have enabled the proliferation of hate across South Asia which represents one of the largest user bases for media consumption. Thousands of videos seeking to promote hate against gender, religious, and caste minorities are uploaded every day on WhatsApp, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter in various languages, and continue to garner millions of views.

Hate speech and the sharing of derogatory language sadly do not remain in

social media echo chambers and have real-world consequences for marginalized communities. This is particularly true for India which is increasingly becoming a hotbed for communal and ethnic clashes, and mob violence against religious minorities. This is a particularly fragile time in the political landscape of the country and the slightest push in the form of video content sharing of the Sambalpur, Orissa incident can potentially inflame communal passions, and lead to an increase in lynchings, public beatings, and institutional punishments as it did in the recent ethno-religious clash in Manipur.

As we approach the 2024 Lok Sabha (parliamentary) elections in India, there continues to be a strong anti-minority sentiment during the election campaign. An election victory may further tip the scales in favor of more anti-minority rhetoric. That's why it is imperative for platforms like Meta to take an active role in and responsibility towards protecting vulnerable communities, and help prevent ethnic violence. It would be unwise to underestimate the disruptive potential of social media during this time.

Although hate speech regulation in South Asia can be a mammoth task with moderation in different languages and dialects, that demands a more-hands on approach, increasing the diversity of content moderators who can tag video content for removal can be beneficial. Alternatively, given the recent allegations of biased moderation, Meta could also consider collaborating with journalists, academics, civic institutions, and subject-matter experts who are working on the ground to combat digital violence between Hindus and Muslims to help focus on timely content regulation for the upcoming year. I emphasize a timely intervention here because, in the Sambalpur incident, rapid video dissemination had already led to censorship efforts from the government; efforts that could potentially drown the voices of minorities. Meta's Violence and Incitement policy should treat all video content depicting scenes of communal outbreaks of violence as potential threats to democracy, and with the help of moderators, work to rapidly remove inciteful material in relation to the Sambalpur clash.

[Link to Attachment](#)

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14066
MR

Asia Pacific &
Oceania

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Madhumita

Das

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

As captured in the documentary, Social Dilemma, Social Media platforms play the most pivotal role in contributing to violence and discrimination against religious and ethnic groups, especially minorities in India and elsewhere. Social Media reaches those without the social capital or literacy in separating facts from fiction, the power of manipulation, it reaches very young, very impressionable, and very frustrated audiences. Further, the gender, and patriarchal aspect of social media use, combined, most importantly with the algorithmic setting of returning those things in a persons feed, that he is already used to watching, this creates echo chambers, information bubbles, magnifies mis/information.

The Indian State has always had a dubious role at best, and an active enabler of violence against minority religious and ethnic groups at worst, across political dispensations. This has to do with the nature of our electoral system, incomplete state-nation building project, and secular/ majoritarian faultlines, and cartographic anxieties. The current dispensation is a lethal combination of

having as its very basis a constant need for otherising and demonizing, it has the backing of really big capital, to whom it has promised to deliver labour and resources for next to nothing. It serves the governments purpose to have sentiments festering and occasional outbursts. The institutional riot mechanism has moved into the internet sphere and is backed by really big money. Truth seekers and announcers are persecuted, independent thought is stifled. There is very little redemption to the state of affairs.

Meta's violence and incitement policies could first do with their staff taking proper social science investigations into the causes and mechanisms of how violence erupts in the country. They should be duly trained in the social sciences, i.e. they should be Mphils and Phds, or such folks can be subcontracted. Each instance needs to be dealt with on a case by case basis. Images showing reports of police siding with rioters in coming at minority areas is truth and must not be taken down, however, it can also lead to some valid counter-organizing, often to counteract violence with preventative violence. This is inevitable. Hence it all needs to be dealt with by specialists on a case to case basis.

If law enforcement agencies ask you to comply with your own rules of breach, well that is a legal matter between you and the state. But the argument from the state to take down something not illegal again must be dealt with as a matter of internal policy.

This last question, got me! Haha. You maintain your stand and do your due investigation, and be transparent about it, let your team of lawyers handle the rest. Easier said than done, but that should be the due procedure. Social Media platforms necessarily are extremely powerful, you must use this power with extreme care, making sure not to bend towards the side of those oppressing others just because they can.

Please try and amplify fact checking sources more than others, so that these might travel to those who were not actively looking for fact checking.

