

Uber sued for mishandling rape victim's medical records

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By CNN

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The woman who was raped by an Uber driver in India in 2014 is suing the company for a second time.

After settling a lawsuit against the firm in 2015 for an undisclosed sum, the woman — who goes by Jane Doe — is taking new action over revelations that Uber mishandled her medical records.

In a complaint filed Thursday in California, Doe is suing Uber as well as cofounder Travis Kalanick and former executives Emil Michael and Eric Alexander for intrusion into private affairs, publicly disclosing private facts and defamation.

Alexander was terminated from Uber last week after allegations that he had obtained and shared the woman's medical records with Kalanick and Michael. Recode reported that the executives doubted the woman's report and suspected that the incident was a sabotage attempt orchestrated by Indian competitor, Ola.

Doe's lawyers, Douglas H. Wigdor and Jeanne Christensen from Wigdor LLP, called it "shocking" that Uber would purport to support Doe and her family in her recovery while "engaging in offensive and spurious conspiracy theories about the brutal rape."

"Rape denial is just another form of the toxic gender discrimination that is endemic at Uber and ingrained in its culture," reads the statement. "Hopefully, this lawsuit coupled with the changes recommended by the independent counsel will create real change and reform."

Uber has been under heightened scrutiny since February, when former engineer Susan Fowler wrote a scathing blog post about sexual harassment and sexism at the firm.

Fowler's post was a catalyst for Kalanick to launch an "urgent investigation" into the company, led by former U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder. Uber hired a separate law firm to investigate the specific harassment allegations, which resulted in at least 20 employees being let go.

On Tuesday, Holder's team delivered its recommendations, revealing just how troubled the \$68 billion startup is. Kalanick announced that he was taking an indefinite leave of absence from his role as CEO.

Doe's new lawsuit mentions recent damning headlines, like Kalanick being caught on camera berating a driver, as well as the Holder report, in order to paint the picture of a company unhinged. It says Uber has "unrestrained, unethical executives," and states that the company made an "intentional decision to look the other way."

In a statement, Uber said: "No one should have to go through a horrific experience like this, and we're truly sorry that she's had to relive it over the law few weeks."

A representative for Alexander did not immediately respond to request for comment.