

UK seeks to curb Apple, Google's grip on mobile platforms

The final decision is subject to consultation and expected by October 22

● To designate Apple and Google's mobile platforms with "strategic market status (SMS)"

AFP | London, United Kingdom

Britain's competition watchdog yesterday proposed measures to tackle Apple and Google's dominance in the mobile device market, as it looks to rein in the US tech giants' so-called duopoly.

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) said it proposes to designate Apple and Google's mobile platforms with "strategic market status (SMS)", subjecting them to special requirements under new UK regulations.

An investigation was launched in January into the companies' control over the mobile ecosystems, including operating systems, app stores and browsers.

The CMA described their dom-



inance as "an effective duopoly".

"Apple and Google's mobile platforms are both critical to the UK economy ... but our investigation so far has identified opportunities for more innovation and choice," CMA chief executive

Sarah Cardell said in a statement.

Google's spokesman

on competition, Oliver Bethell, said the announcement was "disappointing and unwarranted".

If approved, the SMS designation would allow the CMA to require Apple and Google to change how certain mobile services operate, with the aim of offering consumers greater choice.

The regulator stressed that the designation does not imply that these companies have acted anti-competitively.

The final decision is subject to consultation and expected by October 22.

A similar tech competition law from the European Union, the Digital Markets Act, carries the potential for hefty financial penalties.

The CMA in June proposed designating Google with SMS designation in the search engine market due to its dominant position.

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Before iOS and Android dominated the smartphone world, Nokia's Symbian OS was the global leader—at its peak in 2007, it powered over 60% of the world's smartphones. Other notable platforms included BlackBerry OS, Windows Phone, and Palm OS, all of which have since faded, showing how rapidly the mobile ecosystem has evolved.

China tariff deadline can be rolled forward 90 days: US Treasury

AFP | Washington, United States

A deadline for tariffs between the United States and China to snap back to higher levels could be extended in a "90-day increment," US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said Wednesday, ahead of trade talks next week.

Top officials from the world's two biggest economies are set to meet in Sweden on Monday and Tuesday, with Bessent in the US delegation and Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng attending the talks.

"We're in a very good place with China now," Bessent told Bloomberg Television on Wednesday. He added that the upcoming talks would likely move beyond rare earths and

export controls, and "on to bigger discussions."

Asked about the August 12 deadline, when reduced tit-for-tat tariffs are due to bounce back to steeper levels, Bessent signaled openness to a significant extension.

"I think that we could roll it forward, maybe in a 90-day increment," he said in the interview.

"Both sides have de-escalated, and I think we can get into a very good cadence of regular meetings with them," he said.

Washington and Beijing had slapped escalating tariffs on each other's exports in April, reaching prohibitive triple-digit levels, but both sides reached an agreement to temporarily lower them after negotiations

in Geneva.

The truce, however, is set to expire in August.

Officials from the two countries also met in London in June.

On Wednesday, Bessent said he expected the upcoming discussions could include talks on Chinese purchases of Russian and Iranian oil, alongside security issues.

He said both countries would also discuss "purchasing agreements," especially on agriculture. Trade talks between the United States and China had initially stalled after their Geneva meeting, with Washington accusing Beijing of violating their pact and slow-walking export license approvals for rare earths.

Germany approves Eurofighter jet delivery to Turkey

AFP | Berlin, Germany



Germany, Britain, Italy and Spain.

The Typhoon jets are to be built in Britain and London is leading the negotiations.

But all members of the consortium must sign off on the sale and Germany, which has clashed with Turkey over Israel's war on Gaza, had objected.

Turkey had been in talks for several years on buying 40 of the aircraft, which are constructed by a consortium from

government confirming the approval of the export", government spokesman Stefan Kornelius told journalists in Berlin.

News outlet Der Spiegel reported that Chancellor Friedrich Merz had bowed to pressure from British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, as the project is expected to support about 20,000 jobs in Britain.

After Germany gave the green light to the sale, the Turkish and British defence ministers signed a preliminary agreement in Istanbul on Wednesday for the delivery of the jets.

Trump admin unveils AI strategy to maintain US dominance

AFP | Washington, United States

The Trump administration on Wednesday unveiled an aggressive, low-regulation strategy boosting big tech's race to stay ahead of China on artificial intelligence and cement the United States' dominance in the fast-expanding field.

The 25-page "America's AI Action Plan" outlines three aims: accelerating innovation, building infrastructure, and leading interna-



tionally on AI.

Overall, the administration frames AI advancement as critical to maintaining economic and military supremacy. Environmental consequences in the planning document are sidelined.

"We believe we're in an AI race... and we want the United States to win that race," said the White House's AI point person David Sacks in a call with reporters.

President Donald Trump was expected to announce the plan in a speech later Wednesday.

According to US media reports, Trump was also to announce a series of executive orders to give key components of the plan additional legal weight.

In its collection of more than 90 government proposals, the plan calls for sweeping deregulation, with the administration promising to "remove red tape and onerous regulation" that could hinder private sector AI development.

Much of that work has already been carried out through a Trump executive order repealing the AI policies of the Biden administration.

The Trump action plan also calls for AI systems to be "free from ideological bias" and designed to pursue objective truth rather than what the administration calls "social engineering agendas."

This criterion would apply to AI companies wanting to do business with the US government.

A senior White House official said the main target was AI models that gave attention to diversity and inclusion concerns

in programming their model output -- reflecting the Trump administration's anti-"woke" agenda.

A major focus in the plan involves building AI infrastructure, including streamlined permitting for data centers and energy facilities that would overlook environmental concerns in the name of building AI capability as swiftly as possible.

The administration, which largely rejects international science showing a growing climate crisis, proposes creating new environmental review exemptions for data center construction and expanding access to federal lands for AI infrastructure development.

Addressing fears that AI will replace humans and create mass job losses across entire sectors, the administration's plan says instead that "AI will improve the lives of Americans by complementing their work -- not replacing it."

The strategy calls for efforts to "counter Chinese influence in international governance bodies" and strengthen export controls on advanced AI computing technology.

The plan also proposes evaluating Chinese AI models "for alignment with Chinese Communist Party talking points and censorship."