

# Talks between Baidu and Chinese writers collapse

March 25 2011

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More than 40 writers, including top-selling author Han Han, pictured here in 2010, signed a letter branding Baidu a "corrupt thief company" for providing their works as free downloads on its online library Baidu Wenku without their permission.

Negotiations to resolve a copyright dispute between search engine giant Baidu and Chinese writers have broken down with the company now facing potential court action, state media reported Friday.

More than 40 writers including top-selling author Han Han last week signed a letter branding Baidu a "corrupt thief company" for providing their works as free downloads on its [online library](#) Baidu Wenku without their permission.

Representatives of the writers said Thursday that talks with Baidu had

collapsed after the firm rejected all their requests including a public apology and compensation for losses, the state-run [China](#) News Service said.

Baidu spokesman Kaiser Kuo told AFP the company intends to address the complaints by implementing technology from mid-April that will systematically delete pirated content already uploaded on Baidu Wenku.

It also would reject future problematic uploads, he said.

"In the meantime, we have proactively opened channels to fast-track the removal of infringing content uploaded by users," he said.

Baidu Wenku was launched in 2009 and allows users to read, share or download books for free. Some books also can be purchased at a large discount from the cover price.

All documents are uploaded by [Internet users](#) and as of November Baidu Wenku had stockpiled more than 10 million files and books, accounting for 70 percent of China's online file-sharing market, according to the company's figures.

Zhang Hongbo, deputy general-director of the government-linked China Written Works Copyright Society, said the group had been collecting evidence of Baidu's [copyright infringement](#) and would take legal action, the China News Service reported.

The report did not give a timetable.

Zhang also said the society's evidence would be submitted to copyright authorities for possible investigation, the report added.



Chinese Web search giant Baidu's headoffice in Beijing. Negotiations to resolve a copyright dispute between search engine giant Baidu and Chinese writers have broken down with the company now facing potential court action, state media reported Friday.

The society has levelled similar accusations against [Google](#), Baidu's main rival in the China [search engine](#) market, in late 2009 for scanning Chinese books into its online library.

But that dispute appears to have been left in limbo after Google reduced its presence in China last year over a censorship dispute with the government.

Baidu has long been criticised for flouting intellectual property rights. Its MP3 search service, which provides links to free but often pirated music downloads, has drawn particular fire from the recording industry.

The US Trade Representative's office last month named [Baidu](#) as one of

the world's top marketplaces for pirated and counterfeit goods.

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