

Court bans some Apple, Samsung products in SKorea

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A South Korean court ruled Friday that technology rivals Apple Inc. and Samsung Electronics Co. both infringed on each other's patents, and ordered a partial ban of their products in South Korea. Each side was also ordered to pay limited damages.

The Seoul Central District Court ordered Apple to remove the iPhone 3GS, iPhone 4, iPad 1 and iPad 2 from store shelves in South Korea, ruling that the products infringed on two of Samsung's telecommunications patents.

But in a twist, the court also ruled that Suwon, South Korea-based Samsung had infringed on one of Apple's patents related to the screen's bounce-back ability. The court banned sales of the Galaxy S2 and other products in South Korea.

Sales of devices recently released by Samsung and Apple — including the iPhone 4S and the Galaxy S3 smartphones — were not affected.

The court also ordered each company to pay monetary compensation to the other. Samsung must pay Apple 25 million won (\$22,000) while Apple must pay its rival 40 million won.

Legal experts not directly involved in the case said the ruling was favorable to Samsung.

"This is basically Samsung's victory on its home territory," said patent attorney Jeong Woo-sung. "Out of nine countries, Samsung got the ruling that it wanted for the first time in South Korea."

The lawsuit is part of global, multibillion dollar fight between the world's two largest smartphone makers that has been unfolding in nearly a dozen countries.

However, the biggest stakes are in the U.S., where the two companies are locked in an epic struggle over patents and innovation in a federal court in San Jose, California.

Cupertino, California-based Apple sued Samsung in 2011 in the U.S., alleging that some of the South Korean company's smartphones and computer tablets are illegal knockoffs of Apple's iPhone and iPad. Samsung denies the allegations and argues that all companies in the cutthroat phone industry mimic each other's successes without crossing the legal line.

Apple is suing Samsung for \$2.5 billion and demanding that the court pull its most popular smartphones and computer tablets from the U.S. market, making the case

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one of the biggest technology disputes in history.

Jury deliberations began Wednesday after three weeks of testimony. The case went to the jury after last-minute talks between the companies' chief executives failed to resolve the dispute.

Shortly after Apple filed its suit in the U.S., Samsung filed a lawsuit on its home turf and in other countries, accusing Apple of breaching its telecommunications patents.

The battle is all the more complex as Apple and Samsung are not only competitors in the fast-growing global market for smartphones and tablet computers, but also have a close business relationship.

Samsung, the world's biggest manufacturer of memory chips and liquid crystal displays, supplies some of the key components that go into Apple products.

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