Ban TikTok here too!' Head of major media company calls for EU embargo on Chinese app



Photo: Jaap Arriens/NurPhoto via Getty Images

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About 170 million people, including many young people, use TikTok in the U.S. alone. Photo: Kayla Bartkowski/Getty Images

US Supreme Court upholds law banning Chinese TikTok app

Business

On Friday, the American Supreme Court gave the U.S. government the green light to ban TikTok on national security grounds if its Chinese parent company ByteDance does not sell the video app by Sunday.

Mathias Döpfner, CEO of the Germany-based publishing giant Axel Springer, said in an opinion piece that he welcomed the decision and called for the EU to do the same.

"The U.S.A. is serious and [is] banning TikTok starting tomorrow. This is very good news," Döpfner wrote in the German tabloid, Bild, one of its publications.

"TikTok is an indirect instrument of China's communist secret service and uses data on the behavior of its users worldwide... [It] threatens the security of America and Europe. Now it's the EU's turn. Ban TikTok here too," he said.

Axel Springer is a major player in the publishing industry and owns titles in the EU and the U.S. including the influential website Politico and the German daily Die Welt. In a joint venture, it also owns several Polish publications, including the Onet news website and the tabloid, Fakt.

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EU opens proceedings against TikTok

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The EC said it would scrutinize TikTok's policies on political advertisements and paid-for political content. Photo: Jaque Silva/NurPhoto via Getty Images

EU to probe TikTok over shock Romanian presidential result

On Tuesday, the European Commission opened formal proceedings against TikTok over its alleged failure to limit election interference, notably in the Romanian presidential vote last month.

The Commission said it will request information and look into the social media app's policy on political advertisements and paid-for political content, as well as TikTok's systems to generate recommendations and the risks of them being manipulated.

The company was also named in a privacy complaint filed on Thursday by Austrian advocacy group Noyb, which alleged the firm was unlawfully sending European Union user data to China.

Although U.S. lawmakers have backed a ban on TikTok, President Joe Biden's administration has said that it will be up to the incoming government of President-elect Donald Trump to enforce the legislation. The ban is set to come into effect on Sunday – one day before Trump will formally become president for a second time.

Trump has suggested he could negotiate a compromise between Washington and the Chinese-owned firm, but TikTok has said it will have to "go dark" for its 170 million users in the U.S. unless Biden gives assurances that he won't enforce a shutdown, the AP press agency reported.

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