

RedNote may wall off “TikTok refugees” to prevent US influence on Chinese users

Just a few days after more than 700 million new users flooded RedNote—which Time noted is “the most apolitical social platform in China”—rumors began swirling that RedNote may soon start segregating American users and other foreign IPs from the app’s Chinese users.

In the “TikTokCringe” subreddit, a video from a RedNote user with red eyes, presumably swollen from tears, suggested that Americans had possibly ruined the app for Chinese Americans who rely on RedNote to stay current on Chinese news and culture.

“RedNote or Xiaohongshu released an update in the greater China region with the function to separate out foreign IPs, and there are now talks of moving all foreign IPs to a separate server and having a different IP for those who are in the greater China area,” the Reddit poster said. “I know through VPNs and other ways, people are still able to access the app, but essentially this is gonna kill the app for Chinese Americans who actually use the app to connect with Chinese content, Chinese language, Chinese culture.”

There has been no official announcement that such a change is coming, but Reddit commenters speculated that possibly the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was requiring a change to stop American TikTokers from using the app to influence Chinese citizens.

“CCP don’t want American influence to spread to their

citizens,” a top commenter wrote. That prompted another commenter to respond, “a bit of irony here,” seemingly suggesting China walling off American TikTok users seems a lot like what the US government plans to do through the TikTok ban. But others pointed out that China has long blocked Western social media apps like Reddit and X to prevent such feared influence. “If people couldn’t see this coming, then they have no idea what China’s politics are,” one Redditor suggested in the thread.

On social media platforms like X (formerly Twitter), others discussed the potential update that could fence off Chinese users, with one post with 1.2 million views suggesting the update could come next week.

Unlike other popular Chinese apps that require a Chinese phone number to register as a user, like WeChat, RedNote has never had such a requirement and always operated one single version of its app, Reuters reported. So, a shift to segregating users would be a big change and could possibly take more time.

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