

Meta fails to stop work conditions case in Kenya

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Meta has faced scrutiny over the working conditions of its content moderators.

A Kenyan court on Monday rejected a bid by Facebook's parent company Meta to stop a case accusing it of exploitation and poor working conditions.

The suit was filed by a former content moderator at Sama, a company contracted by Meta to review Facebook posts, and alleges that workers in Kenya were subjected to inhumane conditions, including forced labor, irregular pay and no right to unionize.

Meta sought to have the case struck down, arguing that the local employment and labor relations [court](#) had no jurisdiction over it because it is neither based in nor trades in Kenya.

But High Court judge Jacob Gakeri on Monday dismissed the request.

"My finding is that (the) second and third respondent shall not be struck from the proceeding," Gakeri said, referring to Meta Platforms Inc and Meta Platforms Ireland Ltd.

The judge said the companies were "proper parties" in the case, with the court now due to meet on March 8 to discuss how it will proceed to a hearing.

Meta could not be immediately reached for comment.

British-based legal activist firm Foxglove, which is supporting the case, said it was "extremely pleased" with the ruling.

"We think it's right that this trial be heard in Kenya, where the abuses happened," Foxglove director Cori Crider said in a statement.

Amnesty International Kenya also welcomed the decision, saying it was "a significant step that ensures the authority of Kenyan courts to protect and enforce fundamental human rights."

Meta has faced scrutiny over the working conditions of content moderators who say they spend hours focused on hateful, disturbing

posts with little regard given to their well-being.

The company is facing another lawsuit in Kenya filed by two individuals and a rights group accusing the tech behemoth of responding inadequately to [hateful content](#) on its platform, especially in relation to the war in Ethiopia's northern Tigray region.

The petitioners are asking the court for the establishment of a 200-billion Kenyan shillings (\$1.6-billion) compensation fund for victims of hate and violence incited on Facebook.

In late 2021, Rohingya refugees sued Facebook for \$150 billion, claiming the social network failed to stem [hate speech](#) directed against them.

The Rohingya, a mainly Muslim minority, were driven from Myanmar in 2017 into neighboring Bangladesh by security forces in a crackdown now subject to a UN genocide investigation.

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