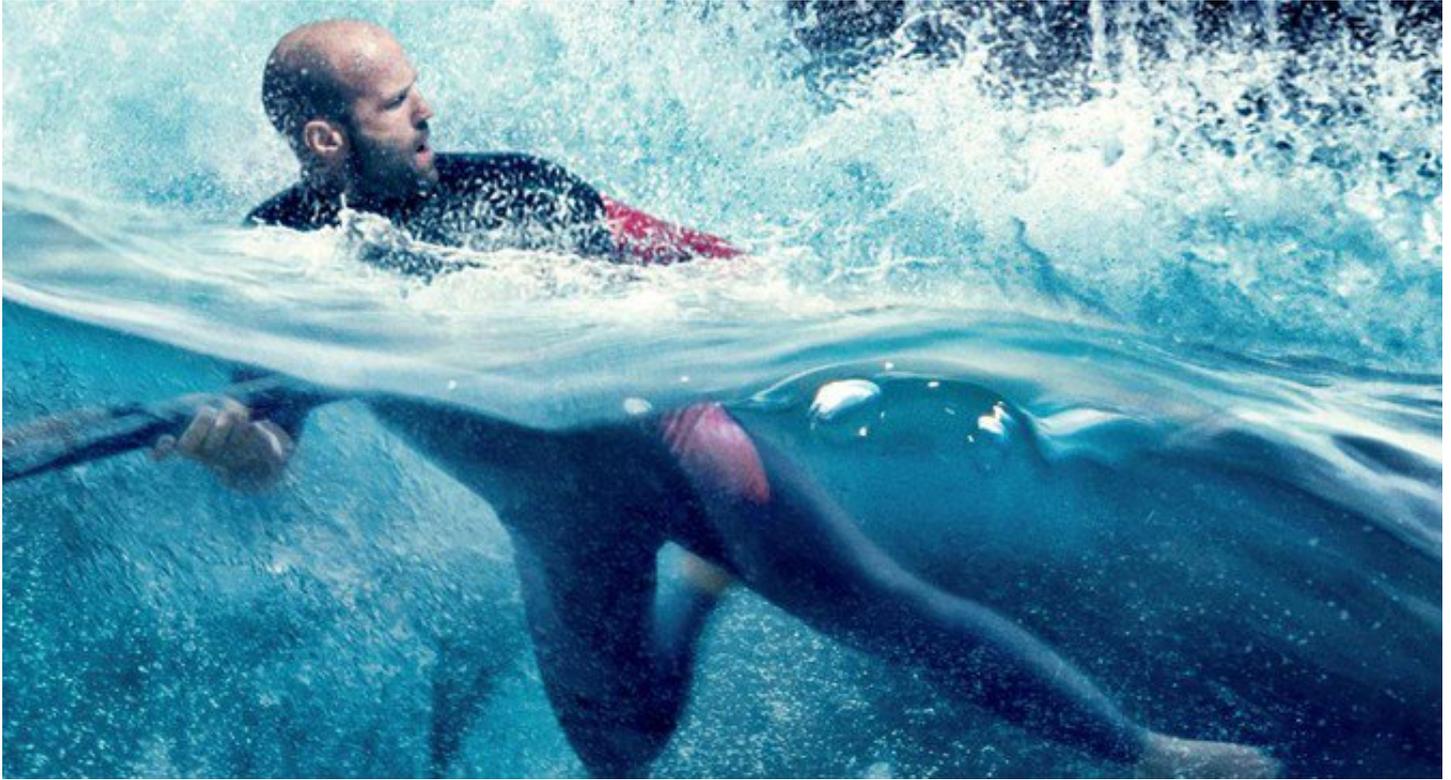


'The Meg:' A giant shark movie that lacks the killer bite



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- “The Meg” has more excitement to offer, and somewhat along the lines of “Jaws” we see a second giant shark attacking beach swimmers

CHENNAI: It seems that “Jaws,” Steven Spielberg’s classic 1975 movie adapted from Peter Benchley’s novel, can never be dislodged from its high pedestal of sheer suspense and moments of terror.

About a giant man-eating shark, “Jaws” remains the best ever underwater drama, and in comparison Jon Turteltaub’s latest blue water ordeal, “The Meg,” pales.

The nail-biting thriller is not in the same league, despite Jason Statham’s exciting action sequences – which probably could be a major reason for Warner Brothers’ \$44.5 million ticket sales in the film’s first weekend in the North American market.

Loosely based on the 1997 book, “Meg: A Novel of Deep Terror” by Steve Alten, the screen version has Statham playing an underwater rescue diver, Jonas Taylor, who is urgently summoned to save a group of scientists trapped in the Pacific Ocean.

Taylor's former wife, Lori (Jessica McNamee) and two others, after a seemingly uneventful deep-sea exploration in a capsule, are attacked by a gigantic, 23-meter, pre-historic shark, Megalodon.

While Taylor succeeds in rescuing Lori and another scientist, the third dies. Back at the base station, the team discovers that the mammal had escaped from the depths after the capsule had breached a chemical cloud which had kept the dangerous creature imprisoned.

"The Meg" has more excitement to offer, and somewhat along the lines of "Jaws" we see a second giant shark attacking beach swimmers.

Many deaths follow, but somehow the movie does not create the kind of panic one would have expected in a shark-man conflict.

This is more like a B-grade horror movie to which summer crowds once flocked for air-conditioned comfort and a tub of popcorn.

Even if they ignored "Jaws" or other marine exploits such as "The Deep" (1977), a scintillating film based on another Benchley novel, the makers of "The Meg" would have seen the recent cliff-hanger, "Skyscraper."

And these are far superior to "The Meg," where the monster shark just lacks the killer bite.