[Link to Attachment](#)

[No Attachment](#)

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14067
MR

Case number

Public comment number

United States &
Canada

Region

Siddhartha

Commenter's first name

Dubey

Commenter's last name

English

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

Organization

No

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

DID NOT PROVIDE

Link to Attachment

[PC-14067](#)

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14068
MR

Central & South
Asia

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Withheld

Withheld

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Withheld

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

Social media platforms may be used to contribute to violence by uploading or sharing fake or biased news. It could feed extremist’s narrative at great ease. And thereafter hurt the sentiments of targeted groups, fuelled by identity politics. Followed by perceived helplessness of these targeted groups to take law and order in their own hands.

“Insights into the socio-political context regarding the treatment of religious and ethnic groups in India, including the Indian government’s policies and practices”:

Religious and ethnic groups are dispersed and diverse all over India. It appears that Indian politicians have successfully united these diverse groups using majoritarian identity politics, by affecting majoritarian sentimentality based on fears and anxieties, in order to consolidate their political power.

Late or muted public reactions by the authorities on unrest, violence, and vigilantism against minorities and marginalised groups also appear to point to

the fact that authorities are making an effort to prove their ideological support towards majoritarian sentiments.

This also validates and fuels propaganda theories of majoritarian groups, by forcing minorities to become defensive and to skew public image of minorities towards extremism.

“How Meta's Violence and Incitement policy should treat video content depicting scenes of communal violence, and how to assess whether such content may cause or contribute to offline violence.”:

Step1: Meta should be able to actively gauge the populous sentiment by looking at data from both political representation and real time digital activity of users.

Step2: Using the data from the previous step, algorithms could be put in place to moderate content that avoids feeding into majoritarian propaganda/opinions. For example: Banning or delaying visibility of content that denotes violence/hatred against majority groups by minority groups. Protection of minorities being priority in times of conflict.

Tip: Setting up a network of independent volunteers on Meta who are verified and affiliated to reputed universities/think-tanks/NGOs to aid content moderation and “responsible tagging”. Possibly in collaboration with LinkedIn’s socially-validated profiles.

Tip: Creating a system in place that forces/encourages governments response towards violent incidents as they’re in legal and responsible position to actively calm unrest, by appealing towards the perpetrators/victims. Silence on part of the government authorities (after a time period) must be equally discouraged as per Meta’s policy to avoid subsequent social aftershocks, if Meta truly stands against misinformation.

Scrutiny of the response itself will be in the hands of citizens or verified volunteers.

[Link to Attachment](#)

[No Attachment](#)

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14069
MR

Europe

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Withheld

Withheld

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Withheld

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

Addressing the Complex Role of Social Media in Promoting Violence and Discrimination:

The utilization of social media platforms can have profound implications in escalating violence and discrimination against religious and ethnic groups, not only in India but across the globe. This incident involving the Facebook video from April 2023 is a stark example of how online platforms can inadvertently amplify tensions and contribute to real-world conflicts. The anonymity and reach of social media can facilitate the rapid dissemination of divisive content, misinformation, and hate speech. Online echo chambers and algorithms that prioritize sensationalism can exacerbate existing prejudices, leading to communal violence, discrimination, and even radicalization.

Socio-Political Context in India:

India's socio-political landscape is marked by diversity and coexistence of various religious and ethnic groups. However, historical tensions, cultural

differences, and socio-economic disparities have at times resulted in friction. The Indian government's policies and practices play a significant role in shaping the dynamics between these groups. While India upholds secularism and promotes religious tolerance constitutionally, certain policies and political rhetoric have been criticized for favoring specific groups or inadvertently marginalizing others. The sensitive balance between safeguarding freedom of expression and curtailing hate speech remains a challenge.

Meta's Violence and Incitement Policy:

Meta (formerly Facebook) has a crucial responsibility in managing content that might incite or contribute to violence, especially in situations involving religious or ethnic tensions. Video content depicting scenes of communal violence, like the one from Sambalpur, should be handled with utmost care. Meta's content review teams should consider factors such as context, intent, and potential impact when assessing whether such content is likely to cause offline violence. This should involve close collaboration with regional experts who understand the socio-cultural nuances of the affected areas.

Balancing Law Enforcement Requests and Content Rules:

Managing law enforcement requests for content review or removal is a delicate task. While content may not directly violate national laws, it could still breach platform content rules and contribute to negative offline consequences. Social media platforms should establish clear guidelines and criteria for assessing such requests. Transparency is key in striking the right balance between respecting freedom of expression and preventing harm. Collaborative dialogues between platforms and law enforcement agencies can aid in ensuring the proper handling of such requests.

