

## HK's TVB takes stern line on critics

TVB is "no exception to unprecedented economic loss," company declares

Hong Kong's dominant free-TV broadcaster, Television Broadcasts Ltd (TVB), entered the weekend on a firm if angry note, following a horrible week that included having to issue a warning about a US\$100+ million loss for 2022 and a plunging share price.

TVB's public statement issued on Friday followed domestic press reports about the exit of U.S. investor Dodge & Cox and alleged shareholder dissatisfaction.

TVB said in the statement that it had "great respect for the opinions and support of shareholders, and is committed to deliver best returns to them".

*The rest of the story is on page 4*



## HK Filmart closes at 7,300 delegates

Mainland China shows up en masse for 4-day in-person event

Hong Kong Filmart made something of a triumphant return last week after three years online, opening its doors to some 7,300 people for the four-day market and EntertainmentPulse conference. About 700 exhibitors – including 330 from China – from 30 countries signed up.

Although the market closed lower than 2019's pre-pandemic 9,000 visitors from 52 countries/regions, expectations were exceeded and positive sentiment reigned. After three years online, absolutely no-one moaned about being back on the exhibition floor.

*The full story is on page 3*



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## 7,300 people through Filmart/EntertainmentPulse doors Mainland China shows up en masse for four-day Hong Kong in-person event

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Organisers – the Hong Kong Trade Development Council – said in the closing wrap that delegates came from 41 countries and regions. The geographic spread and modest approach was evident in post-Covid pared-down but functional exhibition stands, including pavilions from Thailand, Taiwan, Korea and Japan.

Not so much for broadcasters and media companies from across China, Macau and Hong Kong, which filled their booths with everything from flowering trees and red lanterns to high-glam sparkle and a mini Kowloon City.

The bulk of both physical show floor and headspace was taken up by mainland Chinese companies, delivering a united front in support of Hong Kong and an even stronger message: promoting Chinese culture to worldwide audiences.

This was backed up by high-profile Hong Kong companies such as Emperor Motion Pictures, Viu/Makerville and other domestic shops maximising their home-ground advantages... and the pulling power of stars such as Jackie Chan and Nicholas Tse, 10 of the 12 members of boy-band Mirror brought in by Viu/Makerville, and Korean star Lee Je-hoon from Viu's *Taxi Driver 2*.

The absence of Hong Kong's dominant broadcaster, Television Broadcasts Ltd (TVB), from the exhibitors line up was shocking at first. By day two, the explanation – budget – spread. By day three, after TVB issued a profit warning of about US\$100 million, most were nodding their heads in agreement with the decision



10 of boy band Mirror's 12 members on stage during a Viu/Makerville event at Hong Kong Filmart

not to spend something like US\$500K on a display befitting the 56-year-old broadcaster's standing but clearly not fit its bottom line.

These days TVB's banker-bosses are all about ROI, industry insiders explain. With doubt over mainland buyers' presence at the show because of ongoing pandemic restrictions only lifted at the 11th hour, a call was, for better or worse, taken. And then everyone moved on...

This year's Filmart conference track ranged from a look at the "Asian wave" in 2023, dating/romance formats and Web3's impact, along with a series of China-focused sessions organised by the International Cooperation Department of National Radio and Television Administration of China under the banner, "Chinese Global Content Communication Forum".

The who's who of panelists in the series included Huace group CEO, Karen Fu, who many look to as a bellwether for mainland direction. Talking about the opportunities and challenges for Chinese content in the age of streaming, China Review Studio execs said: "We don't need exceptional stories... We need to hear the stories of ordinary people so that overseas audiences can experience their values... If we are going to succeed, we have to understand the West better than


they understand us."

The China sessions left zero doubt about grand cultural expansion plans through storytelling; a refreshed and coordinated outreach to international markets; and – an added bonus – unofficially confirmed the end of the never-official ban on Korean content.

While insiders report ongoing special quotas for Korean TV titles in China, the inclusion of Korean production house AStory (*Extraordinary Attorney Woo*) boss, Nikki Semin Han, in the line-up was interpreted as a public welcome mat.

The takeaways from the Asian wave conversation included the dangers of a mishmash identity in trying to be "international". Plus the dual purpose of Boys Love (BL) titles in smoothing the way for Thai productions internationally as well as expanding streaming-friendly repertoires.

"BL is helping Thai content to travel beyond traditional borders" said Ziraviss Vindhanapisuth, BEC World's international business VP.

Panelists from Korea, Thailand and India agreed that mixed casting from different countries in a bid to broaden appeal had not been successful. And may never be. The danger, all said, was trying to appeal to everyone and ending up appealing to no one. 

