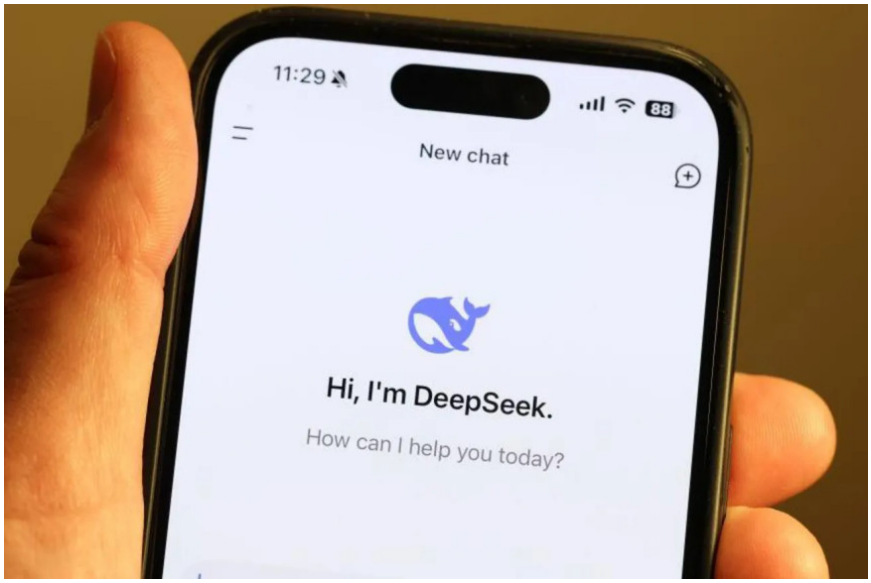
S Korea removes Deepseek from app stores over privacy concerns



South Korea has banned new downloads of China's DeepSeek artificial intelligence (AI) chatbot, according to the country's personal data protection watchdog.

The government agency said the AI model will become available again to South Korean users when "improvements and remedies" are made to ensure it complies with the country's personal data protection laws.

In the week after it made global headlines, DeepSeek became hugely popular in South Korea leaping to the top of app stores with over a million weekly users.

But its rise in popularity also attracted scrutiny from countries around the world which have imposed restrictions on the app over privacy and national security concerns.

South Korea's Personal Information Protection Commission said the DeepSeek app became unavailable on Apple's App Store and Google Play on Saturday evening.

It came after several South Korean government agencies banned their employees from downloading the chatbot to their work devices.

South Korea's acting president Choi Sang-mok has described Deepseek as a "shock", that could impact the country's industries, beyond AI.

Despite the suspension of new downloads, people who already have it on their phones will be able to continue using it or they,