Incorporating Law Enforcement Requests into Transparency Reporting:

Social media platforms should integrate law enforcement requests for content removal into their transparency reporting mechanisms. This could involve categorizing requests based on legality and policy violations. Transparency reports should offer insights into the number of requests received, the

percentage of compliance, and the geographic distribution of these requests. By doing so, platforms can demonstrate their commitment to accountability and build public trust while respecting user privacy.

In conclusion, the incident surrounding the Facebook video underscores the intricate relationship between social media, violence, and discrimination against religious and ethnic groups. Social media platforms like Meta must strike a balance between upholding freedom of expression and preventing real-world harm. Collaborative efforts between platforms, governments, experts, and civil society are essential in addressing these complex challenges while fostering a safe and inclusive online environment.

[Link to Attachment](#)

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- MR
PC-14070

Case number

Public comment number

Central & South
Asia

Region

Withheld

Commenter's first name

Withheld

Commenter's last name

English

Commenter's preferred language

Tech Global
Institute

Organization

Yes

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

I would prefer the Oversight Board publishes the comment in the name of my organization without disclosing my name or contact information, given this is the effort of several contributors.

Link to Attachment

[PC-14070](#)

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14072
MR

Central & South
Asia

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Withheld

Withheld

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Withheld

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

Social media is being used globally to influence elections and invite people into voting for a particular political party by creating a virtual echo-chamber of their thoughts. Communal violence in India is prevalent everywhere and it takes the smallest provocation to incite a mob. If such videos are being shared thoughtlessly, they can cause a lot of harm, hence Meta, as a responsible organisation should immediately take down such content to ensure peace in the country.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14074
MR

Central & South
Asia

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Reshmi

Kazi

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

Social media is a powerful platform for disseminating information and data. However, just as the benefits are enormous, the disadvantages are vast and inimical to public interest. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter are easy mediums through which various kinds of messages are disseminated by the microsecond. These platforms spread information like wild fire that reach out i thousands of people in a matter of seconds thereby engineering a provocative situation. It is a live ticking bomb situation awaiting a slightest pretext to engulf innocent lives in its blast and fire. Recent events have only made us more conscious of the situation. It must be mandatory for social media platforms that they abide by rules of engagement, data protection as well as be mindful of not engineering or provoking any untoward situation that is inimical to public interest.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14076
MR

Central & South
Asia

Case number

Public comment number

Region

ANUSHUA

ROY

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

Violence & violation of individual/collective security and privacy is seamlessly tailored on the political/social landscape of India. No particular event in the recent times may be termed as singular. Not much to amaze, objectionable/unverified/ videos on social media goes unreported despite high viewership & sharing ratios. The appetite of viewers is hard to fulfill without enticing videos. The raging economic recessions bundled with aspirations has deemed the mass inconsiderate.

The dissemination of communal violence through internet platforms is unavoidable. Without the reconstitution of grand Meta laws, no one platform can mend the issues. Much needed are strict laws regarding such sharing of videos; the pursuance of instant fame & viral content urgently calls for enquiry.

Any content of violence has residues of saltiness for any viewer. The average video reel is 15-30 seconds. More visual depictions may be included than words

may be uttered. The constant decline (rejections) of social/economic opportunities rendered Netizens lulling into consuming such contents.

One may look into the Indian cricket match viewership that existed before the boom of scroll- culture. The verbal expressions of anger and desperation went on for hours. Now with given anonymity, generational disappointments emerge. Does any study ever observed the viewer bodily expressions of any such objectionable videos?

Everything around us is capturable. Risking being pessimist, one may wonder, which Meta-laws can restrict such dissemination in presence of phones with high resolution cameras & high speed internet. Humans by nature have been attracted to disharmony. The bulk of spiritual & religious world literatures commanded the control of inner instincts. However, we are moving towards the understanding of creating chaos, & fishing benefits from such muddy terrains. No one country may be singled. In India, the high populations & marginal formal education makes glaring instances. Unbelievable economic disparity, yet holding devices that capture instant reality is undeniable instinct.

[Link to Attachment](#)

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14077
MR

Asia Pacific &
Oceania

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Ritwij

Shandilya

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

The Prode

Yes

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

"Navigating Communal Tensions: A Call for Unity and Pragmatism in Odisha"

In the wake of the recent disturbing video posted on social media, which captures an unsettling incident of communal violence during a religious procession in Odisha, it is imperative for us to reflect on the broader context and implications of such occurrences. This incident not only underscores the immediate need for restraint and dialogue but also compels us to address the underlying issues that perpetuate such clashes.

The video, depicting an individual initiating an act of aggression, followed by retaliatory responses, serves as a stark reminder of the consequences of unchecked emotions and unbridled provocations. It is vital for all parties involved to recognize the importance of restraint and for local authorities to play a proactive role in preventing such situations from spiraling into full-blown conflicts.

