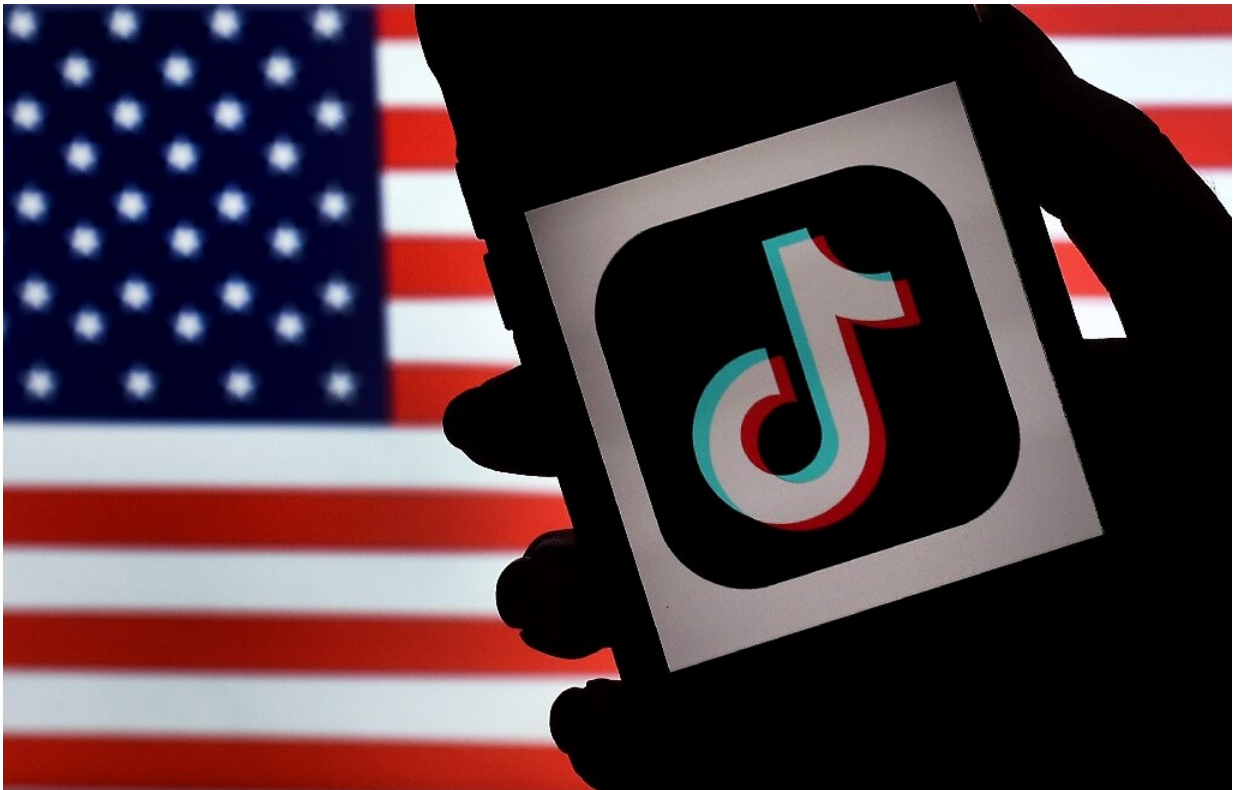


ByteDance in talks with US to avoid selling TikTok: report

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ByteDance, the Chinese company that owns TikTok, is in talks to avoid being forced by President Donald Trump to sell the wildly popular social media app

Chinese internet giant ByteDance is in talks with the US about ways it might avoid having to sell its TikTok operations here, the Wall Street Journal reported Wednesday.

TikTok has been at the center of a diplomatic storm between Washington and Beijing, and President Donald Trump gave Americans a deadline to stop doing business with TikTok's Chinese parent company ByteDance—effectively compelling a sale of the app to a US company.

Walmart has joined forces with Microsoft in negotiations to buy TikTok. Oracle is also reported to be interested in TikTok.

TikTok—which has been downloaded 175 million times in the US and more than a billion times around the world—has filed a lawsuit challenging the crackdown by the US government.

The suit contends that Trump's order was a misuse of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act because the platform is not "an unusual and extraordinary threat."

Trump claims that TikTok could be used by China to track the locations of federal employees, build dossiers on people for blackmail and conduct corporate espionage.

TikTok—used by as many as a billion people worldwide to make quirky, short-form videos on their cellphones—has repeatedly denied sharing data with Beijing.

Talks between ByteDance and the US have been taking place for months but have grown more urgent as the deadline set by Trump nears, according to the Journal report.

At least one of TikTok's major investors was part of a group that met recently with representatives from the Central Intelligence Agency to discuss [data security](#), the Journal reported, citing someone familiar with the matter.

Trump last week repeated his demand for a piece of the action from any sale of TikTok's US operations for forcing such a deal.

"Well, I told them that they have until September 15th to make a deal; after that, we close it up in this country," Trump told journalists.

"And I said that the United States has to be compensated—well compensated—because we are the ones that are making it possible, and so we should be compensated."

Critics have slammed Trump's call for the US government to get a cut of the deal, contending that it appears unconstitutional and akin to extortion.

Meanwhile, ByteDance has vowed to "strictly abide" by new export rules in China which could potentially complicate a sale of the business as demanded by Trump.

China's commerce ministry added "civilian use" to a list of technologies that are restricted for export.

The new regulations could make it more difficult for ByteDance to sell the wildly popular video app, which features clips of everything from dance routines and hair-dye tutorials to jokes about daily life and politics.

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