



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

June 23, 2009

AUTHORITIES BLITZ MANILA MOVIE PIRATES

Two-Day Operation by Hundreds of Police Officers on Dozens of Pirate Retail Outlets Nets Over 1.75 Million Pirated DVDs

Hong Kong / Manila – Manila pirated movie retailers and the organized crime syndicates behind them are reeling from a series of lightning raids unleashed by Manila authorities on two days last week.

On Thursday 18th June 30 officers from the Optical Media Board (OMB) supported by 80 officers from the Special Action Force (SAF), the primary special forces unit of the Philippine National Police (PNP) and Motion Picture Association (MPA) representatives raided two infamous malls in Metro Manila, seizing an estimated 275,000 pirated DVDs. The first raid at Makati Cinema Square resulted in the seizure of an estimated 25,000 pirated DVDs including hundreds DVDs containing child pornography. Two men were arrested and are currently assisting the OMB with inquiries. A later raid on over 25 outlets at Odeon Mall resulted in the seizure of an estimated 250,000 pirated DVDs including latest MPA member companies' titles "*Night at the Museum 2*", "*Angels and Demons*", and "*Terminator Salvation*".

Raids continued on Friday 19th June targeting Manila's infamous Quiapo area. Amid tight security, search warrants were obtained for over 20 locations. Due to the complexities and risks associated with securing and raiding the piracy hotspot a total of 100 officers from the SAF supported 30 OMB officers and MPA representatives to conduct the raids. The weeks of secret planning and tight security paid off as the raiding party's motorcade of 16 unmarked vehicles reached within 100 meters of the target locations before being identified and blocked by vehicles controlled by the piracy syndicates. However while the syndicates had time to shutter and bolt many of the locations they did not have time to move any product out of the area, leaving tens of thousands of pirated DVDs on trestle tables along the street. OMB and SAF officers used bolt cutters and sledge hammers to break down the fortified doors of targeted locations and seized an estimated 1.5 million pirated DVDs. In addition to MPA member companies' movies, movies from the Philippines, Australia, Bollywood, Thailand, France and Korea were seized. Tens of thousands of pirated DVDs were boxed and ready to be shipped locally as well as overseas.

"Movie piracy is not a victimless crime," said Mike Ellis, President and Managing Director, Asia-Pacific for the MPA. "The organized crime syndicates behind the pirated DVDs hurt every Filipino and international film studio, cinema and home entertainment company and are involved in disgusting crimes like child pornography. Consumers should think about that before buying pirated DVDs." Mike Ellis further stated, "We commend the leadership of Chairman Eduardo Manzano and the professionalism and dedication of his team."

“Education and outreach are essential to reduce the public’s demand for pirated products,” said Eduardo Manzano, Chairman of the OMB. “But we all know that the criminal gangs that damage the Philippines’ creative and associated distribution industries care only for their illicit profits. For organized crime we will bring down the full weight of our law enforcement system – like last week’s raids in Manila City and Quiapo – as many times as necessary until they get the message. We will not tolerate your crimes.”

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Piracy in Asia

A study aimed at providing a more accurate picture of the impact that piracy – including Internet piracy - has on the film industry estimated that MPA member companies lost US\$6.1 billion to worldwide piracy in 2005. Of that lost revenue, approximately US\$1.2 billion came from piracy across the Asia Pacific region, while piracy in the U.S. accounted for US\$1.3 billion.

In 2008, the MPA’s Asia Pacific operations investigated and helped law enforcement officials to conduct more than 7,500 raids, seizing more than 19 million illegal optical discs, 17 factory optical disc production lines and 6,000 optical disc burners. Additionally, these efforts initiated more than 4,000 legal actions.

**Bootlegging: Obtaining movies by either purchasing an illegally copied VHS/DVD/VCD or acquiring hard copies of bootleg movies.*

**Illegal copying: Making illegal copies for self or receiving illegal copies from friends of a legitimate VHS/DVD/VCD.*

**Internet piracy: Obtaining movies by either downloading them from the Internet without paying or acquiring hard copies of illegally downloaded movies from friends or family.*

About the MPA: *The Motion Picture Association (MPA) and Motion Picture Association International (MPA-I) represent the interests of major motion picture companies in the global marketplace. As part of this, it investigates and reports on activities infringing its member companies’ intellectual property rights, assists with the resulting criminal and civil litigation to protect their copyrights, and conducts education outreach programs to teach movie fans around the world about the harmful effects of piracy. These activities have helped to transform entire markets from pirate to legitimate, benefiting video distributors, retailers, and foreign and local filmmakers alike.*

The organization’s worldwide anti-piracy operations are directed from its headquarters in Los Angeles, California and overseen at the regional and local market levels by teams located in Brussels (Europe, Middle East and Africa), São Paulo (Latin America), Montreal (Canada) and Singapore (Asia Pacific). Its member companies include: Paramount Pictures Corporation; Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc.; Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation; Universal City Studios LLLP; Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures; and Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. For more information about the MPA, please visit www.mpa-i.org.

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