

EU anti-trust boss says Google fears are irrational

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM: The European Union's (EU) top anti-trust official sharply criticised the "irrational" response by European politicians to the Brussels investigation of Google.



EU Competition Commissioner Joaquín Almunia says that many of the accusations levelled against Google are illogical and nonsensical. Image: [DealBreaker](#)

"Google has provoked a lot of emotions and in some cases irrational emotions," EU Competition Commissioner Joaquín Almunia told the Wall Street Journal.

"Google's critics claim the company will eliminate freedom, privacy, and rights but these claims are illogical," he said.

Google is being investigated by the European Commission in response to complaints that its search engine was squeezing out competition in Europe.

Google and Almunia have made three attempts to resolve the dispute, but in each case intense pressure by national governments, internet rivals and privacy advocates have scuppered their efforts.

Almunia, who steps down at the end of the month, told the newspaper he regretted that this investigation had been muddled by politics.

He added that the anger arose in part from the fact that European companies lagged so far behind US firms such as Google, Facebook and Amazon.

Google has said it is continuing to work with the Commission to resolve any concerns in its search engine software.

EU rules state that a company, if found to be at fault in an anti-trust probe, can be fined up to 10% of its annual sales, in

Google's case about \$55.5bn in 2013.

Source: AFP via I-Net Bridge

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