

Beat: Entertainment

## **`Games of Thrones` renewed for two more seasons**

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**USPA News** - The popular HBO fantasy series "Game of Thrones" has been renewed for a fifth and sixth season, the premium cable network announced on Tuesday, two days after the series' season four debut scored the highest number of viewers yet. The series, which premiered in April 2011 and follows several noble families and individuals in their fight for control of the fictional continents of Westeros and Essos, has received widespread acclaim from critics though it is controversial for its use of nudity, sex and graphic depictions of violence.

The series received numerous awards and nominations during its first three years. "Games of Thrones is a phenomenon like no other," HBO Programming President Michael Lombardo said on Tuesday as he announced - as expected - that the popular series will have at least two more seasons. "David Benioff and D.B. Weiss, along with their talented collaborators, continue to surpass themselves, and we look forward to more of their dazzling storytelling." "Two Swords," the fourth season premiere episode that aired on Sunday, has received much praise from critics and fans alike, being hailed by some as the "best television show ever." The episode was watched by about 6.6 million viewers, causing the HBO Go service to crash and making it HBO's most-watched program since the finale of "The Sopranos" in 2007. But in part because of HBO's limited reach, fans from around the world have turned to unauthorized websites to download a copy of the episode, setting a new piracy record in just hours, according to piracy news website TorrentFreak. It said the episode had been downloaded by more than 1 million people within the first 12 hours, with millions more expected to download the episode throughout the coming weeks. "Games of Thrones" is based on the bestselling fantasy book series by George R.R. Martin.

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