This incident is not isolated but rather part of a concerning pattern of communal tensions reported across various states in India in recent weeks. The underlying factors contributing to these tensions need a thorough examination. Historical, social, and economic dynamics often intertwine in complex ways, fueling sentiments that can escalate into violence. Addressing these root causes requires a multi-faceted approach that involves both short-term conflict management and long-term community-building efforts.

Dialogue and communication emerge as powerful tools in defusing such situations. The importance of local leaders, religious figures, and civil society organizations in facilitating dialogue cannot be overstated. Open conversations, aimed at fostering understanding and empathy, can pave the way for sustainable solutions that transcend sectarian lines.

It is also paramount for authorities to ensure that the rule of law prevails and that all citizens are protected regardless of their background. Law enforcement agencies play a crucial role in maintaining public order while upholding the rights and dignity of all individuals.

In these challenging times, it is incumbent upon all stakeholders to rise above divisive rhetoric and collaborate to restore harmony. While the video is a grim representation of communal strife, it should serve as a catalyst for meaningful change. Odisha, known for its cultural diversity and resilience, can lead by example in showing the nation the path toward unity and coexistence.

I would like to urge both state and central governments to adopt a holistic approach that combines responsive governance, community engagement, and education to foster a society where differences are celebrated and conflicts are resolved through peaceful means. Only through concerted efforts can Odisha and the entire nation ensure a future free from the shackles of communal tensions.

Link to Attachment

[PC-14077](#)

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14078
MR

Asia Pacific &
Oceania

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Niranjan

Sahoo

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

Introduction

India's post-independence history is rife with incidents of religious processions turning into full-blown communal riots, violence, destruction of property and deaths of innocent people in the riot-hit localities. With country's political and social spheres experiencing unprecedented polarization and majoritarianism leading to demonization of groups particularly the religious minorities, there is visible breakdown of social fabrics and inter-community trusts. A major factor fueling such polarization and consequent violence is competitive religious processions. While religious processions (during Hindu and Muslim festivals) are routine phenomenon, these have acquired new status at a time when there are overt majoritarian tendencies that are on steady ascendancy. In the recent years, during the festivals of Ram Navami, Durga Puja and Hanuman Jayanti, the processions which often passes through minorities majority areas have led to riots and large-scale violence. High-decibel music systems, playing obnoxious and hate spewing music have invariably led to communal riots. However, one of

the contributory factors to these communal incidents is doctored/fake videos circulated through social media platforms particularly Meta, Twitter (X) and WhatsApp have escalated the situation. Often religious leaders hate speeches are openly shared which incites clashes/violence. And these videos keep circulating for weeks in Meta and other platforms. While in many occasions, state authorities ban internet to stop the circulation of hate videos, this hardly stops communal clashes/violence.

Odisha Incident

The communal clashes over religious processions and hateful slogans in Odisha's Sambalpur town in April 2023 must be seen in the context of growing religious polarization and majoritarianism in India. Odisha which is relatively immune to major communal clashes as increasingly experienced in North and West of India (last major communal incident was Kandhamal riot in 2008), the right-wing forces are increasingly trying to polarize the society and polity. Thus, there is growing incidents of religious processions rife with hateful slogans and provocative messages often uploaded in the social media channels to incite group violence and riots. Although, state police and other law and order machineries in Odisha do a far more effective job, they were caught on wrong footing over the Sambalpur communal incident. Although, the state police arrested more than 100 people and imposed curfew to quell violence, it took many days to bring the situation under control.

In the context of Sambalpur incident, a video regarding the religious procession was prominently circulated/shared in Meta. Given fraying social relations and majoritarian tendencies leading to frequent violence and deaths, Meta team needs to be extra cautious in quickly analyzing such contents and taking proactive actions to stop their further spread. Its swift action can save many innocent lives.

[Link to Attachment](#)

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14080
MR

Central & South
Asia

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Soma

Basu

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

Public comment:

1) How social media platforms may be used to contribute to violence and discrimination against religious and ethnic groups in India and elsewhere.

