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PADDY SNIFFS OUT SHIPMENT OF PIRATED MOVIE DVDS HEADED FOR SINGAPORE

Weekend Operation Results in Closure of Warehouses in Johore Bahru

Hong Kong/ Kuala Lumpur – The Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs (MDTCA) K9 unit's Paddy led enforcement officers on a successful weekend operation to shut down the supply lines of pirated movie DVDs in the Malaysian state of Johore. With the support of the Malaysian Federation Against Copyright Theft (MFACT) representing the Motion Picture Association (MPA), MDTCA conducted raids on May 30 and 31 to taking down six warehouses storing pirated products slated for export to Singapore.

Paddy, the Labrador trained to detect optical discs was donated by the MPA to the Malaysian Government last year when they established the first K9 unit in the world focused on detecting pirated optical discs.

On May 30, 20 enforcement officers from the MDTCA Johor Bahru and five officers from the K9 unit, raided four premises at the Holiday Plaza, Johor Bahru, initially suspected to be burner labs. While no burners were recovered, these turned out to be warehouses used to store pirated DVDs of games and movies slated for dispatch to Singapore, a short ride away across the Causeway linking the two countries. Paddy's sensitive nose uncovered a total of 19,000 copies of games, software and movies.

Post-raid investigations revealed that two of the targets were actively involved in exporting pirated DVDs to Singapore; packages were discovered with email orders from two websites which are now the subject of follow up investigations.

No arrests were made but a rowdy crowd of around 40 gathered outside the area and booed the raiding party. A dog was brought in to mock Paddy. Fearing for their safety, MDTCA called in the police who sent heavily armed officers to help defuse the situation.

On the following day, 15 enforcement officers together with the K9 unit raided another two targets. One was a large warehouse of pirated movie DVDs and seized over 6,000 discs. The other target was a delivery point for pirated DVDs to Singapore. Recent titles such as

“*Terminator Salvation*”, “*Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian*”, “*Angels & Demons*” and “*Star Trek*” as well as the latest Malay movie titles were among the 10,000 titles seized.

“The Government and MDTCA is taking the appropriate steps to address the proliferation of these warehouses and replicating operations of pirated optical discs. We are happy with the results and will be focusing more efforts especially on curbing the source of these pirates. Paddy and the K9 Unit’s involvement in this raid was crucial in identifying the DVDs, which we later confirmed as pirated copies. We expect similar actions. This is a clear signal to the pirates that we will not waiver in our efforts to shut them down” said Mohd. Roslan bin Mahayudin Director-General, Enforcement Department of the MDTCA.

“We are glad to hear that Paddy’s skills are being put to good use against the large, organized network of pirates involved in exporting illegal pirated DVDs to Singapore,” said Mike Ellis, President and Managing Director, Asia-Pacific for the MPA. “I congratulate the Malaysian authorities on tracking these syndicates who are using their territory as a base for illegal activities involving another country and reaffirm our commitment to supporting the Malaysian authorities in their efforts to shutting them down.”

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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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