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3 April 2013 Last updated at 16:24 GMT

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'China's Google' Baidu is making smart glasses

Baidu, China's largest search engine, is working on its own smart glasses technology - similar to Google's Glass project.

A spokesman for the Chinese firm said the glasses would be able to search by using facial recognition.

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Kaiser Kuo told Reuters that Baidu had not yet decided whether the glasses would be made commercially available.



Baidu says its glasses feature facial recognition capabilities

"We experiment with every kind of technology that is related to search," Mr Kuo said.

Like Google Glass, the Baidu glasses - reportedly known internally as Baidu Eye - consist of a small LCD screen attached to a slim headset.

A **leaked image** taken at Baidu's offices show a person wearing a headset matching the description - but Baidu would not confirm if it was Baidu Eye.

Some early reports had suggested that news of the technology was in fact an April Fool's joke - but while some reports on 1 April were embellished, there was truth behind the rumours.

Alarm

Mr Kuo said that the technology makes the most of Baidu's considerable expertise in facial recognition.

"What you are doing with your camera, for example, taking a picture of a celebrity and then checking on our database to see if we have a facial image match, you could do the same thing with a wearable visual device."

Such words are likely to alarm those worried about the capabilities of this type of technology.

Campaign group "Stop the Cyborgs" has called for limits on when the headsets can be used.

"We want people to actively set social and physical bounds around the use of technologies and not just fatalistically accept the direction technology is heading in," a campaigner told the BBC last month.

Meanwhile, in San Francisco - home of Google - a cafe has said it will ban customers from using Google Glass on its premises.

In response to worries, Google has said: "We are putting a lot of thought into how we design Glass because new technology always raises important new issues for society."



Google Glass is eagerly awaited by technology enthusiasts

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