



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION AGAINST COPYRIGHT THEFT – GREATER CHINA

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SMASHED! – HONG KONG-BASED PIRATE DVD BURNER LAB AND RETAIL SYNDICATE

Hong Kong – On April 13, acting on information provided by the Motion Picture Association's (MPA) Hong Kong Program (IFACT-GC), 10 officers from the Hong Kong Customs Special Task Force raided a burner lab located in Yau Ma Tei, arresting the 46-year-old female mastermind and seizing 28-DVD-R burners and 1,450 pirated discs, including 920 DVD-Rs infringing 27 MPA member company titles.

The raid was the culmination of a six month investigation arising from the earlier arrest of two street vendors selling pirated discs around a number of Hong Kong's bar and entertainment areas in Central and Wan Chai. IFACT-GC staff confirmed that the street vendors were part of a syndicate producing and selling pirated discs and passed the information to Hong Kong Customs who developed the case, resulting in a very significant arrest.

IFACT-GC Executive Director Sam Ho said "Hong Kong Customs are to be congratulated and thanked for this excellent case. Burner labs are relatively scarce in Hong Kong but they are lucrative for the pirates and cause great harm to MPA member companies business – this syndicate was selling movies which are still in theatrical release and which are not yet available on DVD anywhere in the world, including 300 and Meet the Robinsons. Ho estimates that had the syndicate remained in operation for one year, the annual pirate product produced could have been as much as 583,200 DVD-Rs generating potential revenue of US\$1,860,923 (HK\$14,515,200).

While factory-replicated optical discs continue to account for the majority of optical discs produced by movie pirates in the Asia-Pacific region, MPA enforcement operations confirm that a shift is underway in many territories from large-scale production in optical disc factories using machines that cost hundreds of thousands of dollars, to burner labs that can contain dozens of low-cost burners and are often located in apartments and small retail premises.

Both types of operation are capable of producing tens of millions of pirate DVD-Rs or CD-Rs per year, but burner labs are inexpensive and easy to set up, and if raided, easily and quickly replaceable.

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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 Los Angeles, 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.; 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.*

About the IFACT-GC: *The International Federation Against Copyright Theft – Greater China was established in 2006 by the Motion Picture Association to protect the film industry in the Greater China region from the adverse impact of copyright theft. IFA©T-GC works closely with its members, government and enforcement authorities to protect the Greater China film and television industry, retailers and movie fans.*

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