



COLORFUL KITES. A dragon-shaped kite, top photo, and panda-shaped kite, bottom photo, fly in the air at the 41st International Kite Festival in Weifang, China. (AP Photo/Tatan Syuflana)

Skies fill with color at 41st Chinese kite festival

By Tatan Syuflana
The Associated Press

WEIFANG, China — More than 1,000 kites filled the skies of Weifang, an eastern Chinese coastal city that touts itself as the “kite capital of the world.” Locals said there was nothing that can’t sail the skies of Weifang.

From dragons to pandas, modern cars to mythical characters from a canonical Chinese novel, kite craftsmen and aficionados showcased their latest art at the Weifang International Kite Festival.

Kite-makers say the craftsmanship has evolved over the years, with nylon fabrics becoming more common at the expense of traditional materials such as paper and silk. Modern craftsmanship also means kite-makers are boasting more elaborate, complex, and bigger designs, among them a centipede kite measuring 230 feet in length.



RACE REVIVAL. A man prepares his oxen for an oxcart race at Romdoul village, Kampong Speu province, southwest of Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Hundreds of Cambodian villagers held a rare oxcart race last month, trying to revive a centuries-old tradition as they celebrated the arrival of the lunar new year. (AP Photo/Heng Sinith)

Cambodian villagers hold rare oxcart race, seeking to revive centuries-old tradition

By Sopheng Cheang
The Associated Press

ROMDUOL VILLAGE, Cambodia — Hundreds of Cambodian villagers held a rare oxcart race last month, trying to revive a centuries-old tradition as they celebrated the arrival of the lunar new year.

Under a hot sun and amid clouds of dust, they gathered in Romduol village in Kampong Speu province, about 25 miles west of the capital, Phnom Penh. The race marked the Khmer Lunar New Year, which was celebrated from April 13 to 16, and the end of the rice harvest.

Participants rode an oxcart pulled by two oxen along a roughly 0.62-mile-long dirt track as spectators lining the route cheered enthusiastically.

Fifty pairs of oxcarts competed in the race from four provinces: Kampong Speu, Kandal, Phnom Penh, and Kampong Cham.

The oxcart has played a significant role in Cambodia for centuries, especially for farmers and for the transportation of agricultural goods and people in rural areas.

However, the oxcart today is on the brink of disappear-
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These are the countries where TikTok is already banned

By Kelvin Chan
The Associated Press

LONDON — TikTok is in the crosshairs of authorities in the U.S., where new law threatens a nationwide ban unless its China-based parent ByteDance divests. It would be the biggest blow yet to the popular video-sharing app, which has faced various restrictions around the world.

TikTok is already banned in a handful of countries and from government-issued devices in a number of others, due to official worries that the app poses privacy and cybersecurity concerns.

Those fears are reflected in the U.S. law, which is the culmination of long-held bipartisan fears in Washington that China’s communist leaders could force ByteDance to hand over U.S. user data, or influence Americans by suppressing or promoting certain content. TikTok has long maintained that it doesn’t share data with the Chinese government and its CEO has taken a defiant stance, vowing to fight back.

Here are the places that have partial or total bans on TikTok:

Afghanistan

TikTok has been banned since 2022, along with videogame PUBG, after the country’s Taliban leadership decided to forbid access on the grounds of protecting young people from “being misled.”

Australia

TikTok is not allowed on devices issued by the Australian federal government. Attorney general Mark Dreyfus said he made the decision after getting advice from the country’s intelligence and security agencies.

Belgium

The National Security Council decided in March to indefinitely ban TikTok from devices owned or paid for by the federal government. The ban was issued on a temporary basis last year on worries about cybersecurity, privacy, and misinformation. Prime Minister Alexander de Croo said it was based on warnings from the country’s state security service and cybersecurity center.

Canada

Devices issued by the federal government are forbidden from using TikTok. Officials cited an “unacceptable” risk to privacy and security and said the app would be removed from devices and employees blocked from downloading it.

