



Mr. Purushottam Khanal
Hon'ble Chairman,
Nepal Telecommunications Authority
Kathmandu, Nepal

13 November 2023

Subject: Ban on TikTok in Nepal

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your continued support for fostering freedom of creative expression for the People of Nepal through TikTok; the world's leading destination for short-form mobile video.

It is with great concern that we acknowledge the email received from your office today regarding the Government of Nepal's decision to block/ban TikTok. We were as surprised as we're sure the millions of Nepali citizens were, who have been a part of our community expressing their creativity and joy through the platform.

In a very short span of time, we have been embraced by people of all regions, cultures, and socio-economic strata in Nepal, who utilize our platform to get informed, educated, entertained, and inspired. This ban will not just hamper our investment plans, but it will also have a severe economic impact on our Nepali content creators, especially young adults. Nepali businesses, who have relied heavily on TikTok, use our platform to market their products and keep their businesses afloat. As a result of this ban, these businesses will be significantly affected as well.

User safety is TikTok's top priority, and we are committed to promoting a safe and welcoming environment for our community. As a global platform, we have thousands of people across the globe where TikTok operates, working to maintain a safe environment for our users. We address content and behavior that violate our Community Guidelines through a combination of policies, technology, and moderation, which may include removing contents and accounts.

Further to our letter dated 11-Sep-2023, we would like to highlight our recent efforts for our platform operations in Nepal:

1. We met the Ministry of Home Affairs Committee for Cyber Crime Control and Cyber Security on 03-Nov-2023. During the meeting, we presented our detailed working process, moderation process and collaboration commitment with the government of Nepal.
2. We conducted an Internet Safety Summit in Kathmandu on 05-Oct-2023 in presence of a wide range of stakeholders including non-profits, TikTok creators, civil society, law enforcement officials and government representatives.



3. We signed an MoU with Nepal Telecommunications Authority (NTA) on 05-Oct-2023 to jointly conduct an internet safety awareness campaign in Nepal.
4. We opened up the access of the 'Trust & Safety Enforcement Tool (TSET)' to Government of Nepal on 07-June-2023 to ensure the Government can report any content that they find is violative of local laws.
5. We registered as a Digital Service Tax payer in Nepal on 29-Aug-2023.
6. We proactively removed 2.98million videos from our platform in Nepal between Oct 2022 to June 2023 for violating our Community Guidelines.
7. We conducted multiple physical workshops for NTA, CIB and Cyber Bureau to enhance their knowledge and understanding of our platform. We also opened up the 'Trust & Safety Enforcement Tool (TSET)' for Cyber Bureau recently.

The above summary encapsulates our dedication to collaborating with the government of Nepal.

Furthermore, the decision to block TikTok contradicts the Government of Nepal's current continued engagement with us. TikTok is committed to working with the Government of Nepal to identify possible areas of further engagement to ensure platform & users safety. As such, we would like to request the Government of Nepal to share with us the specific reasons for the decision to block TikTok.

We are taking keen steps to make TikTok the safest space on the internet and are also making substantial investments towards the same. Getting constructive support from the government through a level playing field, instead of an arbitrary ban like this one, would go a long way in achieving the goal.

We wish to continue our constructive relationship with the government to take further steps to safely grow our community in Nepal. We hope to have the opportunity to do so with the government's future efforts to provide an enabling environment and support a level playing field for TikTok in Nepal.

We firmly believe that, in the absence of a substantial basis, the undue blocking of a platform widely used for creative expression is contrary to the principles of freedom of speech and expression. We seek to address any concerns raised by the Government of Nepal and work towards a resolution that aligns with both parties' interests. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Ferdous Mottakin

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