## Squid Game unbeaten on Netflix all-time 28-day non-English top 10

#	TV (Non-English)	Hours viewed in first 28 days
1	Squid Game S1	1,650,450,000
2	Money Heist: Part 5	792,230,000
3	Money Heist: Part 4	619,010,000
4	All of Us Are Dead S1	560,780,000
5	Money Heist: Part 3	426,400,000
6	Extraordinary Attorney Woo S1	402,470,000
7	Café con aroma de mujer S1	326,910,000
8	Lupin: Part 1	316,830,000
9	The Glory S1 (part 1 & 2)	289,240,000
10	Elite S3	275,300,000

Source: Netflix, top 10 most popular TV (non-English), based on hours viewed in first 28 days (14 Mar 2023)

K-dramas continue to command 100% of Asia's presence on Netflix's global charts. And *Squid Game*, at 1.65 billion hours, continues to rule supreme, with more than double the 28-day viewership of closest rival, *Money Heist* S5.

Three other K-dramas made it to Netflix's latest 28-day top 10 non-English charts: zombie/horror series *All of Us Are Dead* S1 with 560.78 million hours viewed; legal drama *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* S1, with 402.47 million hours viewed; and revenge thriller, *The Glory* (parts one & two) at almost 290 million hours.

The rest of the titles on the all-time greats list were Spanish and French.

Meanwhile, the show of the moment – eight-episode second part of *The Glory* – made a triumphant return for the week of 6-12 March, attracting 124.46 million viewing hours in two days after its 10 March release and topping the streaming platform's global top 10 non-English TV chart for the week.

*The Glory* was written by Kim Eun-sook, directed by An Gil-ho and produced by Studio Dragon subsidiary, Hwa&Dam Pictures. The series stars Song Hye-kyo (*Descendants of the Sun*) as a woman who becomes a primary school teacher and takes on a group of her former schoolmates who bullied her mercilessly when she was a student.

## Telkomsel, Zee5 align on new packs South Asian titles x data bundles launched in Indonesia



Ra One

Telco Telkomsel and South Asian streaming platform Zee5 are collaborating on two premium packages that promise "the most complete and quality Bollywood" subscription offer in Indonesia.

The two packs are both bundled with data and cost from IDR26,000/US\$1.70 for a bundle including 2 GB of data a month to IDR36,000/US\$2.30 for the 2.5 GB data bundle.

Telkomsel said that the alliance "further reinforces" its position as "the

home of entertainment" servicing all segments of Indonesian society and strengthens its commitment as a "digital lifestyle enabler" in Indonesia.

Select titles will be language-customised.

Zee5 shows that will be available in Indonesia as part of the new agreement include series *Kaali*, *Lassi Cold & Chicken Tikka Masala*, *Abhay* and *Fitrat*, as well as films such as *Simmba*, *Ra One*, *English Vinglish* and *Mr. India*.

## HK TVB highlights "road of new media development"

### From page 1: TVB

At the same time, the company said it would not "tolerate or condone the dissemination of misleading information about the Company, attempts to tarnish the Company's reputation without contacting any members of the management team, or making personal attacks towards our management".

Naming no names or specific situations, TVB said it "reserved the right to pursue legal action against any unlawful acts or false accusations".

TVB said the market had been hit hard by the Covid-19 pandemic and that the global economy was "clouded by uncertainties and continues to underperform".

"All industries have suffered unprecedented economic losses, and TVB is no exception," it said, pointing to "extensive reforms" implemented since the beginning of 2021 "in order to actively embark on a path towards new media for the television industry".

The company added that in the past two years, its new management team "has reshaped and strengthened TVB brand's solid foundations, allowing TVB to successfully embark on the road of new media development".

"This ultimately leads to the creation of a brand-new, cohesive and energetic TVB in terms of business development and management," it said.

## Asim Abbasi's *Barzakh* opens at Series Mania

Pakistan series for Zee5 puts South Asian drama originals in the spotlight

When *Barzakh* premiered in the International Panorama category at Series Mania at the weekend, Asian premium drama took one more step forward in a global TV landscape overwhelmingly dominated by Korea.

The only South Asian selection at Series Mania this year, *Barzakh* (aka *Limbo Land*) is competing for Best Series, Director, Actress, Actor, Student Jury and Audience awards at this year's event in the French city of Lille.

Written and directed by U.K./Pakistan filmmaker, Asim Abbasi (*Cake*, *Churails*, *Count Abdulla*), *Barzakh* is a family drama that plays out in a world between life and death, fantasy and reality.

Set in Pakistan's Hunza valley, the series stars Fawad Khan (*Ms. Marvel*), Sanam Saeed (*Cake*) and Salman Shahid in a story of love, loss and reconciliation created by Abbasi as a *Zindagi* original for South Asian streaming service, Zee5.

*Barzakh* revolves around a 76-year old patriarch (played by Salman Shahid) who runs a tourist resort in a mythical mountain valley. When he announces his third marriage to the love of his life – a woman the villagers believe is long dead – he sets in motion events that will change his family and the valley forever.

The series is produced by Shailja Kejriwal, Zee Entertainment Enterprise's chief creative officer for special projects, and Waqas Hassan. The premiere date on Zee5 has not been announced.

In our conversation with Abbasi ahead of Series Mania, which runs to 24 March, the London-based filmmaker spoke about sensory worlds and dream states, shamans and prophecies, universal consciousness, masculine dysfunction and intergenerational trauma.

