



Public Comment Appendix for

2024-001-FB-MR

Case number

Case description

Note: Please be aware before reading that the following case summary includes disturbing material dealing with content about sexual violence against minors.

In January 2022, a news organization posted on its Facebook page a video of a documentary about a man convicted in a Pakistani court for committing serial murders. The content contains extensive details, in Urdu, about the crimes, which involved the sexual abuse and murder of many children in the 1990s, and his subsequent arrest and trial. The video clearly shows identifiable images of the child victims. The caption warns that the video contains interviews with people associated with the perpetrator and his crimes, and details about sexual abuse and violence. The content was viewed about 21.8 million times, received about 51,000 reactions and 5,000 comments, and was shared about 18,000 times.

After it was posted, 67 users reported the content, while Meta’s High Risk Early Review Operations (HERO) system reported it eight times due to its high virality signals. Meta’s HERO system is designed to identify potentially violating content that is predicted to have a high likelihood of going viral. Once identified by the system, the content is prioritized for human review by Meta’s staff with language, market and policy expertise.

In this case, initial automated reviews and a human reviewer concluded the content did not violate any Community Standards. Later, however, following the additional review stage, Meta decided its original decision to keep up the content was wrong. The company then removed the post for violating the [Child Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Nudity](#) policy’s prohibition on sharing “content that identifies, or mocks alleged victims of sexual exploitation by name or image.” Meta did not apply a strike against the account of the news organization that posted the content because of the public interest and awareness-raising context of the video, and notable length of time between the content being posted and removed.

Meta referred this case to the Board, noting that it represents tensions in Meta’s values of voice, safety, privacy and dignity when content involves the sharing of imagery of child abuse victims in a documentary. Meta considers this case significant and difficult because the company has to “weigh the safety, privacy and dignity of the child victims against the fact that the footage does not emphasize the child victims’ identities, the events depicted are from over 30 years ago, and the video appears designed to raise awareness around a serial killer’s crimes and discuss issues that have high public interest value.”

The Board selected this case to assess the impact of Meta’s Child Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Nudity Community Standard on the rights of child victims, especially in the context of reporting and when a notable passage of time has passed. It falls within the Board’s [strategic priority](#) of Treating Users Fairly.

The Board would appreciate public comments that address:

- Media freedoms in Pakistan, in particular any legal restrictions on the press or social media in reporting on crimes against children.
- Whether Meta’s Child Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Nudity policy adequately protects the rights of identifiable child victims of sexual crimes and their families, as well as the rights of freedom of expression among people reporting on or raising awareness of such crimes.
- Ethical journalism standards on reporting of sexual crimes against child victims, including historic crimes, and the inclusion of extensive details and/or victims’ names or faces in reporting that could lead to their identification.
- Trade-offs associated with automated systems designed to detect and prioritize enforcement decisions on potentially viral content.

As part of 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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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.

2024-001-FB-MR

PC-26001

United States &
Canada

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Gayla

Dawson

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'm in agreement with Meta for taking down the post's about sexual abuse on children. Thank you!

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

2024-001-FB-MR

Case number

PC-26002

Public comment number

Europe

Region

Andrew

Commenter's first name

Crabtree

Commenter's last name

English

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

Organization

No

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

I usually sign any campaigns regarding the abuse of children. I myself posted about the tragic life and death of Victoria Climbè. Whatever i say or sign in my Country about murder and abuse of children in Pakistan, India, Muslim stone age mentality will not make one iota of difference to their plight.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

2024-001-FB-MR

PC-26005

United States &
Canada

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Gregory

Stanton

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Genocide Watch

Yes

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

Meta was correct to take down the posting of a video that showed images of child victims of a serial sexual predator. The video did not protect the privacy and identities of the victims. Even years after their victimization, their privacy was violated, as was the privacy of their families. If the video had masked or blurred the images of the victims, the video could have been permitted and left up.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

2024-001-FB-MR

PC-26013

Asia Pacific &
Oceania

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Dr Harry

Melkonian

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Macquarie
University Law
School - Media
Law Students

Yes

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

Short Summary:

Meta's policy on Child Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Nudity lacks sufficient protection for victims and their families. While aiming to uphold freedom of expression regarding reporting or raising awareness, clearer and more detailed guidelines for content review are needed for protecting legitimate interests.

The current policy does not adequately protect the rights of identifiable child victims as well as the rights of freedom of expression of the media. While it provides a baseline of protection, there is scope for further improvement in the implementation of the policy and consideration of context to have a balance of both rights.

Full Comment:

Child Protection

Meta's Child Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Nudity policy could be improved to adequately protect the rights of identifiable child victims of sexual crimes and their families. The policy should align with international standards, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which sets out various rights protecting children from abuse and exploitation.

Initially, the policy is silent in clearly defining a child. A child is described as real minors, toddlers, babies, or non-real depiction with a human likeness. On an international perspective, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child to be any persons under the age of 18. It is evident that Meta's description of a child emphasises infancy and being of tender age, as opposed to any persons in their adolescence.

The only policy that refers to children who are victims of sexual crimes states "Content that identifies or mocks alleged victims of sexual exploitation by name or image". This policy only has regard to children that are victims of sexual exploitation, as opposed to any other types of crimes they may fall victim to. Furthermore, the policy does not have any regard to families of child victims.

It is respectfully submitted that the current policy needs to be amended to clearly define a child with respect to the international definition as set by the United Nations. The amendment should also effectively cover child victims of historical crimes and be expanded to include the families of child victims upon a compassionate basis.

Furthermore, while it is important to shine a light on crimes against children, due regard must be had for the rights of identifiable child victims and their families. However, this must be balanced against the right to freedom of expression where the reporting relates to historic crimes.

While the documentary clearly has high public value in raising awareness about child abuse, any content should ideally obscure the identities of victims. This could be achieved through the use of pseudonyms or facial blurring, thereby protecting the privacy of victims and their families without compromising the factual accuracy of the content.

Limitations on freedom of speech ultimately stem from a need to prevent a foreseeable harm to an individual or group of individuals that would otherwise occur absent such a limitation. Meta's Child Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Nudity policy should include provisions to ensure that identities of child abuse victims are obscured in legitimate news documentaries.

Freedom of Expression

Initially, Meta should evaluate controversial material by examining the source. Legitimate news organisations should be recognised and their legitimacy acknowledged by allowing professional journalists as broad a scope as possible without compromising the rights of individuals affected by the content.

Meta's Policy does not provide for special consideration for content dealing with child sexual exploitation, abuse and nudity that is produced by journalists for public interest and awareness-raising. We believe that Meta's Policy should be amended to allow for legitimate journalists to produce content of this subject matter but, where possible, eliminate identifying data or images that are not integral to the news event itself.

Conclusion

The news documentary on child abuse in Pakistan is an example of a scenario in which greater consideration to context would have facilitated an outcome that better balanced both the rights of the child victims and their families, as well as the important public interest in freedom of expression. The relevant context namely being the professionalism of the documentary, the significant passage of time and the educational and awareness-raising context of the documentary.

Meta should first clarify ambiguous terminology within its policy and provide specific guidelines for content moderation, including clear criteria for censorship, warnings, and implementation, particularly in cases of significant public interest or where many years have passed since the occurrence.

[Link to Attachment](#)

[No Attachment](#)