
Supreme Court upholds TikTok ban pending sale by ByteDance



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The U.S. Supreme Court has unanimously upheld a federal law mandating the ban of TikTok from Sunday unless its Chinese parent company, ByteDance, sells the app. The decision, citing national security risks linked to ByteDance's ties to China, overrides concerns about free speech for TikTok's 170 million U.S. users.

The ruling allows a 90-day extension if significant progress is made toward a sale. However,

ByteDance has expressed no intention to sell, and Chinese regulations restrict the sale of TikTok's proprietary algorithm. Once the law takes effect, new users will be unable to download the app, and updates will be unavailable, rendering it non-functional over time, according to the Justice Department.

Justices Sonia Sotomayor and Neil Gorsuch supported the decision despite expressing reservations. Gorsuch emphasized the risks of China accessing sensitive data from millions of Americans, a concern echoed by Congress when the bipartisan legislation was passed and signed by President Biden in April.

TikTok has consistently denied claims of data misuse or Chinese government influence. However, U.S. officials argue the app's data collection practices and algorithm manipulation pose security threats. Critics, including Senator Tom Cotton, label TikTok a "communist spy app."

The ruling sparked criticism from digital rights advocates and content creators who fear economic losses. Desiree Hill, a small business owner, expressed concerns about her ability to reach customers without TikTok.

As the law comes into force, Apple, Google, and internet hosts will be barred from supporting TikTok. Despite interest from potential buyers like Steven Mnuchin and Frank McCourt, ByteDance remains resistant to a sale.

The Supreme Court's decision reflects escalating U.S.-China tensions, with TikTok at the heart of geopolitical competition.