

French court says Uber may infringe on taxi law

December 12 2014, by Greg Keller



In this Wednesday, June 11, 2014, file photo, police move in as demonstrators try to block the way while another pours water on a car, suspected to be a private taxi during a 24-hour taxi strike and protest in Madrid, against unregulated competition from private companies, in particular, Uber. A French court is expected to decide whether to ban the ride-hailing company's service after a complaint from rival taxi and car services. (AP Photo/Paul White, File)

A French court ruled Friday that Uber's ride-hailing service may infringe French law and ordered the company to make changes to its popular mobile app-based service.

However, the court did not ban the popular service, which was launched earlier this year in France and matches people seeking rides with drivers through a mobile phone app.

The contretemps is the latest in a string of challenges that Uber and other ride-hailing companies such as Lyft face around the world, as taxi drivers argue the new car services have an unfair advantage because they don't have to follow the same regulations and can afford cheaper prices.

The Paris Commercial Court said Friday it is ordering Uber to withdraw from its app to French users "all mention suggesting it is legal" for Uber's drivers to act like taxis—that is, driving around and waiting for clients.

The court also said it is up to a French criminal court to decide if Uber should be fined.

Earlier this year, in a case brought by taxi and limousine companies, Uber was convicted by the criminal court of engaging in misleading commercial practices. The ride-hailing service is appealing the verdict, but a ruling is not expected for several months.

Uber did not immediately return calls seeking comment about Friday's ruling.

Maxime de Guillenchmidt, a lawyer representing limousine companies that brought the commercial court lawsuit, said they are only partially satisfied by its verdict. "We wanted the court to immediately order Uber to stop this service, which infringes the law," Guillenchmidt said. "Uber

has won time during which they will win lots of market share."



French National Taxi Union lawyers Emmanuel Soussen, left, and Jean Paul Levy, right, address reporters, after a French court ruled over ride-hailing company Uber, at Paris commercial court, Friday Dec. 12, 2014. A French court on Friday ordered Uber to withdraw from its mobile app to French users "all mention suggesting it is legal" for Uber's drivers to act like taxis—that is, driving around and waiting for clients. But the court did not ban the popular ride-hailing service. (AP Photo/Remy de la Mauviniere)



UberPOP driver Anthony Loussala-Dubreax, 24, of Paris, turns on his smartphone in his car in Paris, Friday, Dec. 12, 2014. A French court on Friday ordered Uber to withdraw from its mobile app to French users "all mention suggesting it is legal" for Uber's drivers to act like taxis—that is, driving around and waiting for clients. But the court did not ban the popular ride-hailing service. (AP Photo/Bastien Inzaurrealde)

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