**You open the series with a quote from the Book of Nowhere – “Respect the sacredness of the earth you were born into, for the story of your soul is inseparable from the magic of your lands”.**



*Barzakh* (above); Asim Abbasi (left) at Series Mania (2023)



**What is the Book of Nowhere?** “*Barzakh* is set in a fictional place, known as the Land of Nowhere. The Book of Nowhere is a prophetic book created regarding these lands.”

**Where did you start creating *Barzakh*?**

“The story was born in Covid. I had done *Churails* and wanted to focus on something smaller and intimate, but set in a world that feels universal and big... a family drama set in a world of magic realism, that speaks about the universe and universal consciousness, rather than about a family and its dysfunction.”

**You shifted gears in a big way from the female-centric focus of *Churails*...** “I wanted women in this show, but I wanted women not to be the focus. I wanted the focus to be on the father and the sons and the dysfunction that comes from masculinity. Women here are almost not human. The women either have powers or are ghosts, and men are the ones who

are real and less in touch with their feelings. The idea of grounding with fathers and sons and inter-generation trauma was important.”

**What story-telling boundaries does *Barzakh* push?**

“It moves away from the ‘hooky’ binge effect. It’s more expansive thematically. I’ve attempted to talk about themes that mainstream shows don’t talk about, and not to keep moving through editing. It has a third of the shots that were in *Churails*. In terms of filmmaking and cinematography, it’s closer to films”.

**Where/how does *Barzakh* challenge you as a creator?**

“It all boils down to how much creative freedom you get from producers and commissioners. Everything I do is a constant learning. I always want to be shifting gears.”

**The full interview with Asim Abbasi & Shailja Kejriwal will appear in ContentAsia’s magazine for MipTV 2023 in April**

## Glenn Chan: translating traditions for new audiences

### Singapore director talks about the return of a TV icon

Singapore director Glenn Chan belongs, he says, to an "in-between generation". On one hand, he is a card-carrying member of the "old school way of doing things". On the other, he is firmly attached to a new world. Much like Oak3 Films' new eight-episode drama series, *Titoudao: Dawn Of A New Stage*, which premiered across Mediacorp platforms this month.

Written by Goh Boon Tek, whose mother inspired the series, *Titoudao: Dawn Of A New Stage* is woven around the theme of conflicting impulses – to stay as we are or move on to new lives.

"That resonates with me," Chan said as the new series premiered to a Singapore theatre full of die-hard fans of the 2020 original *Titoudao*, which became the most-watched English-language series in the Mediacorp's history.

"Singapore is progressing so fast," Chan says. "We could be losing the dialects that give us flavour and identity. We need to remember our roots... to know where we came from," he adds.

Chan directed the first four episodes of the sequel, which he describes as "a little lighter than the first season".

The new season, set from 1969 to the late 1970s, returns Singapore actress Koe Yeet as Chinese opera (wayang) star Ah Chiam, who has been banished by her troupe and is now lost and searching for her place in the world.

Chan's main concern was capturing the "same magic as we had in season one... the world, the colour, the costumes, the tradition".

Challenges for season two were led by the expanded backdrop, introducing *bangsawan* (Malay theatre & early Singapore cinema) for the first time, and absorbing new cast



*Titoudao: Dawn of a New Stage*

members into a well-loved environment. New cast members include Chen Liping in her first English-language drama role.

Chan's focus on authenticity is sharpened by awareness that he's not a wayang expert. "For both seasons, the wayang scenes were really tough," he says. For one, he had to find the sweet spot between showing enough to do wayang justice but not overload new viewers with lengthy, indulgent, shots. "It's a bit of a shame that we can't showcase as much but I can understand why."

Filming in Singapore, where much of the old world atmosphere has given way to shiny modernism, presented physical challenges. "We don't have a lot of the old-world look here anymore," Chan says. The result was a narrower scope. "We couldn't go too wide, so we tried to make up for that in performance," Chan says.

For all the challenges of living up to expectations, Chan was undaunted about returning to the story for a second season. "I didn't know how big season one was going in. I wasn't privy to how much people liked the show. I went in trying to achieve the same magic."

**“ We need to remember our roots... to know where we came from.”**

Chan describes his current project with Vidsee/Mediacorp as a "multi-dimensional youth show" where the protagonist learns that the world doesn't revolve around her. Later this year, he's on to a period project set in the 1930s. "I like to do shows that bring you to a different world and take a break from reality for a while".



## Treb Monteras: "Any creative work is a group effort"

### Award-winning Philippines' director on music, movies and the value of listening

After making hundreds of music videos and commercials, Filipino director Treb Monteras II arrived on the film scene with an emphatic debut feature, *Respeto*. The film swept major awards at the Cinemalaya Film Festival in 2017, including Best Film, going on to screen at more than 30 film festivals around the world. Monteras won the 2022 ContentAsia Award for Best Director for *Still* (2021), a Viu original series featuring young musicians. He is currently showrunner and director of *Dreamwalker* for London/Singapore label, 108 Media.

