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Google fined for misdirecting searches to rivals' products

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New Delhi: The Delhi HC has ordered Google to pay Rs 30 lakh in damages to a sanitaryware maker after finding that internet users searching for the company's products were directed to rival manufacturers through Google's advertising system.

HC said Google is liable to pay damages for allowing rival competitors to place advertisements on Hindware's trademark as keywords, leading to losses. Google's Ads programme allows advertisers to bid on keywords to trigger their ads.

Hindware argued that when consumers typed its trademark into Google's search engine, sponsored links for competitors appeared alongside the search results, diverting potential customers.

Justice Mini Pushkarna,

IN THE COURTS

> In contest between right to privacy and right of child to know who is his father, SC rules in favour of child | P 9

> ₹11L compensation awarded to convict who spent 24 days in custody even after parole | P 7

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while dealing with two lawsuits by Hindware Ltd, held that the use of trademarks as keywords amounted to "unfair advantage" under the Trademarks Act and restrained Google LLC and Google India from using 'Hindware' or

'Hindware Sanitaryware', 'Hindware Sanitary' or 'Hindware Sanitaryware India' as part of advertising keywords for its platform.

HC also held that Hindware was entitled to actual costs of litigation. HC ordered the defendants to pay the amount within eight weeks.

The judge observed that Google's AdWords programme was a commercial venture to monetise the use of the search engine for advertising by displaying the sponsored links of various advertisers. By enabling direct competitors to intercept users when they expressed an interest in the plaintiff's mark, Google indulged in an "unfair practice" and also sought to exploit the distinctive character or repute of the plaintiff's well-known trademark to benefit its own advertising business, the court said.

We in TheLawyerics have often stated in our posts that nobody in this selfish world will give you anything free. If you are getting anything, you are paying price in some other form, and perhaps more than what you would like to pay if you know the price being extracted from you indirectly. Consider, how the search engines are maintaining themselves if they are not charging anything from you. It is not possible. We are simply shutting our eyes. They pose before their subscribers that they are not charging anything from them but devise alternative modes of revenue earning from business houses whose products are promoted. Perhaps no one reads terms of service (ToS) which we accept while subscribing to their service. Most of the things are in their favour. They have a right to display search results which you and I are not looking for. They have even the right to prioritise the products

IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI

Reserved on: 26th February, 2026

Pronounced on: 22nd May, 2026

CS(COMM) 591/2017

HINDWARE LTD.

.....Plaintiff

Through: Mr. Manav Gupta, Mr. Sahil Garg, Mr. Abhinav Jain, Mr. Ankit Gupta, Mr. Mithil Malhotra, Mr. Aryan Pandey, Advocates (M:9818022022)

versus

GROHE INDIA PVT LTD & ORS.

.....Defendants

Through: Mr. Sandeep Sethi, Sr. Adv. with Ms. Sriparna Dutta Choudhury, Ms. Kopal Tewary, Mr. Naman Dutt, Mr. Krisna Gambhir, Ms. Shreva

and services which fetch them more revenue.

Apart from trademark law, there are other laws, such as competition law, consumer protection law and now data protection law to protect the general public but we in India are not sufficiently informed to take on the malpractices. And even if we know, we have a tendency towards freebies without appreciating that we are losers in the long run. We in TheLawyerics have tested all these things. We often use AI models to search the material we are looking for. We use paid services of AI models. This is in addition to free service made available by popular search engines. Comparative search takes us nearest to what we are looking for. Or alternatively if we are misled, we as consumers of paid service, can assert our consumer rights. But again, the question is how many of us in India can use skills of technology and law to keep ourselves on the straight path. The best practice

we have often advocated is to restrict free services.



Users should be made to pay, howsoever nominal the amount may

be, for the services they avail. The ultimate object is that we come within the protection of consumer protection law and are not exploited.

