

Chinese Government Selects 5,000 Cinemas to Screen Propaganda Content

Chinese documentary “Amazing China” grossed RMB 338 million nationwide as of 19 March. The patriotic documentary, co-produced by China Central Television and China Film Corp, records China’s achievements over the last five years. An intensifying personality cult around the Party Leader not only has allured mass viewings by staff from companies and government agencies, but has also paved the road for creating a “People's Cinema Line” following the Chinese New Year.

The so-called “People's Cinema Line” is not your everyday traditional cinema circuits, but an ad hoc one that comprises 5,000 cinemas selected by the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film, and Television (SAPPRFT) from across the country to play “main melody” films on special occasions.

The “People's Cinema Line” will, of course, collaborate with relevant cinema circuits to receive box office revenue share. State-owned cinema circuits, such as Film Stellar Theatre Chain, China Film Group Digital Cinema Line, Shanghai United Circuit and China Film South China Circuit, have nodded to the unprecedented policy implemented in the name of the nation. The large number of privately-owned cinema circuits, such as Wanda and Guangdong Dadi, just have to accept.

“Amazing China” did not even open during major holidays such as the Chinese New Year, Labour Day or National Day, or it would have definitely been considered a “main-melody” film screened in the “People's Cinema Line”. How would that have affected the privately-run cinema circuits, production companies and distributors?