**You made music videos before going into film. Your series for Viu, *Still*, revolves around music. How did you end up at this intersection between film and music?** "Music has always been a part of my family. I have a sister who is a singer and all our family members sing. If you enter our house, whether you are my friend or a friend of a friend, you are required to sing with us. So I grew up in a very musical environment. When I started high school, I already knew what I wanted to do: make music videos."

**What made you want to explore film?** "I guess you can compare it to being a runner: you won't be content just running 100 metres and might want to try a marathon. I wanted to know if I was able to make films as well."

**What project do you look back most fondly on?** "*Respeto* is closest to my heart because it's where I found my voice as a filmmaker. I also tried to capture what was happening in our country at that time with the war on drugs, and it was one of the first films to do that."

**How would you describe the process of making *Respeto*?** "Very challenging because it took seven years to make it happen. The idea came to me in late-2010, but I didn't know anyone in the film community at that time. The music video industry was a different planet from the film industry. 2010 was a very important year because it was when the rap battle scene in the Philippines really started growing. I've been a lover of hip-hop and R&B and I wanted someone to make a film about this movement. Little did I know that it would be me eventually! In 2015, I was working in television and got bored

with what I was doing so I decided to make a film, which became *Respeto*.

**How do you choose projects to work on?** "I always have ideas and wanted to continue developing projects but the pandemic happened and we're still trying to get things back on track. Streaming platforms are very specific about what they're looking for. It depends from platform to platform, but one thing I like is that they're looking for original and very local stories."

**What do you think is your biggest strength as a director?**

"I listen. I love criticism from people I look up to and respect. I'm not stuck with my initial ideas. I listen to my producer and creative collaborators and what they bring. For me, any creative work is a group effort."

– Sara Merican



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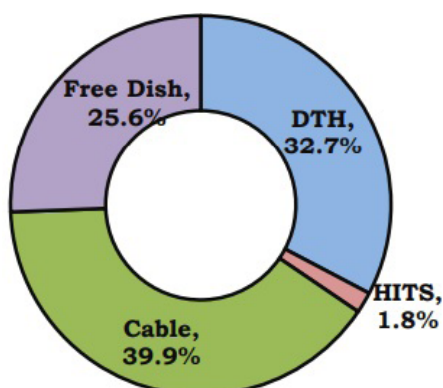
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# India

## In numbers

Population.....	1.41 billion
Households.....	300 million
TV households.....	210 million
TV penetration.....	6.9%
TV viewing individuals.....	892 million
Avg H/H size owning TV.....	4.25
Active DTH TV subs.....	65.58 million
Cable TV paid subs.....	67 million
HITS paid subs.....	3 million
Free TV subs.....	43 million
Pay TV channels.....	353
- Standard definition.....	254
- High definition.....	99
Registered satellite TV channels.....	885
Pay DTH operators.....	4
Free DTH operator.....	1
HITS operator.....	1
Multi-system operators.....	1.748
Cable TV operators.....	81,706
Mobile subs.....	1,142.93m
- Reliance Jio.....	424.52m
- Bharti.....	367.6m
- Vodafone Idea.....	241.32m
- BSNL.....	106.62m
- MTNL.....	2.759m
- Reliance Comm. Group.....	2,784
Internet subscribers.....	850.95m
Broadband subs.....	832.20m
- Reliance Jio Infocomm.....	432.16m
- Bharti Airtel.....	231.46m
- Vodafone Idea.....	123.87m
- BSNL.....	26.35m
- Atria Convergence.....	2.14m
Narrowband subs.....	35.01m

Source: The World Bank (population in 2021), Telecom Regulatory Authority of India/TRAI (TV channels, DTH, internet in Sept 2022; MSOs, mobile, broadband in Dec 2022, cable TV ops in Jan 2022, pay cable TV/HITS, free TV subs, in 2021), BARC India (households, TV, 2020)



TV subscriptions share in India in March 2022. Source: TRAI



Taj: Divided by Blood is a Zee5 Originals Hindi historical drama produced by Contiloe Digital ("Swaraj", "Yashomati Maiyaa Ke Nandlala"). The series, premiered on 3 March 2023, reveals several facets of each Mughal period figure. The show dramatises the rise and collapse of the many Mughal dynasties, displaying both the splendor and the savagery of the empire. Directed by Ron Scalpello, Ajay Singh, Vibhu Puri and Prashant Singh, the 10-part series stars Dharmendra, Naseeruddin Shah, and Rahul Bose.

## Terrestrial FreeTV

### Doordarshan

Established in Sept 1959, Doordarshan (DD) is India's government-funded national broadcaster, transmitting to 92% of the population via terrestrial transmitters. DD also operates the DTH DD Free Dish satellite service (launched 2004), offering both TV and radio channels to 43 million viewers in 2021. DD is overseen by public broadcast corporation, Prasar Bharati, an autonomous body that also looks after All India Radio (AIR).

