

Thailand angers Hollywood

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The government of Thailand has angered Hollywood.

The latter's International Intellectual Property Alliance (IIPA), made up of six entertainment industry spawned and funded enforcement organizations, has "expressed concerns over devastating copyright piracy in Thailand" and warned the Royal Thai Government that it "needs to take urgent action now to begin reducing the high levels of piracy that infect this market".

In a statement suggesting the Thai government itself has direct involvement and is knowingly sheltering criminals, "The Thai Government harbors dozens of CD plants capable of producing over 400 million discs per year - more than seven times any justifiable legitimate domestic demand," the IIPA states.

It also warns the US government "not to permit the Thai Government to use the FTA negotiations as an excuse for inaction".

For the entertainment industry to berate national governments for failing to protect its commercial interests is nothing new. Nor does it hesitate to use national police forces to act as industry enforcers, working from material supplied by its 'investigation units'.

Piracy in Thailand, "causes enormous harm to the copyright industries, declares the IIPA. "To date, the Thai Government has shown little sign that it intends to pay much more than lip service to the serious piracy problem now that commencement of an FTA has been announced.

"The copyright community expects the highest level standards of copyright protection and enforcement obligations in Thailand as a result of any agreed-upon FTA with Thailand.

"We also expect that the Royal Thai Government will take concrete steps during the negotiation to fight massive over-production of pirate CDs, DVDs, and CD-ROMs; production and export of pirate cartridge-based videogames; book piracy; end-user piracy of business software; and other forms of piracy in Thailand."

"It is clear Thailand has become a major exporter of pirate discs," says IIPA president Eric Smith. "We simply cannot understand why Thailand, which wants to modernize its economy in the 21st century, would want to protect these blatant and organized pirates."

IIPA members are:

Association of American Publishers (AAP)

AFMA AFMA (formerly the American Film Marketing Association)

Business Software Alliance (BSA)

The Entertainment Software Association (ESA)

The Motion Picture Association of America MPAA)

Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA)

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