

Google 'monopoly' antitrust case: A timeline

Published - August 09, 2024 11:04 am IST

THE HINDU BUREAU



Google is seen at the Google Store Chelsea in Manhattan, New York City, U.S., November 17, 2021. File photo

Google's payments to make its search engine the default option on smartphone web browsers violate US antitrust law, a federal judge ruled on Monday (August 5, 2024), handing a key victory to the Justice Department. Judge Amit Mehta in Washington said that the Alphabet Inc. unit's \$26 billion in payments effectively blocked any other competitor from succeeding in the market.

"Google's distribution agreements foreclose a substantial portion of the general search services market and impair rivals' opportunities to compete," Mehta said in a 286-page ruling.

The highly anticipated decision issued by U.S. District Judge Amit Mehta comes nearly a year after the start of a trial pitting the U.S. Justice Department against Google in the country's biggest antitrust showdown in a quarter century.

Antitrust enforcers alleged that Google has illegally maintained a monopoly over online search and related advertising. The government said that Google has paid Apple, Samsung Electronics Co. and others billions over decades for prime placement on smartphones and web browsers. This default position has allowed Google to build up the most-used search engine in the world, and fueled more than \$300 billion in annual revenue largely generated by search ads.

It represents a major setback for Google and its parent, Alphabet Inc., which had steadfastly argued that its popularity stemmed from consumers' overwhelming desire to use a search engine so good at what it does that it has become synonymous with looking things up online.

Also read: [Judge says trial is required to decide U.S. government's antitrust case over Google's advertising tech](#)

Google's search engine currently processes an estimated 8.5 billion queries per day worldwide, nearly doubling its daily volume from 12 years ago, according to a recent study released by the investment firm BOND.

The case is the first antitrust trial pitting the federal government against a US technology company in more than two decades. Here is a timeline:

 Interactive content by Flourish