## Direct To Home (DTH) Satellite

### Airtel Digital TV

Telecommunications provider Bharti Airtel launched DTH satellite platform,

Airtel Digital TV, in Oct 2008. The service offers upwards of 702 channels/services, including 85 HD channels, 57 SVOD services, five international channels and four interactive services to 16 million subscribers (Dec 2022).

### d2h/Dish TV/Zing

The merger of Videocon d2h and Dish TV took effect on 22 March 2018. The two platforms continue to be offered separately. Dish TV India carries more than 750 channels/services, including 31 audio channels and 81 HD channels/services (March 2023). d2h offers 61 HD channels to about 19 million subscribers. Zing launched in Jan 2015 providing regional language DTH services for Tamil viewers in Kerala, West Bengal and Odisha. The group has a distribution network of over 2,700 distributors and around 240,000 dealers that span across 9,300 towns in the country.



# contentasia Screenings



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**DD Free Dish**

State-owned broadcaster, Doordarshan (DD), launched free-TV DTH service, DD Free Dish (formerly DD Direct Plus), in Dec 2004 with 33 channels. The Ku-band platform now offers 167+ TV channels and about 48 radio channels for a one time fee of Rs2,000/US\$24 for the STB and dish antenna. DD Free Dish transmits to 43 million homes (as of March 2022), and is available nationwide.

**Sun Direct TV**

Established in Dec 2007 as an 80:20 JV between India's Maran Group and Malaysia's Astro Group, Sun Direct TV offers about 100 channels in multiple languages. Monthly subscriptions cost from Rs49.15/US\$0.60 for the My FTA pack (Rest of India, 139 channels).

**Tata Play**

Launched in Aug 2006 as a joint-venture between Tata Sons and Disney's TFCF Corporation (formerly 21st Century Fox), Tata Play (formery Tata Sky) offers 600+ TV channels/services and 24 streaming services, including Disney+ Hotstar, SonyLiv, Zee5, Voot Select/Kids, ShemarooMe, SunNxt, Hungama Play, Eros Now, CuriosityStream, EpicOn and MX Player. Tata also operates mobile service Tata Play Mobile, which offers live TV channels and over 5,000 on-demand titles.

**Online/mobile/OTT**

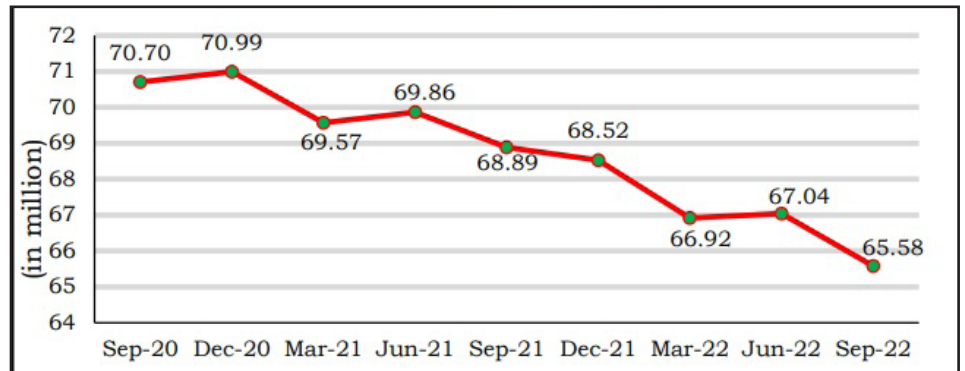
**AltT**

Balaji Telefilms' streaming platform AltT (formerly AltBalaji), launched in April 2017 offering original Indian content. AltT had at least 870,000 subscribers, of which 410,000 were new customers in the 12 months ended Dec 2022. Subscriptions cost Rs1/US\$0.01 daily or Rs300/US\$3.95 a year.

**Aha**

Launched in 2020, Aha is an Indian Telugu/Tamil VOD streaming service providing acquired and original web series and movies for Rs399/US\$4.82 a year.

**India's declining total active DTH subscriber base (Sept 2020-2022)**



Source: TRAI

Aha is owned by Arha Media & Broadcasting, a joint venture by Geetha Arts and My Home Group.

**Airtel Xstream**

Airtel Xstream (launched Sept 2019) is a revamped version of Airtel TV. The Android TV box offers DTH/IPTV Airtel subs 350+ TV channels live streamed and 10,000+ VOD movies/TV titles to two million paid subscribers (June 2022).

**Amazon Prime Video India**

Amazon added video services to its India platform in Dec 2016. Prime Video offers content in Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Punjabi and Bengali, with a strong slate of local originals, including *Farzi*, *The Family Man*, *Mirzapur*, *Made in Heaven* and *Four More Shots Please!*. Prime Video is available in India at no extra cost with Prime membership for Rs1,499/US\$18.13 annually.

**AMC+**

Streaming service AMC+ by AMC Networks launched in India in March 2022. The service is available via Amazon Prime Video Channels, Apple TV Channels and via Apple TV app at Rs199/US\$2.56 a month.

