



By: TA | AP Brief

TikTok deal ensures US control of board and crucial algorithm



An emerging TikTok deal with China will ensure that U.S. companies control the **algorithm** that powers the app's video feed and Americans will hold a majority of seats on a board overseeing U.S. operations, the White House said Saturday.

A central question to the tug of war between Washington and Beijing has been whether the popular social video **platform** would keep its algorithm after the potential divestment of Chinese parent company ByteDance.

Congress passed legislation calling for a TikTok **ban** to go into effect in January, but President Donald Trump has repeatedly signed orders that have allowed TikTok to keep operating in the United States as his administration tries to reach agreement for ByteDance to sell its U.S. operations.

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said tech giant Oracle would be responsible for the app's data and security and that Americans will control six of the seven seats for a planned board. Oracle did not respond to a request for comment.

"We have great American patriots that are buying it — very, very substantial people, people that love our country," Trump told reporters on Saturday evening, the day after discussing the TikTok deal with China's Xi Jinping in a lengthy phone call. "And they're very smart technologically, and they will not let anything bad happen to TikTok."

Leavitt, in a Fox News "Saturday in America" interview, said "the algorithm will also be controlled by America as well," offering more detail about how the deal, at least in the eyes of the White House, is taking shape.

TikTok's algorithm fuels what users see on the app. American officials have warned the algorithm is vulnerable to manipulation by Chinese authorities, who can use it to shape content on the platform in a way that's difficult to detect.

"We are 100% confident that a deal is done, now that deal just needs to be signed and the

president's team is working with their Chinese counterparts to do just that," Leavitt said.

The need to protect Americans' privacy

Trump said after his call with Xi that American investors were lined up and that the Chinese leader has been "a gentleman" about the matter. The Republican president was vague on the crucial question of whether China would control the algorithm.

"It's all being worked out," Trump said. "We're going to have very good control."

A statement from the Chinese government after that phone call did not clarify what Xi had agreed to regarding a **sale** of a controlling stake by TikTok's Chinese parent company to avoid a U.S. ban.

TikTok is a vital part of our democratic process - Karoline Leavitt

Leavitt said Trump "recognized the need to protect Americans' privacy and data while also keeping this app open," adding that "TikTok is a vital part of our democratic process."

A recent Pew Research Center **survey** found that about one-third of Americans said they supported a TikTok ban, down from 50% in March 2023. Roughly one-third said they would oppose a ban, and a similar percentage said they weren't sure.

Among those who said they supported banning the social media platform, about 8 in 10 cited concerns over users' data security being at risk as a major factor in their decision, according to the report.

Leavitt expressed confidence that the agreement would be finalized soon. "Now we just need this deal to be signed," she said. "And that will be happening, I anticipate, in the coming days."