Answer: Several academic studies on political propaganda on social media (Facebook and Twitter) confirm that messages have the potential to artificially shape the public agenda or inflate the popularity of political candidates (Vargo, Guo, & Amazeen, 2018; Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017). They can contribute to the polarisation of political debates and stoke incivility in the public sphere (Stella, Ferrara, & De Domenico, 2018; Theocharis, Barberá, Fazekas, Popa, & Parnet, 2016) and they foster antagonism and negative attitudes towards certain political issues (Anderson, Brossard, Scheufele, Xenos, & Ladwig, 2014; Hwang, Borah, Namkoong, & Veenstra, 2008; Lampe et al., 2018). There have been ample studies on digital amnesia and exposure to dominant image patterns can create

false memories that end up threatening a user's sense of self. Messages and dominant image patterns can also boost the memory of one event that users did not experience directly while impair memories of events that they did experience. Social media platforms can be used to propagate violence and discrimination against religious and ethnic communities in India and around the world. They serve as a virtual breeding ground for the spread of extremist ideology, hate speech, and misinformation on an unprecedented scale, resulting in the radicalization of individuals and the encouragement of violence against certain communities. These platforms' anonymity and echo chambers enable hate groups to thrive, since they use algorithms to promote divisive content, reinforce existing prejudices, and marginalise minority populations. The quick distribution of inflammatory content in this digital landscape can increase tensions, spark real-world conflicts, and perpetuate cycles of mistrust, posing serious challenges to social cohesion, stability, and human rights protection.

2) Insights into the socio-political context regarding the treatment of religious and ethnic groups in India, including the Indian government's policies and practices.

Answer: Hate crimes against the minorities in India took a sharp jump and IndiaSpend , a non-profit data journalism initiative, shows that between 2009-2019, over 100 people have been killed and 691 injured in total 281 incidents of hate crimes. 73% of victims of these hate crimes were Muslims and other minority communities. The data reveals a sharp increase in the number of incidents after 2014 and 50% of the attacks were on the pretext of cow protection, inter-faith marriages and alleged inter-faith conversions.

In its report for 2023, issued in March, the American NGO Genocide Watch ranks the Indian government's attacks on Muslims and Dalits at stages 6, 7, and 8, one stage short of genocide. India's Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, has been recorded making statements that are examples of stage 10 (denial), the ultimate level on the 10-step grid utilised by Genocide Watch in its genocide prevention tool.

While Christians have suffered as a result of the emergence of Hindu

majoritarianism, Muslims have clearly faced more widespread and systematic discrimination. Muslims, a multilingual and ethnically diverse minority, account for around 15% of India's overall population, or more than 200 million citizens. Their destiny under Modi's administration. Because of its sociological, demographic, and historical significance, their fate may have additional political ramifications. Indian Muslims hold a vital position in the South Asia region.

Minorities, notably Muslims, have been marginalised de facto and increasingly de jure since Narendra Modi's election as Prime Minister in 2014, and even more so following his reelection in 2022. Laws passed by the Indian Parliament or state legislatures target every expression of religion practised by Indian Muslims, including hijab, beef consumption, and public prayer.

The Citizenship Amendment Act (2019) (CAA), one of the most ambitious pieces of legislation introduced by the Modi government, aims to protect persecuted minorities by admitting them as refugees and gives a six-year fast track to citizenship through naturalisation. The CAA is intended to apply solely to undocumented Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, Christians, and Parsis from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan, leaving Muslims out, regardless of persecution or time spent in India.

Over the last 9 years, the BJP has created a setting of particular concern through legislation: by signalling that minorities, particularly Muslims, had habits and characteristics that needed to be controlled or addressed by law, it has helped ostracise and fragilize their lives.

Cases of religious violence are based on false claims of proselytism (the "love jihad" claim, in which young Muslim males deliberately attempt to impregnate Hindu women in order to increase their numbers), and contempt for Hindu icons such as the cow. They are led by vigilantes and mobs who benefit from impunity. Extrajudicial killings by police personnel appear to have increased as the police feel free to follow deep-seated and historic prejudice.

3) How Meta's Violence and Incitement policy should treat video content

depicting scenes of communal violence, and how to assess whether such content may cause or contribute to offline violence.

Answer: Meta is not qualified and does not have the required knowledge and contexts to assess if any specific video can contribute to offline violence. The Hindu-right wing social media teams have mechanisms to bypass Meta's filters. I have personally reported several videos which targeted Muslims and instigated people to exclude Muslims socio-economically. But, Meta has failed to take those videos down. I have also reported videos and images where prominent Muslim women journalists and activists were called names, but Meta didn't take down the videos and I got the response that these videos do not violate community rules. For instance, Meta may filter out words like "Kill Muslims" but it won't be able to filter out a phrase written in this manner, "Finish Chuslims" when both the phrases mean the same. Meta should have special, multilingual team to analyse such contexts to remove all content that depicts hate and violence. Meta can very well remove such content but as scholars, factcheckers and whistleblowers have repeatedly proved, the company makes profit out of inciteful content. Meta needs to fix its intention first.

