

Microsoft's music player and browser scrutinised by China

SHANGHAI, CHINA: The head of the Chinese government agency investigating Microsoft for alleged monopoly actions said the probe includes the way the US technology company distributes its media player and browser.



The SAIC's Zhang Mao says Microsoft is being investigated for flaunting China's anti-monopoly laws particularly with Windows, Internet Explorer and Windows Media Player. Image: [WN](#)

The State Administration for Industry and Commerce (SAIC) announced last month that it was investigating Microsoft over its Windows operating system, which is used on the vast majority of computers in China, along with its Office suite of programs.

Zhang Mao, Head and Communist Party Chief of the SAIC, told a news conference in Beijing that Microsoft had failed to fully disclose information about its software.

He added the agency, one of the government bodies which enforces China's anti-monopoly laws, was also looking into "issues" with Microsoft's media player and browser, according to a transcript posted online.

Microsoft has previously faced anti-trust investigations in other markets for tying the company's Windows system to its other products.

The European Commission fined it \$731m in March last year for failing to offer users browser choices beyond its own Internet Explorer.

Microsoft agrees to cooperate

"Through repeated contact with Microsoft, their top-level executives have shown respect for China's laws, (and) cooperated with China's anti-monopoly investigation," Zhang said.

Microsoft has said it seeks to comply with Chinese law. Its comments came after the official announcement of the investigation, which included raids on its offices in the country.

In May China also banned the use of Microsoft's Windows 8 operating system on all new government computers, as reports alleging security concerns circulated.

State media have blasted Microsoft for its share of the operating system market in China, claimed to be as high as 95%, saying it forms a "de facto monopoly".

China, which is embroiled in a long-running cyberspying row with the US, is planning to introduce a homegrown operating system as early as October to reduce the country's reliance on Microsoft, the official China Daily newspaper reported.

The Microsoft probe comes as foreign firms doing business in the huge Chinese market face greater scrutiny from government authorities.

Source: AFP via I-Net Bridge

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