

2020-007-FB-FBR

Case referred by Facebook

A user posted a photo in a Facebook group, depicting a man in leather armor holding a sheathed sword in his right hand. The photo has a text overlay in Hindi that discusses drawing a sword from its scabbard in response to “infidels” criticizing the prophet. The photo includes a logo with the words “Indian Muslims” in English. The accompanying text, also in English, includes hashtags calling President Emmanuel Macron of France “the devil” and calling for the boycott of French products.

Facebook removed the content for violating its policy on Violence and Incitement. In its referral, Facebook stated that it considered this case to be significant, because the content could convey a “veiled threat” with a specific reference to an individual, President Macron. Facebook referred to heightened tensions in France at the time the user posted the content.

Facebook further indicated that although its policies allow it to determine a potential threat of real-world violence and to balance that determination against the user’s ability to express their religious beliefs, it was difficult to draw the line in this case.

Submit public comment [here](#)

The case announced today replaces case 2020-001-FB-UA, which is no longer available for review by the Board as a result of user action. This case concerned a comment on a post, with the user who made the comment appealing Facebook’s decision to remove it.

However, the post itself, which remained on the platform, has subsequently been deleted by the user who posted it. As a result, both the post and comment have been removed from the platform.

Facebook users have the right to delete their content. As such, we anticipate that such events will occur from time to time, particularly after the Board begins considering appeals from users about content they want removed from the platform over the coming months. Where user action results in a case being withdrawn, the Board will announce this promptly.