4) How social media platforms should manage law enforcement requests for the review or removal of content that may not violate national laws but may breach platforms content rules.

Answer: Meta should not be concerned about law enforcement requests as long as they do not breach national laws. Meta can follow stricter content rules in cases of violation of platform rules. Moreover, Meta has issued an unwritten code to third-party factcheckers that false claims posted by elected members of the ruling party in India should not be flagged. Meta should take this rule away at once. The members of the ruling party, with their large followers, use Meta to incite communal violence and Meta's rules such as these are responsible for Muslim and Christian hate crimes in India. I have faced this issue and the Meta's hypocrisy first hand while leading the factcheck team of a global newsroom.

5) How social media platforms should incorporate law enforcement requests for content removal, especially requests not based on alleged illegality,

into their transparency reporting.

Answer: Meta should make their transparency reports truly transparent. In the interest of democracy and freedom of expression, Meta should reveal all such requests in the transparency reports. If the corporation can't do that, it should rename "transparency report" into something else. Meta should also open up data access for scholars and ease the process. By restricting data and excluding academia, Meta is roadblocking efforts to weed out content that cause ethnic conflict and enabling majoritarian and autocracy in the Global South.

Link to Attachment

[PC-14080](#)

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14082
MR

Central & South
Asia

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Withheld

Withheld

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Withheld

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

The posting is a good example of the changing narrative of free expression wherein the person posting the message is possibly aware of the direct linkages between the message and the incitement of violence but consciously opts to remain below the threshold. In doing so, he legitimately remains below Meta's 'Violence and Community Standard' to prohibit/remove the posting but at the same time has enough traction to polarize the opinion.

The current environment is highly polarized with a populist flavour and therefore such below par intensity of the message to incite violence is strong enough to cumulate with other reinforcing messages to incite violence. Messaging will be atomic, seemingly independent of the popular rhetoric and populist narrative. Yet, such atomic messaging will have the potential to add up to create a strong political discourse not to incite direct violence but change the norms of tolerance by deepening the socio-political cleavages and thus inciting violence.

For Meta, the challenge will be immense. Most message will remain below the

‘Violence and Community Standard’ but have extremely dangerous long term consequences which will impact culture and existing norms of religious tolerance. The ecosystem in which this atomic messaging will exist will be extremely localized and may/may not have external manifestations. For example, the second message could be part of the larger design of content manipulation wherein the person who posted the message planned the posting and its removal. Although the case study remains silent on the media traffic, any possible spike in the messaging, the length and the duration of the posting, one needs to examine the trend of removing the postings.

Another challenge which is likely to arise in the future is the legitimacy of the message to operate well below the ‘Violence and Community Standard,’ apparently transparent and yet has the potential of strong messaging. The poster’s removal of the posting is likely to create more interest, not just of the content but the message itself.

Law enforcement requests are politically motivated. The risk of incitement and/or violence too has a political appeal and cannot be, in most situations without the State’s direct/indirect acquiescence. At the same time, Meta’s compliance to the national law particularly on the State’s concerns for national security and public order will de facto create conditions of compliance. Both concerns wrests wide discretion upon the state and thus legitimises content removal. While national security is rhetorically strong to which Meta will have to submit, public order has to assessed for its directness of the intended harm and violence. Meta will have space in the case of the latter but very little in the case of the former. However, we should be able to distinguish law enforcement to national security.

[Link to Attachment](#)

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14083
MR

Central & South
Asia

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Sudipta

Shaw

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

With the increasing digitalization and widespread reach of social media, its potential to contribute to violence and discrimination against religious and ethnic groups becomes increasingly evident. Several factors interact to create this concerning phenomenon. Social media's real-time nature enables the swift spread of misinformation, hate speech, and incendiary materials. In the Indian context of religious diversity, this can amplify existing prejudices, escalate tensions, and potentially lead to violence. A single inflammatory post can reach thousands or even millions of users within moments, shaping their perceptions and attitudes. Social media platforms, further, utilize algorithms to tailor content to users' preferences and behaviours. This can lead to the formation of echo chambers, where users are exposed to content that reinforces their existing beliefs. In regions like India, where caste politics are influential, algorithms can inadvertently expose users to divisive content, entrenching biases and contributing to discrimination. Moreover, social media offers users a degree of anonymity that emboldens some to express hateful and discriminatory

views they might avoid sharing in person. The absence of face-to-face accountability can lead to the use of derogatory language, hate speech, and incitement targeting specific religious or ethnic groups. Such online hostility can potentially spill over into real-world conflicts. Extremist groups also exploit social media to spread their ideologies, recruit followers, and coordinate activities. In regions marked by religious or ethnic tensions, these groups can exploit historical grievances, manipulate emotions, and incite violence. Also, malicious actors can use social media to specifically target religious or ethnic groups with divisive messages. Viral hate campaigns, driven by a small number of individuals, can rapidly gain traction and lead to widespread hostility and even offline violence. Social media, owing to its reach, and lack of regulation, can create a distorted sense of support for extreme views. When users encounter content aligned with their beliefs, they may perceive these views as more widely held than they are, potentially driving further polarization and animosity.

