

Brazilian Police Destroy US\$ 50 Million Worth of Counterfeit Goods

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Monday, March 20, in São Paulo, in southeastern Brazil, the Brazilian Federal Police (PF) destroyed 90 tons of phony watches, millions of CDs and DVDs, 141 thousand boxes of beauty products, and 1.3 million pairs of eyeglasses, worth a total of US\$ 52.8 million.

The counterfeit merchandise had all been seized in four PF operations directed against the Chinese black marketeer, Law Kin Chong, in 2004 and 2005.

The immolation ceremony counted on the presence of the Minister of Justice, Márcio Thomaz Bastos, the general director of the PF, Paulo Lacerda, and the executive secretary of the Ministry of Justice, Luiz Paulo Barreto, who is also president of the National Council to Combat Piracy.

US\$ 84 million in counterfeit merchandise was confiscated in Brazil, last year, 130% more than the value of the goods seized in 2004. Altogether, 1200 individuals associated with this kind of activity were arrested, as against 40 in 2004.

Around 500 thousand counterfeit CDs and DVDs seized all over the country in 2005 were destroyed in December in front of the National Congress. This symbolic act marked National Anti-Piracy Day.

The creation of the National Anti-Piracy Council by the federal government at the end of 2005 also constituted a significant watershed in the way combatting piracy is approached, according to Brazilian authorities.

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