

Chinese search engine plans overseas expansion

September 16 2011



A man walks pass the Chinese Web search giant Baidu's headoffice in Beijing. The head of China's biggest search engine Baidu has said he aims to make it a household name in at least half the world within a decade.

The head of China's biggest search engine Baidu has said he aims to make it a household name in at least half the world within a decade, according to a company statement.

Baidu chief executive Robin Li made the comment in a meeting earlier this month with China's propaganda chief Li Changchun, a statement posted on the search engine's website late Thursday said.

"Robin Li reported on Baidu's target for the next decade to 'become a household name in more than half the countries around the world and represent Chinese businesses to influence global economies'," it said of

the meeting.

[Baidu](#), China's most popular search engine by far with a [local market](#) share of more than 75 percent, said Li Changchun had approved the plans.

Baidu already has a presence in Japan, although it is largely overshadowed there by international rivals [Google](#) and Yahoo!. It has also recently launched operations in Thailand and Egypt.

"This has been a push of the [Chinese government](#) for years now, making Chinese companies go global," Jeremy Goldkorn, of the Beijing-based [web research](#) firm Danwei, told AFP.

"Perhaps their idea is that they stand the most chance of success in non-anglophone markets where there are repressive governments.

"They can position themselves as something that is not American, and therefore less likely to be hostile."

Robin Li's meeting with the head of China's powerful propaganda arm came amid official concern over the growing influence of the [Internet in China](#), which has the largest online population at 485 million people.

Last month Beijing's most senior Communist Party official visited the offices of two Chinese Internet companies, Sina and Youku, to urge them to stop the spread of "false and harmful information".

Youku is a video sharing service, while Sina runs a news website and a highly popular microblog that was used by thousands of people to criticise the government after a July train crash in which at least 40 people died.

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Citation: Chinese search engine plans overseas expansion (2011, September 16) retrieved 2 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-09-chinese-overseas-expansion.html>

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