

CHINA SLAMS APPS BAN, URGES INDIA TO 'CORRECT DISCRIMINATORY MEASURES'

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China on Wednesday called on India "to immediately correct its discriminatory measures" over the decision to extend a ban on 59 Chinese apps.

The Indian government recently sent notices to Chinese firms, informing them that the ban, announced in June, would continue. India had banned the 59 Chinese apps including TikTok, WeChat and UC Browser, citing national security concerns in the wake of the stand-off in Ladakh. Another 118 apps were banned in September and 43 more in November.

The recent notice was sent after reviewing the responses from the Chinese firms, which had been given a chance to respond to the June move.

The Ministry of Electronics and IT had said in its order last year that it had received "credible inputs that such apps pose [a] threat to sovereignty and integrity of India" and that it had taken the measure "in view of information available they are engaged in activities which are prejudicial to sovereignty and integrity of India, defence of India, security of state and public order."

"Since last year, the Indian side has repeatedly used national security as an excuse to prohibit some mobile apps with Chinese background," the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi said in a statement.

"These moves [are] in violation of WTO's non-discriminatory principles and fair competition principles of a market economy and severely damage the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese companies," said Ji Rong, a spokesperson for the Embassy. "The Chinese side firmly opposes them.

'Comply with local laws'

"The Chinese government always asks Chinese companies to observe international rules and local laws and regulations when doing business overseas," the Embassy said. "The Indian government has the responsibility to follow WTO rules and market principles and protect the legitimate rights and interests of international investors including Chinese companies."

The moves had "hindered the improvement of the Indian business environment and the innovative development of related Indian industries," the Chinese Embassy said. "China-India economic and trade cooperation is mutually beneficial by nature," it said. "We urge the Indian side to immediately correct its discriminatory measures and avoid causing further damage to bilateral cooperation."

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