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Anil Ambani signs \$815-million muti-movie deal with Spielberg

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New Delhi, July 15: Reliance ADAG chairman Anil Ambani and Hollywood's star director Steven Spielberg have entered into the first phase of the multi-movie deal committing an initial investment \$825 million for the first three years. Spielberg's studio, DreamWorks would eventually make 5-6 films per year and the production of the first film under the venture, expected to release in 2010, will go on floor later this year.

"DreamWorks anticipates starting its first film for the new studio later this year. They have been actively acquiring properties and developing projects for release in 2010," said a Reliance ADAG statement. This initial phase of funding will include an equity investment from R-ADAG, debt financing from a syndication of banks, as well as funding from Disney. Of the \$825 million, the equity component would be \$325 million, while Disney would infuse \$125 million and the bal-



Steven Spielberg

ance from a syndication of banks and other investors. Earlier this year DreamWorks signed a distribution deal with The Walt Disney Company, who would handle marketing and distribution of the studio's films around the world, except for India where Reliance BIG Entertainment would retain distribution rights.

"Ever since we looked at their business plan, I have never doubted that we would succeed in providing them with financial muscle required to realise their dream. We are delighted to partner with such uniquely talented individuals as Steven Spielberg and Stacey

Snider," Ambani said in a conference call after a meeting with Spielberg and Stacy Snider, CEO of DreamWorks at New York. Ambani said that the deal is a game changer which would drill the Indian Film Industry and Reliance ADAG into Hollywood consciousness.

"This venture with Reliance opens a new door to our future. Their visionary step has given us a new set of dreams to work toward," said Oscar winning filmmaker Spielberg who may visit India later this year. "All of us at DreamWorks Studios join with our Reliance partners in anticipating the financial closing," said Stacey Snider. "We also welcome the opportunity and freedom they have given us to make the films we want to make. We always want to aim for appeal and quality whether it be for a highly commercial concept or an artistic achievement", Snider added.

DreamWorks also acquired numerous attractive projects from Paramount on the separation from that studio earlier this year, she added.