

Facebook removes Bolsonaro videos for misinformation



New York, April 3 (RHC)-- Facebook has followed in the footsteps of Twitter earlier this week by removing video posts in which Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro challenged the isolation measures defended by the health authorities to combat the coronavirus pandemic.

In a statement, Facebook reported that it decided to delete the posts, shared both in Facebook and Instagram, because its policy does not allow “misinformation that could lead to physical harm.”

In the videos, the 65-year-old head of state was seen talking to a street vendor in Taguatinga, one of the satellite cities of the capital Brasilia, despite the restrictions imposed by various Brazilian states to stop the spread of COVID-19, which has already left 159 dead and 4,579 confirmed cases in Brazil.

“What I have been hearing from people is that they want to work. What I have said from the beginning is that ‘we are going to be careful, the over-65s stay at home,’” said Bolsonaro, one of the most skeptical about the severity of the pandemic and a supporter of the end of social isolation.

He also told people that chloroquine, a medicine used against malaria and other diseases, “is working everywhere,” even though its effectiveness against coronavirus has not yet been scientifically proven.

Facebook, which owns Instagram, has announced various initiatives to contribute to the fight against the coronavirus, including measures to curb misinformation and “fake news” and increase the dissemination of the recommendations of the World Health Organization.

The Menlo Park-based company made the decision to remove Bolsonaro’s video following a similar action by Twitter, which removed two because they “violated the Twitter Rules.” In a statement sent to local media, Twitter said it had recently included among its criteria for excluding tweets, content that contradicted public health information from official sources and could put people at greater risk of transmitting COVID-19.

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