

Chinese app TikTok cuts jobs in India following ban

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In this Sept. 28, 2020 file photo, a view of the TikTok app logo, in Tokyo. Popular short-video Chinese app TikTok is cutting its workforce in India after with hundreds of millions of its users dropped it to comply with a government ban on dozens of Chinese apps amid a military standoff between the two countries.(AP Photo/Kiichiro Sato, File)

Popular short-video Chinese app TikTok is cutting its workforce in India after hundreds of millions of its users dropped it to comply with a government ban on dozens of Chinese apps amid a military standoff between the two countries.

"Given the lack of feedback from the government about how to resolve this issue in the subsequent seven months, it is with deep sadness that we have decided to reduce our workforce in India," a TikTok statement said Wednesday.

The statement didn't give details, but media reports say the company has more than 2,000 employees in India. It expressed the hope it will get a chance to relaunch TikTok in India to support hundreds of millions of users, artists, storytellers, educators and performers.

The Indian government announced a ban on 59 Chinese apps, including TikTok, which is operated by Chinese internet firm Bytedance, in June as its relations with China deteriorated. It said the apps were prejudicial to the sovereignty and integrity of India.

China says New Delhi has been using national security as an excuse to prohibit Chinese mobile apps.

China's government on Thursday criticized Indian moves to ban Baidu, TikTok and other popular Chinese apps and appealed to New Delhi to get economic ties "back on track."

"China opposes any discriminatory restrictive measures against Chinese companies," said a Commerce Ministry spokesman, Gao Feng.

Gao didn't address Indian complaints that Chinese apps might be a security threat but said Beijing requires its companies to abide by local laws abroad.

"The hard-won development of China-India economic and trade cooperation is in the common interests of the two peoples," Gao said.

Beijing hopes New Delhi can "provide an open, fair and non-discriminatory business environment" for Chinese companies "so that China-India bilateral economic and trade cooperation can be back on track as soon as possible," Gao said.

Chinese-owned apps have found a fast-growing market in India, with some companies creating India-specific apps that have exploded in popularity.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has used the country's 500 million internet users—second only to China—as a lure to get tech giants including Twitter to localize Indians' data.

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