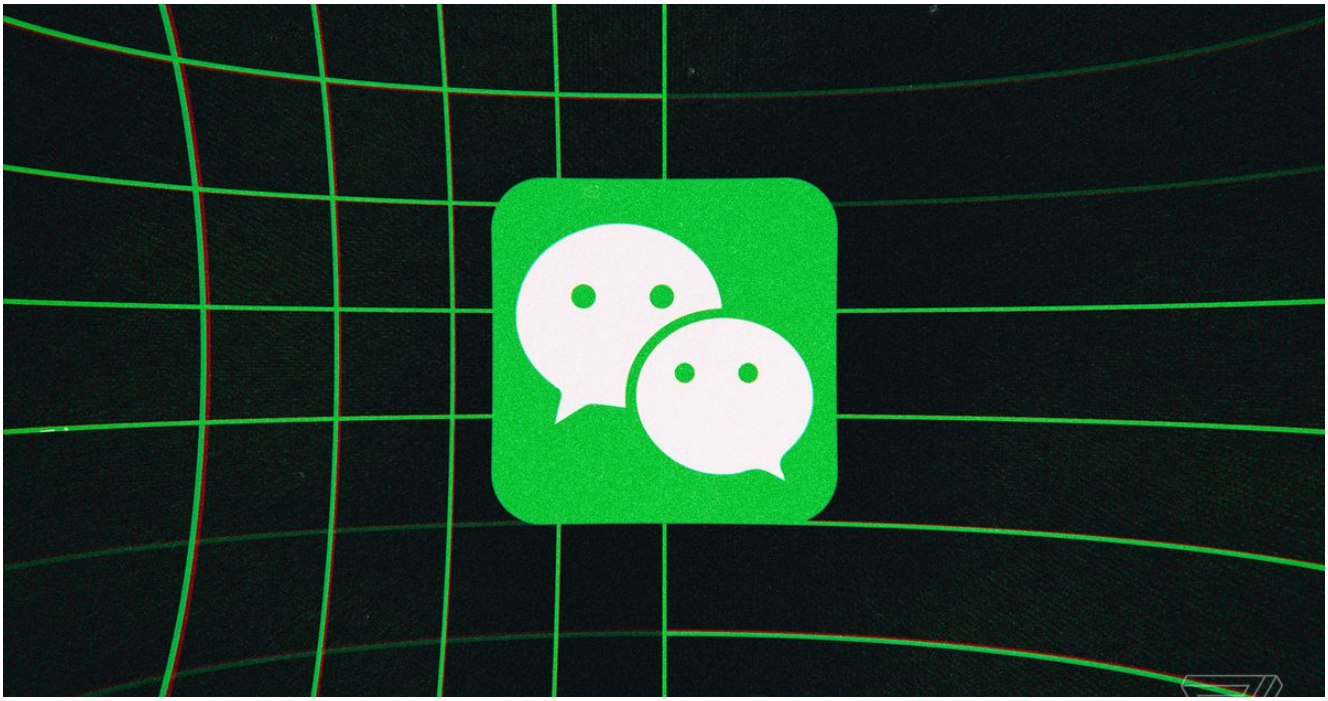
Authorities in China sue Tencent over WeChat’s youth mode



Prosecutors in Beijing are suing Chinese tech giant Tencent, claiming the “youth mode” on its WeChat app is against laws protecting minors, *Reuters* reported. When WeChat is used in youth mode, it restricts younger users’ access to functions like mobile payments, as well as certain games.

The suit doesn’t specify how the app’s youth mode violates the law, according to *Reuters*, but the action comes a few days after a state-owned Chinese newspaper referred to online games as “opium for the mind.” That article was later updated and toned down somewhat, the *Wall Street Journal* reported, but not before Tencent’s shares fell by more than 10 percent.

Tencent did not immediately comment about the lawsuit, but it said last week it would place restrictions on its *Honor of Kings* game —which the Chinese news article specifically referenced—for players under 18, limiting how long they can play the game daily.

The lawsuit is likely part of a larger crackdown by China on its largest tech companies in recent months; in April, it levied a $2.8 billion (18.23 billion yuan) fine against Chinese e-commerce site Alibaba because it claimed the company stifled competition. In July, the Cyberspace Administration of China ordered app stores to remove ride-hailing company Didi Chuxing’s app, claiming the company was collecting users’ personal data.

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