

# Baidu deletes nearly 3 mn works in copyright flap

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A woman passes in front of the Baidu logo in Beijing. The Chinese search engine giant has deleted nearly three million works from its online library in a three-day blitz aimed at ending a copyright dispute with writers.

Chinese search engine giant Baidu said Wednesday it had deleted nearly three million works from its online library in a three-day blitz aimed at ending a copyright dispute with writers.

Company spokesman Kaiser Kuo told AFP the firm had deleted "nearly 2.8 million potentially infringing items in total in the literary section."

A check by AFP showed there were just under 1,000 works left in the section on Wednesday.

"It took us three solid days working round-the-clock. I'm told that what

remains is all licenced, and that any additional uploads to that section are being carefully vetted," Kuo said.

The row erupted when more than 40 authors, including top-selling writer Han Han, signed a letter blasting the Chinese firm for providing their works as free downloads from its online library [Baidu](#) Wenku without their permission.

Negotiations between the Internet giant and authors reportedly broke down last week, but Baidu then apologised at the weekend, promising to delete unlicensed items within the next few days.

Baidu Wenku was launched in 2009 and allows users to read, share or download texts for free.

All documents are uploaded by Internet users and as of November, Baidu Wenku had stockpiled more than 10 million texts and books, according to the company's figures.

The firm had previously required that authors or [copyright](#) holders report problematic content found on Baidu Wenku to a complaints centre, after which the infringing item would be deleted within 48 hours.

In a disclaimer on its website, Baidu said users who uploaded the files must be responsible for compensation in any copyright disputes. But the writers had insisted the firm should bear responsibility.

Zhang Hongbo, deputy general-director of the government-linked China Written Works Copyright Society, was not immediately available for comment on Baidu's latest move when contacted by AFP.

The society accused [Google](#) -- Baidu's main rival in the China [search engine](#) market -- of similar copyright infringements in 2009 for scanning

Chinese books into its [online library](#).

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

Kuo said Baidu now wanted to explore ways to work with authors and publishers.

"If this whole episode has shown anything, it's that Baidu Wenku is a very powerful distribution platform, and we can all be profiting from it," he said.

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