



PRESS RELEASE

LONDON, 19TH JULY 2007, 3.30PM

CRACKDOWN NETS 1,218 FAKE DVDS IN WHITECHAPEL

A crackdown on illegal DVD sellers in Whitechapel netted 1,218 pirate DVDs including 311 obscene pornographic films.

Eight DVD sellers were arrested in the street raids on Thursday (12 July) and seven pleaded guilty to breaking the Trade Marks Act 1984 and the Video Recordings Act 1984.

Most of those charged appeared before Thames Magistrates on Friday (13 July) and have been sentenced and others are due to make court appearances in the near future.

This joint crackdown by Tower Hamlets Council the Metropolitan Police and Federation Against Copyright Theft (FACT) is part of a wider campaign to reveal the truth behind counterfeiting. To stop people who are tempted by the cut-price products a hard-hitting road show run by Tower Hamlets Partnership and Safer Neighbourhood Teams has been visiting community organisations and local schools in Spitafields, Banglatown and Bethnal Green to reveal the truth.

Police Inspector Paul Kinzett said: "This is the first joint operation coordinated as a result of the Whitechapel Problem Solving Group and shows the commitment that a wide range of agencies have in improving the area for people who use the market area. I am grateful to those who have contributed to the planning of this operation - initial feedback from market traders is that they were pleased to see the action taken by officers on Thursday."

Tower Hamlets Council's Lead Member for Cleaner, Safer, Greener Councillor Abdal Ullah said: "People should be able to walk down Whitechapel High Street without being hassled by illegal DVD sellers and without worrying that their children are going to see DVD covers featuring pornography. Crackdowns like this are so important for the area and we must all play our part.

"Selling fake goods hits legitimate businesses hard and it floods the market with cheaper products making it hard for reputable businesses to compete. On a broader scale, film piracy is making vast profits for organised criminal networks in the UK and worldwide."

The workshops have been prepared with support from the national organisation Federation Against Copyright Theft (FACT) to prepare a series of challenging discussions encouraging people to think about the reality of piracy.

Kieron Sharp, FACT Director General, said: "FACT is pleased to have been able to assist with this multi-agency operation. This action should send out a strong message that this type of criminality will not be tolerated in Tower Hamlet."

Ends

Notes to Editors

1. FACT is the UK's leading trade organisation established to protect and represent the interests of the film and broadcasting industry against copyright and trademark infringements.

2. DVD and online piracy must be recognised as a crime of growing national significance. In 2006 alone FACT seized over 1.5 million pirate DVDs and their in-house forensic services team assisted the Police, Trading Standards and HM Revenue & Customs in examining close to 1 million DVDs.

3. List of people charged following Thursday's crackdown

CHEN, Ling (Ms) date of birth 03-03-1985 (no address provided)

Found in possession of 115 DVDs (71 feature films and 44 pornographic)

Charged: One (1) offence contrary to section 92(1)(c) Trade Marks Act 1994 and one (1) offence contrary to section 10(1) Video Recordings Act 1984

Plea: Guilty

Sentence: 2 year Conditional Discharge and Forfeiture and Destruction Order in respect of all seized DVDs

FU, Qui (Ms) date of birth 27-06-1967 (address Flat 3, Bridge Court, Lea Bridge Road, London E10 7JS)

Found in possession of 198 DVDs (165 feature films and 33 pornographic)

Charged: One (1) offence contrary to section 92(1)(c) Trade Marks Act 1994 and one (1) offence contrary to section 10(1) Video Recordings Act 1984

Plea: Guilty

Sentence: 3-months imprisonment and Forfeiture and Destruction Order in respect of all seized DVDs

HE, Hong (Ms) date of birth 20-01-1974 (gave address as 18 Walpole Street, London SE18 6TW)

Found in possession of 38 DVDs (27 feature films and 11 pornographic)

Charged: One (1) offence contrary to section 92(1)(c) Trade Marks Act 1994 and one (1) offence contrary to section 10(1) Video Recordings Act 1984

Plea: Not Guilty

Case set down for trial at 2.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 7 August 2007. Defendant refused bail and remanded in custody. Case therefore also listed for hearing at 10.00 a.m. on Thursday, 19 July 2007 for further bail application.

HE, Zhu Mei (Ms) date of birth 19-02-1972 (also gave address as 18 Walpole Street, London SE18 6TW)

Found in possession of 128 DVDs (86 feature films and 42 pornographic)

Charged: One (1) offence contrary to section 92(1)(c) Trade Marks Act 1994 and one (1) offence contrary to section 10(1) Video Recordings Act 1984

Plea: Guilty

Case adjourned to 10.00 a.m. on Friday, 3 August 2007 for pre-sentence report to be prepared. Defendant refused bail and remanded in custody.

WANG, Jainming (Mr) date of birth 30-12-1970 (address 457 New Cross Road, London SE14 6TA)

Found in possession of 222 DVDs (168 feature films and 54 pornographic)

Charged: One (1) offence contrary to section 92(1)(c) Trade Marks Act 1994 and one (1) offence contrary to section 10(1) Video Recordings Act 1984

Plea: Guilty

Sentence: 4-months imprisonment and Forfeiture and Destruction Order in respect of all seized DVDs

XIANGYUN, Guo (Ms) dated of birth 06-02-1976 (no address provided)

Found in possession of 172 DVDs (136 feature films and 36 pornographic)

Charged: One (1) offence contrary to section 92(1)(c) Trade Marks Act 1994; one (1) offence contrary to section 10(1) Video Recordings Act 1984; and one (1) offence contrary to section 1(10) Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (breach of Anti-Social Behaviour Order)

Plea: Guilty

Case adjourned to 10.00 a.m. on Friday, 3 August 2007 for pre-sentence report to be prepared (options include committal to Crown Court for sentence). Defendant refused bail and remanded in custody.

XUEQING, He (Mr) date of birth 05-06-1983 (address 229 Great Portland Street, London W1)

Found in possession of 180 DVDs (125 feature films and 55 pornographic)

Charged: One (1) offence contrary to section 92(1)(c) Trade Marks Act 1994 and one (1) offence contrary to section 10(1) Video Recordings Act 1984

Plea: Guilty

Sentence: 2 year Conditional Discharge and Forfeiture and Destruction Order in respect of all seized DVDs

ZHANG, Xiu Qin (Ms) date of birth 02-07-1977 (incomplete address but in New Cross)

Found in possession of 165 DVDs (129 feature films and 36 pornographic)

Charged: One (1) offence contrary to section 92(1)(c) Trade Marks Act 1994 and one (1) offence contrary to section 10(1) Video Recordings Act 1984

Plea: Guilty

Sentence: 2 year Conditional Discharge and Forfeiture and Destruction Order in respect of all seized DVDs