

Ministry to review Google and Apple's in-app payment systems

2020-08-26 16:57

PLAINTIFF
U.S. District Court - NDCAL
4:20-cv-05640-YGR-TSH
Epic Games, Inc. v. Apple Inc.
Ex. No. PX-1914
Date Entered _____
By _____



(Yonhap)

The Ministry of Science and ICT said Wednesday that it will look into Google and Apple's in app payment systems over claims that they apply excessive commissions to app developers using their platforms.

Local app developers and businesses earlier this month asked the government to look into their in app payment systems and see if the US tech giants are violating local laws that prohibit telecommunications service operators from obstructing users in choosing services. Local developers argued that the platform operators are using their market clout to charge high commissions to local developers.

Google, for instance, is reportedly pushing to expand its list of requirements that had been applied to games only to other content providers, such as for webtoons, music streaming and e-books. They would include an obligation to use Google's payment system with 30 percent in commission.

The ministry said that it will collect opinions from app developers and sources from the market to see if Google's high commissions are unfairly weighing on local business operators and increasing prices for users.

“(The ministry) will carefully monitor and prepare policies that can cope with the

PX-1914.1

5/13/2021

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increasing influence of platform providers,” the ministry said. “The ministry will also mediate between developers and platform operators to secure user rights.”

Amendments could be applied to the new Telecommunications Business Act, which will take effect in January next year accordingly with the ICT Ministry’s findings.

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