**Den TV+**

Cable TV provider Den Networks launched Den TV+, a mobile TV app extension of Den TV, in Feb 2017. Den TV+ offers 130+ live TV channels, 2,500+ movies and 10,000 hours

of VOD content in Hindi, English and other local languages. Select content is offered free for all Den's TV and broadband subscribers.

**Eros Now**

Established in 2012, global streaming service Eros Now, owned by Eros STX Global Corporation, offers 12,000+ (of which 5,000 are Eros' owned) Hindi, Tamil and regional language films to 80 million paid subscribers across 40 million households (March 2022).

**Disney+ Hotstar**

Novi Digital Entertainment, a subsidiary of Star India, launched ad-based/SVOD platform Hotstar in February 2015 and in April 2020, rebranded as Disney+ Hotstar. Today the streamer carries more than 100,000 hours of TV shows and movies in 10 local languages, along with coverage of sporting events. Annual subscription costs Rs1,499/US\$18 for the Premium (four screens) or Rs899/US\$10.90 for the Super plan (two screens). Monthly is Rs299/US\$3.60 for four screens. Mobile plan costs Rs499/US\$3.60 a year for the Disney+ Hotstar Mobile plan (one device). Selected movies, news and sports content, is available free.

**Discovery+**

Discovery launched its direct-to-consumer streaming app Discovery+ in Mar 2020, offering science, adventure, food and lifestyle programming. The multi-language app costs Rs199/US\$2.40 a

month or Rs399/US\$4.85 a year. Select content is offered for free.

### Hoichoi

Launched in 2017 by SVF Entertainment, global streamer Hoichoi offers Bengali content, including original web series/films and acquired movies on demand as well as Bengali songs. Subscriptions cost Rs599/US\$7.30 a year and Rs899/US\$10.90 a year for the family plan. Select content is offered for free.

### Hungama Play

Hungama Digital Entertainment Media launched Hungama Play in July 2015, offering over 5,000 films in English and local Indian languages; more than 1,500 short movies; 7,500+ hours of kids content; and over 150,000 short-format videos across various categories. Hungama Play also offers original series, including its first Tamil original series, action crime thriller *Maaya Thotta*, about the assassination of a minister under mysterious circumstances amidst the presence of high security. *Maaya Thotta*, released in February 2023, is produced by Roon Media and directed by Nandhakumar Raju.

### JioTV/JioCinema

Reliance Jio Infocomm launched live TV streaming platform JioTV and VOD service JioCinema in Sept 2016 exclusively for its mobile Jio subscribers. JioTV offers upwards of 600 live TV channels, including 100+ HD channels. JioCinema carries over 100,000 hours of on-demand content.

### Lionsgate Play

Lionsgate/Starz Indian launched streaming service Lionsgate Play in Dec 2020, offering Hollywood films and original content for Rs99/US\$1.20 a month or Rs699/US\$8.50 a year. Distribution partners include Vodafone Idea, Bharti Airtel, Jio FTTH, Apple TV+ and Amazon Firestick.

### ManoramaMax

Launched in 2019, ManoramaMax is a global OTT service offering Malayalam programming, including original

content, movies, TV shows, web series and news. Premium subscription costs Rs1,399/US\$16.95 a year. Select content is offered for free.

### MX Player

MX Player, owned by Times Internet Ltd (TIL), a subsidiary of The Times Group, started off as a cross-platform media player developed by South Korea's app publisher J2 Interactive. A majority stake was acquired by Times Internet in June 2018 for Rs1,000 crores/US\$143m. In Oct 2019, mainland China's Tencent paid US\$110m for an undisclosed stake. The freemium platform offers original shows and 50,000+ hours of content.

### Netflix

Netflix in India costs between Rs149/US\$1.80 for the mobile plan and Rs649/US\$7.90 for four HD/UHD screens. Available direct and through partnerships with telecom and broadband players like Airtel and ACT Broadband; and devices such as Vu TVs and OnePlus 7 Pro.

### Paramount+

Paramount+ is scheduled to launch in India in 2023, its second launch in an Asia market following its rollout in South Korea in June 2022. As of 17 March 2023, there has been no official confirmation on launch details.

### SonyLIV

Launched in Jan 2013, ad-based platform SonyLIV offers 40,000+ hours of programming from Sony Entertainment Network-branded channels. The service also offers Bollywood/Hollywood movies, original web series, live sports, live TV channels and music. Premium monthly plan costs Rs299/US\$3.60, a six-month plan is Rs699/US\$8.50 and yearly is Rs999/US\$12.10.

### Spuul

Global streaming service Spuul launched in 2012 targeting the South Asian Diaspora with over 10,000 hours of Hindi/regional language movies. A premium subscription costs Rs99/US\$1.20 a month and yearly is Rs999/US\$12.10.

### Sun NXT

Launched in June 2017, streaming service Sun NXT is owned and operated by Sun TV Network Limited. Sun NXT offers over 50,000 hours of live TV content, movies, originals, kids' content, and music across multiple Indian languages including Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Bengali. Subscription plans start from Rs49/US\$0.60 a month.

