

Samsung fights Apple move to block Galaxy sales

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A visitor is seen inspecting Samsung's latest Galaxy smartphone during an IT show in Seoul, last month. Samsung Electronics vowed to press ahead with the US launch of its newest smartphone this month, despite a fresh lawsuit filed by rival Apple seeking to block the cutting-edge model.

(AP) — Samsung Electronics Co. said Thursday that it will fight Apple's move to stop U.S. sales of its new Galaxy phone in the latest flare-up of an intellectual property battle between the world's top smartphone makers.

Samsung said it will vigorously oppose Apple's request for a court to ban sales of the Galaxy S III smartphone and still plans to go ahead with the device's scheduled release in the U.S. on June 21.

The South Korean company said in a statement that it will "demonstrate to the court that the Galaxy S III is innovative and distinctive."

On Tuesday, Apple Inc. asked a U.S. district court to temporarily ban sales of the S III smartphone before its launch in the United States. The maker of the iPhone accused Samsung of infringing two Apple patents.

The request, if accepted by the U.S. District Court for Northern California, would deal a blow to Samsung's attempt to get a headstart on sales of Apple's next iPhone.

The S III smartphone went on sale in Europe on May 29 and will be offered by around 300 mobile carriers in Asia and North America later this month.

The early launch puts Samsung in a favorable position to take a bigger chunk of the lucrative smartphone market. While Apple is keeping mum on its annual iPhone upgrade, many analysts expect the new iPhone to go on sale as early as July.

Samsung has become the biggest threat to Apple's clout in the mobile market as its Galaxy series of smartphones won popularity among consumers seeking an Android-powered device.

Most market research firms say Samsung overtook Apple in smartphone shipments for the first time during the first three months of this year.

Samsung and Apple have been embroiled in bitter patent lawsuits in North America, Europe and Asia since Apple accused Samsung of copying its iPhone in April 2011.

Chief executives of the two companies met in San Francisco last month after a court instructed them to negotiate, but the talks didn't produce a

settlement.

Amid the legal battles, the two companies continue to do business with each other.

Samsung counts Apple as among its largest buyers of chips and display screens while Apple relies on Samsung for mobile components.

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