India has witnessed instances of communal violence and tensions throughout its history, often rooted in historical grievances, territorial disputes, and socio-economic disparities. These tensions occasionally escalate into violence, posing challenges to social harmony and stability. Religious and caste-based politics have played significant roles in shaping India's political landscape. Political parties sometimes exploit religious and caste identities for electoral gains, which can exacerbate divisions and create a climate conducive to communal violence. Caste politics intersects with religious identities and can further complicate intergroup relations. Biased reporting, sensationalism, and the spread of false information can contribute to the amplification of tensions and the incitement of violence between religious and ethnic groups, indicating an increased role of media in shaping peoples' perceptions, opinions, and actions. Though the Indian Constitution guarantees freedom of religion and the protection of minority rights, certain policies such as Citizenship Amendment Act has impacted intergroup relations and incited violence.

Meta's Violence and Incitement policy should approach video content depicting scenes of communal violence with careful consideration. The contextual setting, the intent of the video content and the potential harm that it can cause needs to

be assessed. Meta's team should be aware of the historical, cultural, and socio-political factors that may contribute to tensions between different religious and ethnic groups. Contextual understanding is crucial for determining whether the content has the potential to escalate real-world violence. Meta's team should consider whether the content amplifies existing prejudices or contributes to the spread of hate speech. If the video content fuels animosity, reinforces stereotypes, or targets vulnerable groups, it may have a higher potential to incite offline violence. Meta's team should evaluate the intent behind the video content, particularly looking out for calls/incitement to violence, and/or explicit threats to harm specific groups. The presence of such elements should be a key factor in assessing the potential for offline violence. Content that encourages or glorifies violence should also be reviewed in this context. Further, if the video content is directly linked to ongoing or upcoming events that historically have led to violence, it should be evaluated with a higher level of scrutiny. For these assessments, cross-cultural understanding is crucial. Experts in conflict resolution, human rights, among others need to be involved by Meta to gain insights into the potential implications of the content. These experts can provide valuable perspectives on the content's potential to contribute to offline violence.

Managing law enforcement requests for content review or removal that may not violate national laws, but breach platform content rules require a well-defined and transparent process. Social Media platforms should establish clear and transparent guidelines outlining the types of content that may be subject to review or removal based on law enforcement requests, even if not illegal under national laws. This can include content that poses a genuine risk of harm, incites violence, or violates platform community standards. Social Media platforms can work collaboratively with relevant law enforcement agencies to develop a mutual understanding of content rules and their application. Regular communication can help ensure that law enforcement requests align with platform policies and user rights. Further, each case must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine whether the content in question genuinely poses a risk of harm or violates content rules. A careful assessment is necessary to avoid unnecessary censorship and to respect freedom of expression. To ensure transparency at all levels, social media platforms should notify users when their

content is subject to law enforcement review or removal, providing clear explanations and an opportunity to appeal. External audits by third parties or experts of different domain of each case can further enhance transparency, building user trust and accountability.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- MR
PC-14084

Case number

Public comment number

Asia Pacific &
Oceania

Region

Withheld

Commenter's first name

Withheld

Commenter's last name

English

Commenter's preferred language

Withheld

Organization

No

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

DID NOT PROVIDE

Link to Attachment

[PC-14084](#)

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14085
MR

Central & South
Asia

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Withheld

Withheld

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Withheld

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

The utilization of social media platforms has the potential to contribute to violence and discrimination against religious and ethnic groups, both in India and across various global contexts. This can manifest through several mechanisms.

One particularly concerning avenue is the dissemination of hate speech and misinformation aimed at specific religious and ethnic groups. The amplification of such harmful content can create an environment of fear and mistrust, which can fuel instances of violence and discrimination. For example, the rise of hate speech and misinformation directed at Muslims in India has exacerbated intolerance and violence against this community.

Social media can be instrumental in recruiting and radicalizing individuals who are inclined towards violence and discrimination. Echo chambers can be created, reinforcing existing biases and promoting extremist views. Reports have emerged regarding entities such as ISIS exploiting social media to recruit

and radicalize vulnerable individuals, particularly among India's youth.