### TVFPlay

The Viral Fever (TVF) launched TVF Play in June 2015 to target the youth/teenage demography. TVFPlay offers original and acquired content.

### Vi Movies and TV

Vodafone Idea's OTT service, Vi Movies and TV, offers 470+ live streaming HD/SD TV channels and 8,500+ on demand movies in 13+ languages to all Vodafone Idea subscribers. The service also offers third-party OTT services such as Zee5 and Hungama Play.

### Voot/Voot Select/Voot Kids

Viacom18's Voot (launched May 2016) is an ad-supported VOD platform offering 80,000+ hours of local/international content (July 2022). Voot's SVOD extension is Voot Select (launched Mar 2020) offering originals, movies and live TV channels, across 10 languages. Voot Select costs Rs99/US\$1.20 a month or Rs999/US\$12.10 a year. Voot Kids is another SVOD services of Viacom18 for kids/family, launched in Nov 2019, offering over 13,000 hours of local/int'l children/family titles, 500+ ebooks, 150+ audio stories, and quizzes/games.

### Watcho

Dish TV launched Watcho in April 2019 targeting younger audiences. Offering includes original/local shows, acquired Korean/international content, exclusive plays and live TV channels in Hindi, Kannada and Telugu, as well as UGC, to upwards of 70 million users (March 2023). Watcho costs from Rs49/US\$0.59 a month for the Watcho Mirchi pack (five streaming apps) to Rs299/US\$3.60 a month for the Watcho Max pack (11 streaming apps). Watcho Exclusive

plan, which offers only original content, starts from Rs29/US\$0.35 a month or Rs39/US\$0.47 a month for non-Dish/D2H customers.

### YuppTV

YuppTV, an OTT platform for South-Asian content, offers live TV channels, TV shows, Bollywood/regional movies from India, short films, web series in 17+ national/regional languages. Subscription fees start from Rs49/US\$0.60 a month.

### Zee5

Zee's global OTT freemium platform Zee5 (launched across 190+ countries in Oct 2018), consolidates Zee's former ad-based OZee and subscription-based dittoTV. Zee5's 200,000 hours of on-demand offering includes originals, Indian and int'l movies and TV shows, music, health and lifestyle across 18 languages (English, Hindi, Bengali, Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Marathi, Oriya, Bhojpuri, Gujarati, Punjabi, Malay, Thai, Bahasa, German, Russian, Arabic), as well as live TV channels. Zee5's monthly all access pack costs Rs99/US\$1.20.

## Multi-system Cable Operators

### Asianet Digital

Asianet Satellite Communications (est. 1993) provides digital cable TV and broadband internet in Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Cable subsidiary, Asianet Digital, offers 500+ video channels from Rs32.10/US\$0.40 a month in Kerala. Asianet

Digital, which had about 1.09 million cable TV subscribers, is owned by Rajan Raheja Group, Kerala Communicators Cable, and UCN Cable Network.

### Den Networks

Den Networks (est. July 2007) is a cable TV/fixed line broadband provider to about 4.28 million household subscribers in 500+ cities across 13 states. Owned by Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries (RIL), Den Networks along with Hathway Cable & Datacom and TV18 now falls under Reliance's Network18 Media and Investments.

### Fastway Transmissions

Fastway Transmissions was founded in 2008 in association with Digicable Network India. The aim was to fast track digital migration and to provide value added services. The platform offers 400 SD/HD channels from Rs130/US\$1.60 a month to about 1.9 million cable subscribers in 200+ cities.

### GTPL Hathway

GTPL started operating in 2006 in Gujarat offering CATV services and now serves 1,000+ towns across 15 states, providing CATV and broadband services. GTPL had 8.4 million active CATV subs, of which 7.8 million are paying subs, and 845,000 active broadband subs. GTPL distributes 800+ channels, including 97+ HD (June 2022).

### Hathway Digital

Hathway Cable & Datacom, established in 1995, is a digital cable TV and broadband service provider. The

platform has 5.5m cable TV subs across 700+ cities/towns. Monthly subscriptions starts from Rs130/US\$1.60 for the Maharashtra FTA pack. The platform also has 1.12 million broadband subs and claims 5.7m broadband homes passed across 22 cities (June 2022).

### InDigital/NxtDigital

NxtDigital (NDL), the media arm of Hinduja Group, delivers TV services via digital cable TV InDigital and Headend In The Sky (Hits) platform NxtDigital. InDigital offers 700+ TV channels to 1.315 million subscribers across 100+ cities/town in India in Dec 2021. NxtDigital has about 2.356 million subscribers in 1,500+ cities/towns.

### Siti Networks

Essel Group's multi system operator, Siti Networks (formerly Siti Cable Network/Wire and Wireless India), operates 10 digital head-ends and a fibre/coax network of approx 33,000km. Basic packs start from Rs137.25/US\$1.70 for 31 TV channels. The network had 7.44 million digital subs in Dec 2021.

### Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV (TACTV)

The state-owned platform was incorporated in 2007 (as Arasu Cable TV) to provide affordable cable TV services and to protect the welfare of small operators in India.

Adapted from ContentAsia's  
The Big List 2023

# Be included!

ContentAsia's directory listings are updated continuously. If you would like to be included, send your details to Malena at [malena@contentasia.tv](mailto:malena@contentasia.tv)

## What's on where...

March 2023	21-23	Series Mania Forum 2023	Lille, France + Online
April 2023	13	AVIA: Future of Video India 2023	Mumbai, India
	14-19	Canneseries 2023	Cannes, France
	17-19	Mip TV 2023	Cannes, France
	17-19	Mip Doc 2023	Cannes, France
	17-19	Mip Formats 2023	Cannes, France
	17-19	Mip Drama 2023	Cannes, France
May 2023	4	AVIA: Taiwan in View 2023	Taipei, Taiwan
June 2023	6	AVIA: Satellite Industry Forum 2023	Singapore
	7-9	BroadcastAsia/CommunicAsia 2023	Singapore
	8-10	Telefilm Vietnam 2023	Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
	20-21	AVIA: Asia Video Summit 2023	Hong Kong
	28-30	Content Expo Tokyo 2023	Tokyo, Japan
August 2023	21-23	ContentAsia Summit 2023	Bangkok, Thailand
	24	ContentAsia Awards 2023	Bangkok, Thailand + Streamed
	31	AVIA: Indonesia in View 2023	Jakarta, Indonesia
September 2023	14-17	Gwangju Ace Fair 2023	Gwangju, South Korea
	26-28	APOS 2023	Bali, Indonesia
October 2023	10	AVIA: Thailand in View 2023	Bangkok, Thailand
	14-15	MipJunior 2023	Cannes, France
	16-19	Mipcom 2023	Cannes, France
	25-27	TIFFCOM 2023	
November 2023	7-12	Taiwan Creative Content Fest 2023	Taipei, Taiwan
	22-23	Dubai International Content Market 2023	Madinat Jumeirah, Dubai
December 2023	5	AVIA: Piracy Over the Top 2023	Singapore

# Hindi drama tops Pakistan demand

## The Last of Us and Cocomelon top & tail latest Top 10

Turkish media company ATV joined a slew of Hindi/Indian dramas – including Amazon Prime Video's *Farzi* and *Mirzapur* – in the heads and hearts of Pakistan's viewers for the week of 7-13 March, according to the latest tracking from data science company, Parrot Analytics.

Demand for ATV's long-running drama, *Kurulus: Osman* (the sequel to *Dirilis: Ertugrul*), about the Ottoman Empire, ran second to HBO's *The Last*

*of Us*, which topped the overall list for the week at almost 26x higher demand than the average show in the market.

*The Last of Us* was one of three U.S. titles – including kids' property *Cocomelon* – on the overall TV list for the week.

Amazon Prime Video led demand for digital originals, with Raj & DK's 2023 crime thriller, *Farzi*, about an artist who, disillusioned by India's income inequality, embarks on a counterfeit money scheme.

### Top 10 overall TV shows: Pakistan

Rank	Title	Difference from Market Average
1	<i>The Last Of Us</i>	25.86x
2	<i>Kurulus: Osman</i>	19.49x
3	<i>Naagin (नागनि)</i>	18.99x
4	<i>Yeh Rishta Kya Kehlata Hai (ये रश्मिता क्या कहलाता है)</i>	18.42x
5	<i>Farzi (फर्जी)</i>	16.88x
6	<i>Mirzapur</i>	16x
7	<i>Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah (तारक मेहता का उल्टा चश्मा)</i>	15.93x
8	<i>The Mandalorian</i>	14.17x
9	<i>Baal Veer</i>	13.12x
10	<i>Cocomelon</i>	12.83x

### Top 10 digital originals: Pakistan

Rank	Title	Platform	Difference from Market Average
1	<i>Farzi (फर्जी)</i>	Amazon Prime Video	16.88x
2	<i>Mirzapur</i>	Amazon Prime Video	16x
3	<i>The Mandalorian</i>	Disney+	14.17x
4	<i>Stranger Things</i>	Netflix	11.18x
5	<i>Bebefinn</i>	Netflix	10.41x
6	<i>La Casa De Papel (Money Heist)</i>	Netflix	10.38x
7	<i>Nas Daily</i>	Facebook Watch	10.29x
8	<i>You</i>	Netflix	10.15x
9	<i>The Boys</i>	Amazon Prime Video	9.02x
10	<i>The Family Man</i>	Amazon Prime Video	8.62x

Date range: 7-13 March 2023

The total audience demand being expressed for a title, within a market. Audience demand reflects the desire, engagement and viewership, weighted by importance; so a stream/download is a higher expression of demand than a 'like'/comment. In this dataset we are comparing the demand that exists for each series in this market, against the average TV show. A difference of 1x represents the market average and 10x means a series is ten times more in demand than the average TV show in this market.



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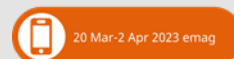
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