

News

Google pays ₹20.2 crore to resolve the Android TV abuse of dominance case at the CCI.

In a forceful opposition, CCI Member Anil Agrawal demanded that the settlement be rejected outright.



Google has submitted a settlement plan to the Competition Commission of India (CCI) in order to address claims of anti-competitive behavior pertaining to its licensing arrangements for Android TV.

The ruling, which was approved by the CCI's majority committee under the direction of

Chairperson Ravneet Kaur, mandates that Google make structural adjustments to its interactions with smart TV manufacturers and includes a settlement sum of ₹20.24 crore.

Anil Agrawal, a member of the CCI, strongly disagreed, urging that the settlement be rejected entirely.

The action started as a result of accusations made in 2020 by attorneys Purushottam Anand and Kshitiz Arya, who claimed that Google had exploited its market dominance in the marketplaces for app stores and smart TV operating systems that could be licensed. The Director General was instructed by the CCI to start an investigation into this matter.

Google dominated the Indian market for Android smart TV OS app stores and the market for licensable smart TV operating systems, according to the DG's probe. According to the study, Google has abused its position of power in a number of ways:

1. requiring the full suite of Google TV Services to be installed first.
2. prohibiting manufacturers from creating smartphones with rival forked versions of Android by requiring them to sign Android Compatibility Commitments (ACC).
3. tying the YouTube app to the Play Store and using its dominance in the app store to defend its place in the market for online video hosting platforms.

Google submitted a settlement application in May 2024 in accordance with the CCI (Settlement) Regulations, 2024. As part of the proposed settlement, Google consented to:

- Give original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) the option to license the Google Play Store separately from other Google apps through a stand-alone "New India Agreement."
- Devices sold in India that do not include Google apps are exempt from the Android Compatibility Commitments (ACC) requirement.
- Remind OEMs that they are free to choose rival operating systems like Tizen and WebOS or open-source Android.

Google also promised to provide yearly compliance reports and to keep these modifications in place for five years.

After taking into account Google's relevant turnover related to Android TV operations in India, the CCI decided on the settlement sum, dismissing Google's claim that YouTube and Play Store income should not be included. According to the CCI's Settlement Regulations, a 15% settlement discount was used.

On April 8, 2025, Google deposited the money after accepting it.

"For a duration of five years, Google will abide by all three settlement proposals. According to the CCI order, Google is also willing to provide the Commission with periodic compliance reports attesting to its adherence to the terms of these settlement agreements."

CCI Member Anil Agrawal strongly disagreed with the Commission's majority ruling to approve Google's settlement offer in the Android TV antitrust case in his dissenting opinion.

Agrawal demanded that Google's plan be *"unequivocally rejected"* because it *"does not prima facie address all the competition concerns identified by the DG."*

One of the main issues brought up was Google's choice to keep providing the Television App Distribution Agreement (TADA) in addition to the recently suggested *"New India Agreement."* Although OEMs can pay to license the Play Store without other Google apps under the New India Agreement, TADA is still free but has limitations. As Agrawal noted,

Because of this dual structure, OEMs are forced to choose between paying more for the New India Agreement and accepting the bundled applications under TADA, which are still free but have limitations. Existing market arrangements based on TADA are unlikely to be corrected by this arrangement.

He emphasized that TADA was prima facie determined to violate the Competition Act and that anti-competitive activities would be sustained if it were to remain in place without change.

"The Settlement Proposal does not eliminate existing arrangements under TADA which have been prima facie found to be contravening the provisions of the Act."

Agrawal further drew attention to Google's disregard for the DG's conclusions on YouTube's affiliation with the Play Store under TADA. Additionally, he drew attention to the fact that Google's proposal made no mention of requiring OEMs to install Google's preferred button on both physical and mobile remote controls. Agrawal concluded his disagreement by saying,

"In my opinion, there should only be one contract for the licensing of Google Apps, whether or not there is a price. Since the Settlement Proposal ignores these problems, it lacks credibility and should be categorically rejected.

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