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POLICE ARREST 17, SEIZE 193 DVD-R, CD-R BURNERS AND WEAPONS IN ORGANIZED CRIME RAID IN TAIWAN

Raid Followed Arson Attacks on Transport Company

Hong Kong, Encino – On March 8, thirty officers from Taiwan's Criminal Investigation Bureau (CIB), with support from the Foundation for the Protection of Film and Video Works (FVWP), representing the Motion Picture Association (MPA), raided seven locations in Taipei, Kaohsiung and Hualien belonging to Golden International Trading Co. Ltd., seizing 193 DVD-R and CD-R burners and arresting 17 people on charges of arson and infringing Taiwan's Copyright Law.

The raids followed investigations that originated after a purported business dispute between Golden International and Taiwanese courier and transportation company T. Join Transportation Co. Ltd. resulted in what police suspected were sabotage and arson attacks by Golden International employees on T. Join Transportation trucks.

On December 27, 2005, 19 trucks owned by T. Join were sabotaged. Subsequently, on five separate days in late January 2006, seven T. Join trucks were set on fire. Believing that the attacks were related to its dispute with Golden International, T. Join filed a complaint with the CIB and following an investigation, CIB officers launched the March 8 raids.

In addition to 163 CD-R burners and 30 DVD-R burners, police seized 34,527 pirated optical discs, many of which were infringing MPA member company titles, and several weapons. The seized burners were capable of producing as many as 11,736,000 CD-Rs and 648,000 DVD-Rs in one year, yielding revenues of US\$11,543,408, assuming the burners were in operation ten-hours-a-day, seven-days-per-week.

"The seizure of weapons in this outstanding raid by Taiwan's CIB against suspected arsonists and large-scale copyright thieves reinforces the well-documented links between optical disc piracy and organized criminal gangs and syndicates," said Mike Ellis, Senior Vice President and Regional Director, Asia-Pacific for the Motion Picture Association. "Crossover from piracy into violent crime and racketeering has become commonplace in many countries, and is no longer a strictly commercial issue; it is a matter of national security."

In 2004 and 2005, more than 2,500 optical disc burners were seized in FVWP/MPA operations in Taiwan. During the first three months of 2006, three raids have yielded seizures of 441 optical disc burners.

In Taiwan, it is frequently the case that pirated movies are individually burned onto optical discs with CD-R or DVD-R burners. Burner labs can contain dozens of burners, capable of producing millions of pirate CD-Rs or DVD-Rs per year.

Piracy in Asia

The MPA estimates that its member companies lose an excess of US\$896 million in potential revenue annually in the Asia-Pacific region alone. In 2004, the MPA operations in the Asia-Pacific region investigated more than 25,500 cases of piracy and assisted law enforcement officials in conducting nearly 12,000 raids. These activities resulted in the seizure of approximately 49,000,000 illegal optical discs, and the initiation of more than 8,000 legal actions.

About the MPA: *The Motion Picture Association (MPA) represents the interests of major motion picture companies in the global marketplace. On behalf of its Member Companies, the MPA conducts investigations around the world, assists with the criminal and civil litigation generated by such cases, and conducts education outreach programs to teach movie fans around the world about the harmful effects of piracy. The MPA directs its worldwide anti-piracy operations from its headquarters based in Encino, California and has regional offices located in Brussels (Europe, Middle East and Africa), São Paulo (Latin America), Montreal (Canada) and Singapore (Asia-Pacific). The MPA's anti-piracy activities have helped to transform entire markets from pirate to legitimate, benefiting video distributors, retailers, and foreign and local filmmakers alike. The MPA Member Companies include: Buena Vista International, Inc.; Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios Inc.; Paramount Pictures Corporation; Sony Pictures Releasing International Corporation; Twentieth Century Fox International Corporation; Universal International Films, Inc.; and Warner Bros. Pictures International, a division of Warner Bros. Pictures Inc.*

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