China

TikTok has never been available in mainland China, a fact that CEO Shou Chew has mentioned in testimony to U.S. lawmakers. ByteDance instead offers Chinese users Douyin, a similar video-sharing app that follows Beijing’s strict censorship rules. TikTok also ceased operations in Hong Kong after a sweeping Chinese national security law took effect.

Denmark

Denmark’s Defense Ministry banned its employees from having TikTok on their work phones, ordering staffers who have installed it to remove the app from devices as soon as possible. The ministry said the reasons for the ban included both “weighty security considerations” as well as “very limited work-related need to use the app.”

European Union

The European Parliament, European Commission, and the EU Council, the 27-member bloc’s three main institutions, have imposed bans on TikTok on staff devices. Under the European Parliament’s ban, lawmakers and staff were also advised to remove the TikTok app from their personal devices.

France

“Recreational” use of TikTok and other social media apps like Twitter and Instagram on government employees’ phones has been banned because of worries about insufficient data security measures. The French government didn’t name specific apps but noted the decision came after other governments took measures targeting TikTok.

India

India imposed a nationwide ban on TikTok and dozens of other Chinese apps like messaging app WeChat in 2020 over privacy and security concerns. The ban came shortly after a clash between Indian and Chinese troops at a disputed Himalayan border killed 20 Indian soldiers and injured dozens. The companies were given a chance to respond to questions on privacy and security requirements but the ban was made permanent in 2021.

Indonesia

TikTok isn’t entirely banned in the sprawling, populous Southeast Asian nation, only its online retail function, after the authorities clamped down on e-commerce transactions carried out on social media platforms in a bid to protect small businesses.

Latvia

Foreign Minister Edgars Rinkevics tweeted that he



SECURITY CONCERNS. The TikTok logo is displayed on a mobile phone in front of a computer screen in this 2022 file photo. TikTok is gearing up for a legal fight against a U.S. law that would force the social media platform to break ties with its China-based parent company or face a ban. (AP Photo/Michael Dwyer, File)

deleted his TikTok account and that the app is also prohibited from official foreign ministry smartphones.

Netherlands

The Dutch central government banned apps including TikTok from employee work phones citing data security concerns. A government statement did not name TikTok specifically but said civil servants are discouraged from having apps “from countries with an offensive cyber program against the Netherlands and/or Dutch interests installed and used on their mobile work devices.”

Nepal

The Himalayan country imposed a nationwide ban on TikTok, saying it was disrupting “social harmony” and goodwill and blaming it for a “flow of indecent materials.” Authorities ordered the telecom company to block access to the app.

New Zealand

Lawmakers in New Zealand and staff at the nation’s parliament are prohibited from having the TikTok app on their work phones, following advice from government cybersecurity experts. The app was removed from all devices with access to the parliamentary network, although officials can make special arrangements for anybody who needs TikTok to perform their democratic duties.

Norway

The Norwegian parliament banned TikTok on work devices after the country’s Justice Ministry warned the app shouldn’t be installed on phones issued to government employees. The parliament’s speaker said TikTok shouldn’t be on devices that have access to the assembly’s systems and should be removed as quickly as possible. The country’s capital, Oslo, and second largest city Bergen also urged municipal employees to remove TikTok from their work phones.

Pakistan

Pakistani authorities have temporarily banned TikTok

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				1	3		9	
				7			6	8
						4		1
2	6		5					
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1		8						
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Difficulty level: Hard								#13976

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that the digits 1 through 9 appear one time each in every row, column, and 3x3 box.

Solution to last issue’s puzzle

Puzzle #56825 (Medium)

All solutions available at <www.sudoku.com>.

1	2	8	3	7	9	4	5	6
6	4	3	8	2	5	7	1	9
7	5	9	1	4	6	3	2	8
5	3	6	4	8	2	1	9	7
8	1	2	7	9	3	5	6	4
9	7	4	5	6	1	8	3	2
3	6	7	2	5	8	9	4	1
4	9	5	6	1	7	2	8	3
2	8	1	9	3	4	6	7	5