

NEW STRAITS TIMES

ESTABLISHED 1845

INCORPORATING BUSINESS TIMES

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SATURDAY • DECEMBER 6, 2003



OUT OF CONTROL: Shoppers fighting to get into the wholesale centre for the bargains.

Shopping spree turns into wholesale looting

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NILAI, Fri. — Thousands of shoppers mobbed the Nilai 3 Wholesale Centre in a wild shopping spree, but the cash registers only recorded RM8 in sales — the rest of the goods were looted in 30 minutes flat.

Five people fainted in the frenzy after sales personnel were unable to control the crowd estimated at 10,000.

Goods worth about RM100,000 were looted,

according to officials at the centre.

The crowd had thronged the centre for its second anniversary sale in conjunction with the State-level Malaysian Mega Sale Carnival today. It was offering many household items at rock-bottom prices of RM2 each.

Television sets, DVD players, washing machines and air-conditioning units were all offered at a discount of 70 per cent.

Developer Pemaju Perumahan Sungai Ramal Sdn Bhd sales manager Freddy Liew, who witnessed the frenzy, said the crowd

began lining up outside as early as 3am.

"It was shocking," he said. "I never imagined this could happen — people climbing over grilles and pushing their way just to grab items."

Only four people paid for their items in an orderly manner before the mob madness began, to the horror of salespersons and the security and Rela officers on duty.

Some 3,000 items were being offered in two sessions, from 3pm to 5pm and from 6pm to 9pm. The second session was abandoned.