

How the Facebook outage crippled businesses and communication around the world | Rest of World

By Vittoria Elliott

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Estherina Bewintara, a 29-year-old mother and designer in Jakarta, normally processes orders for her online furniture shop once her baby is asleep, typically between 10 p.m. and 3 a.m. But on Monday night, as she was coordinating a stock update over a WhatsApp call, she noticed something was wrong.

“I thought it was the Wi-Fi,” she said. She attempted to reconnect multiple times, got frustrated, and eventually abandoned the work. “I went to sleep upset.”

Bewintara is one of the 2.85 billion users of Facebook.com, WhatsApp, and Instagram who were left in the dark by a router update gone awry, which took down Facebook’s entire network of platforms this week.

For much of the world, the outage struck in the middle of the night. In Indonesia, which has over 190 million Facebook and 88 million Instagram users, the outage occurred at around 10:30 p.m. Had it struck just a few hours earlier, it would have meant communication chaos.

Facebook’s products are more than just a social network for hundreds of millions of people globally. Beyond being communication tools, the company’s platforms are e-commerce resources, storefronts, and health and emergency aids.

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