



The United States Attorney's Office

Office of Public Affairs

Leader of NinjaVideo.Net Website Sentenced to 22 Months in Prison for Criminal Copyright Conspiracy

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WASHINGTON – A founder of NinjaVideo.net, a website that provided millions of users with the ability to illegally download high-quality copies of copyright-protected movies and television programs, was sentenced today to 22 months in prison, announced U.S. Attorney Neil H. MacBride for the Eastern District of Virginia, Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Justice Department's Criminal Division and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Director John Morton.

Hana Amal Beshara, 30, of North Brunswick, N.J., was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Anthony J. Trenga in the Eastern District of Virginia. Judge Trenga ordered Beshara to serve two years of supervised release, complete 500 hours of community service, repay \$209,826.95 that she personally obtained from her work at NinjaVideo.net and forfeit to the United States several financial accounts and computer equipment involved in the crimes.

On Sept. 9, 2011, Beshara was indicted along with four of the other top administrators of NinjaVideo.net. Beshara pleaded guilty on Sept. 29, 2011, to conspiracy and criminal copyright infringement. Three of Beshara's co-defendants have pleaded guilty and await sentencing. An arrest warrant remains outstanding for the fourth co-defendant, Zoi Mertzanis of Greece. Another co-founder of NinjaVideo.net who was charged separately has also pleaded guilty.

According to court documents, Beshara was one of the founders of the NinjaVideo.net website, which operated from February 2008 until it was shut down by law enforcement in June 2010. NinjaVideo.net offered visitors the ability to view, without charge, many movies still in theaters as well as some movies

that had not yet been released in theaters, and many television programs immediately after they aired. Beshara, who was known as “Queen Phara” on the Internet, served as the public face of NinjaVideo.net. She supervised the uploading and placement of infringing television programs and motion pictures on the website and served as the lead moderator of the website’s forum boards. At one point Beshara managed the conspiracy’s finances, including receiving advertising revenue generated by traffic to NinjaVideo.net. In total, advertising revenue and visitor donations generated more than \$505,000 in income for the conspiracy, with Beshara personally receiving nearly \$210,000.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jay V. Prabhu and Lindsay A. Kelly and Trial Attorney Glenn Alexander of the Computer Crime & Intellectual Property Section in the Justice Department’s Criminal Division.

The investigation was conducted by the HSI-led National Intellectual Property Rights Coordination Center (IPR Center). The IPR Center is one of the U.S. government’s key weapons in the fight against criminal counterfeiting and piracy. As a task force, the IPR Center uses the expertise of its 19 member agencies to share information, develop initiatives, coordinate enforcement actions and conduct investigations related to IP theft. Through this strategic interagency partnership, the IPR Center protects the public’s health and safety, the U.S. economy and the war fighters.

To report IP theft or to learn more about the IPR Center, visit www.IPRCenter.gov.

This case is part of efforts being undertaken by the Department of Justice Task Force on Intellectual Property (IP Task Force) to stop the theft of intellectual property. Attorney General Eric Holder created the IP Task Force to combat the growing number of domestic and international intellectual property crimes, protect the health and safety of American consumers, and safeguard the nation’s economic security against those who seek to profit illegally from American creativity, innovation and hard work. The IP Task Force seeks to strengthen intellectual property rights protection through heightened criminal and civil enforcement, greater coordination among federal, state and local law enforcement partners, and increased focus on international enforcement efforts, including reinforcing relationships with key foreign partners and U.S. industry leaders. To learn more about the IP Task Force, go to www.justice.gov/dag/iptaskforce.