

Fiji. SkyCity is also looking to add another 22 screens to the operation via an increased stake in New Zealand chain Rialto Cinemas. In addition to its Antipodean holdings, Village Roadshow is reported to be in final negotiations over the sale of its multiplex sites in Austria and the U.K.

EAST ASIAN BOX OFFICE TO BOOM BY 2010

BEIJING—Buoyed by a rapid rate of modernization and technological upgrades at theatres throughout the territory, China is expected to triple its box-office tallies by 2010. The quickly developing cinema market is set to have 200 digital screens operating by the end of this year, enabling the easier distribution of films to some of the region's most populous locations, according to the latest study published by exhibition industry analyst Dodona Research. While Warner Bros. International Theatres is still the only Western exhibition chain to have invested in China, several other foreign circuits, including Japan-based Kadokawa Group and South Korean giant CJ CGV, have demonstrated interest in developing new multiplexes. Other markets predicted to experience healthy box-office growth are South Korea, which saw a 160-percent rise between the years 2000 and 2005, and Taiwan, which, in direct contrast to the worldwide box-office dip, recorded a seven-percent improvement last year. Additionally, combined box office among the markets covered in the Dodona report entitled "Cinemagoing East Asia"—including China, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan—is forecast to increase by 33 percent to 5.5 million over the next four years.

PLEX CHAIN INOX OPENS DARJEELING SITE

CALCUTTA—Residents in the Indian market of Darjeeling recently welcomed a new state-of-the-art movie theatre. Operated by local chain INOX, the 811-seat venue is hailed as the city's first modern multiplex. Amenities at the site include contemporary projection and sound systems and stadium-style seats with reclining features. The theatre also offers premium box seats for a slightly higher admissions fee. In addition to its latest bow in Darjeeling, INOX holds two theatrical sites in Calcutta, with another slated to open in the city by the end of next year.

LATIN BEAT

CINEMARK BOWS LIMA THEATRE

LIMA—Cinemark's overseas division has grown its Latin American presence with its latest theatrical grand opening in Peru. Encompassing more than 32,000 square feet, Cinemark International's new four-plex is located at the Plaza Lima Sur Mall in the Chorrillos district of the Peruvian capital. Moviegoing amenities at the site include stadium auditoriums, digital sound systems and wall-to-wall screens. "Cinemark International is excited to be a part of this new commercial development," said company topper Tim Warner.



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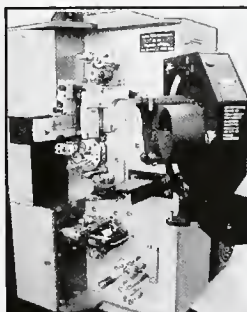
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