The platforms also serve as tools for organizing and orchestrating violence against religious and ethnic groups. Groups or pages may propagate violence or share details on when and where to carry out attacks. Notably, organized efforts on social media facilitated instances of communal violence in India during 2020.

The rapid growth of digital media platforms has led to new challenges in regulating and supervising content that may provoke or contribute to real-world violence. The purpose of this policy proposal is to provide clear guidelines for Meta's Violence and Incitement policy, specifically regarding video content that depicts instances of communal violence. The ultimate objective is to strike a delicate balance between protecting freedom of expression, preventing harm in the physical world, and fostering a secure online environment for all users.

The first crucial step is to establish a clear and comprehensive definition of communal violence. This definition should form the basis for content moderation decisions, covering any form of physical or verbal aggression among diverse religious, ethnic, or social groups that results in harm, destruction, or disharmony within a community.

A critical aspect of the evaluation process is a thorough examination of the contextual elements inherent in video content that portrays communal violence. This analysis should take into account the content's intention, investigating whether it seeks to incite violence, hatred, or discrimination among distinct groups. Moreover, the historical context surrounding the content should be considered. It is important to evaluate whether the content is linked to a historical event, cultural practice, or a commentary on communal tensions without directly promoting violence. Additionally, a distinction should be made between content that has genuine educational or news value, which aims to raise awareness about communal violence, and content that sensationalizes or glorifies violence.

Collaboration with external subject-matter experts, such as academics, human rights organizations, and community leaders, is crucial in shaping and refining Meta's policies on communal violence. These experts provide insights that

enhance decision-making processes and facilitate a nuanced approach to content assessment.

To ensure transparency, Meta's content moderation decisions should be accompanied by clear explanations. Users must be given the right to appeal such decisions, providing an opportunity to present additional context or evidence regarding the content's intent.

For content that shows scenes of communal violence but is not intended to incite violence, appropriate warning labels should be applied. In cases where the content may pose a potential risk, Meta should consider implementing age restrictions to limit exposure to younger audiences.

Active engagement with the user community is essential. Regular surveys, focus groups, and consultations should be conducted to gather feedback on the application of Meta's Violence and Incitement policy, specifically in relation to video content that portrays communal violence.

Investing in advanced AI technologies that can accurately identify and analyze video content showcasing communal violence is crucial. Collaborative efforts with the research community can yield improved content assessment and moderation mechanisms.

The diverse cultural, social, and political contexts of various regions should be considered in policy enforcement. Content that is deemed acceptable in one region might be deeply sensitive or offensive in another, necessitating a localized approach to content assessment.

Therefore, the delicate task of preventing offline violence while upholding freedom of expression necessitates a contextually sensitive and adaptable approach. Meta's Violence and Incitement policy should prioritize thorough contextual assessment, collaboration with experts and communities, and the application of advanced detection technologies. Regular policy reviews and adjustments are vital to effectively address emerging challenges in this dynamic digital landscape.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14086
MR

Case number

Public comment number

Asia Pacific &
Oceania

Region

Ramona

Commenter's first name

Gonsalves

Commenter's last name

English

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

Organization

No

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

Social media platforms can contribute to violence and discrimination against ethnic groups through various means:

1. Echo Chambers
2. Missinformation
3. Online bullying
4. Spread of hate
5. Incitement
6. Polarization

To curb/ mitigate these issues, stricter content moderation must be implemented by these platforms. In addition platforms must encourage diverse

voices and critical thinking, educational resources to promote understanding and tolerance.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

Case 2023-018-FB- PC-14087
MR

Central & South
Asia

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Withheld

Withheld

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Withheld

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

Social media platforms today work under the diktats of the government. They allow fake and edited versions of things to persist on the platform when it suits the majority. Often, on behalf of the ruling party, edited clips and images from outside India get shared as happening in India. for example, every Eid, images of flowing blood are shown which are either fake or from Bangladesh. images of Muslim youth attacking police are shown as being from Bengal when it is from Myanmar and the fake image of Modi on NYT keeps coming back often.

Social media websites need better algo and now maybe AI to detect hate speeches and patterns of users uploading and sharing them. That may help flag potential abusers even before they share such posts the next time. Beef ban is another issue on which social media has become a tool to spread hate and its a recurring problem for the last 10 years.

Does social media want to be on the right side of the government for ad

revenues or market shares? or become the flagbearer of democracy and rights? everything boils down to that. Its a tricky line to follow. Social media should increase the visibility to civil society groups and individual who bring message of peace and harmony at the least.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment