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Asia Hours on Netflix Top 10 Fall 17% Blame 2025's "Squid Game" Return for 1H 2026 drop



"Teach You a Lesson"

Viewers around the world spent almost 3.1 billion hours watching Asian TV series on Netflix's global Top 10 in the first half of this year – a drop of 17.1% compared to the first 26 weeks of 2025.

ContentAsia's analysis of Netflix's weekly Non-English Global Top 10 rankings shows 3,076.9 million hours viewed in 2026 compared to 3,712.2 million in 2025 – a decline of 635.3 million hours.

Much of the difference can be traced to the second season of "Squid Game", which pulled the original season back into the global rankings alongside it.

Together, the two seasons were watched for 1,135.4 million hours in the first nine weeks of 2025.

Stripping "Squid Game" out of last year's total, 2026 is more than half a billion hours ahead of 2025. This implies that the rest of the field improved year-on-year.

Leaving the "what ifs" aside, for all its Korean hits in the first half of this year, 2026 had nothing that came even close to "Squid Game".

The top Asian title for the first half of 2026 (weeks 1-26) by total hours viewed was limited series "Teach You a Lesson", with approx 498.9 million hours viewed across its four weeks on the charts.

In week 27 – the first week of the second half of 2026 – "Teach You a Lesson" added 49.9 million hours viewed, giving it a total of just under 549 million hours for its five-week run in the top 10.

The new rankings for the week of 6-12 July 2026 will be released in the U.S. overnight on Tuesday (Wednesday morning Asia time). What We Watched: A Netflix Engagement Report for the first half of the year is expected to be released this week along with the company's Q2 financial earnings.

"Teach You a Lesson" is a 10-episode South Korean action-drama about a government task force – the Educational Rights Protection Bureau – that is created to reform a school system where teacher authority has collapsed and campus violence, bullying and corruption are rampant.

The series released on 5 June, drawing 68.7 million hours for the week of 1-7 June.

Hours viewed spiked sharply for its first full week (8-14 June) on the platform, to 225.8 million hours, an increase of 157.1 million (228.7%), and have declined every week since in a classic front-loaded viewing curve.

Week 25 (15-21 June) came in at 126.2 million hours, a drop of 44% on the previous week; followed in Week 26 (22-28 June) by another 38% drop to 78.2 million hours. Week 27 (29 June-5 July) puts the series 78% down from its week 24 peak.

By total Non-English Top 10 hours viewed in first half 2026, the second top Asian series was Korea's "Can This Love Be Translated?", with 271 million hours across 5 weeks in the Top 10 – about 46% lower than "Teach You a Lesson".

7 Aug Release for Kargil War Series

"The greatest acts of heroism are often driven by duty, sacrifice and humanity" – Sanjay Routray, Producer



Picture: Netflix

"Operation Safed Sagar"

Netflix releases military drama "Operation Safed Sagar" – the untold story of the Indian Air Force's historic operation during the Kargil War – on 7 August.

The series, which will stream on the global line up, was part of Netflix's Feb 2026 India showcase.

Set against the backdrop of the 1999 Kargil War, "Operation Safed Sagar" is about the Golden Arrows Squadron, which defied impossible odds.

Created by Abhijeet Singh Parmar and

Kushal Srivastava, the series is directed by Oni Sen and produced by Matchbox Shots and Feel Good Films.

Talking about the series, Matchbox Shots' Sanjay Routray said "some chapters in our nation's history demand more than remembrance – they deserve to be brought to life with honesty and scale. Operation Safed Sagar is one such story that reminds us that the greatest acts of heroism are often driven by duty, sacrifice, and humanity."

Sony x Google ad AI to new "Kaun Banega Crorepati"

Sony Pictures Networks India has partnered with Google India, adding Gemini to the upcoming season of "Kaun Banega Crorepati" ("KBC" / "Who Wants to be a Millionaire?") as "Your Guide to the Hot Seat". The partnership integrates AI into the classic quiz show format for

the first time.

The two companies are promising a "deeply integrated content collaboration" that brings Google Gemini "into the fabric of the KBC experience [for audiences] across Sony Entertainment Television and Sony LIV".

iWant, PlayTime ink streaming production deal

Philippines programmer ABS-CBN's iWant streaming service is partnering with digital entertainment company PlayTime Entertainment on new streaming originals, including vertical

romcom "Will You Fake Marry Me?", starring JM Ibarra and Fyang Smith, and the upcoming fourth season of reality queer-dating show "Sparks Camp". Commercial terms of the deal were not disclosed.

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Viewership up 130%,
iQiyi says; gains driven by
"long + short" strategy



“Pursuit of Jade”

Chinese streamer iQiyi says total viewership across its international platform surged 130% in the first half of 2026 compared to 1H2025. Premium long-form Chinese dramas and microdramas – the so-called “long + short” approach– are powering global growth.

1H2026 viewership data reveals distinct preferences across key markets.

Demand in Southeast Asia is led by premium Chinese dramas and localised content. Audiences in East Asia are increasingly drawn to fast-paced microdramas. In the Middle East and Latin America, premium long-form dramas remain appealing, with localisation continuing to play an important role in expanding reach.

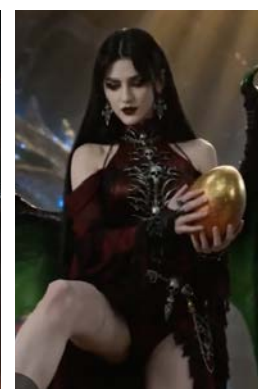
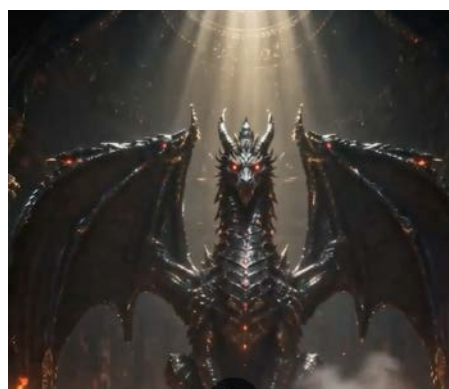
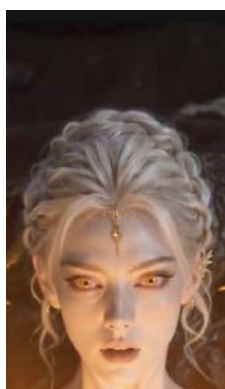
In 1H2026, the top 10 titles on iQiyi International's Chinese drama chart were self-produced, spanning historical epics, contemporary romance and coming-of-age narratives. "Pursuit of Jade" ranked first across all content categories.

Three titles from iQiyi's 2025 annual top 10 Chinese dramas — "Fated Hearts", "The Best Thing" and "Speed and Love" — returned in 1H2026.

Contemporary romance, female empowerment, and class-reversal storylines dominate the top 10 rankings. The top microdrama globally was “Midnight Temptation”, a female-centric series about growth and the pursuit of equal respect.

AI-generated Short Drama Rise

"Doting Snake Lord" wins the week – SocialPeta



“Doting Snake Lord”

AI-generated dramas continued to dominate short-drama rankings for the week of 15-21 June, accounting for 80% of the Top 20 and rapidly expanding across fantasy, romance and female-oriented revenge stories, according to advertising intelligence platform SocialPeta.

Female-oriented emotional dramas remained dominant, with themes such as contract marriages, family conflicts, divorce comebacks and revenge continuing to drive strong audience engagement.

About 32,700 short dramas were in circulation for the week, up approximately 7.61% compared to the previous week, SocialPeta said. Around 9,010 new short dramas were launched, with new releases accounting for approximately 27.53%.

The top drama of the week was AI-generated fantasy that mimics live action centered on rebirth and revenge, “Doting Snake Lord” (NetShort, followed by iDrama & VibeShort).

“Doting Snake Lord” is about Elena, who was framed by her elder sister Veronica alongside her fiancé Grayson. The pair swapped her golden dragon egg behind her back, leading to her wrongful execution. SocialPeta says the title accumulated more than 10.4K unique ad creatives, generating

an estimated 140 million+ impressions.

World Cup-themed marketing gained strong momentum, with local productions leveraging football-inspired settings and celebrity buzz to capture audience attention and boost campaign performance. At #3 was “Offside”, a live-action romance riding FIFA Club World Cup attention. The series pairs a football superstar and a rookie PR professional who enter a three-month marriage contract; he needs a wife to satisfy his family and she wants revenge on her cheating ex.

“The combination of a tried-and-tested romance formula with a trending global event proves to be an effective recipe for attracting audiences,” SocialPeta said in its analysis.

The other three titles on the top 5 were “The Rise of the Lycan Queen” (#2), “Chained to My Bully Stepbrother” (#3) and “Seducing My Hockey Rival” (#4).

AI has surged. SocialPeta/Amo Pictures' "Insight into Global Micro Drama App Marketing for 2026" report says 895 AI animations released ad creatives in 2025. These were dominated by male-oriented titles. "MYTHIC BEASTS, World at My Feet" was ranked second in ad creatives and delivered the highest estimated impressions, about 180 million impressions.



• ON AIR

Asia's content industry, in conversation

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Indra Suharjono



▶ Building a Vertical
Backbone: WenWen Han
on the Global Short
Drama Alliance



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– Filmmaking in the Philip-
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NBCUniversal Global TV Distribution is responsible for licensing and distributing NBCUniversal product to all linear and streaming platforms in North America and 200+ territories internationally. This includes a vast and diverse content portfolio of over 6,500 feature films and 170,000 television episodes, including current and classic titles, unscripted, kids, sports, news, and long-form and short-form programming from Universal Pictures, Focus Features, Universal Television, UCP, Universal International Studios, Sky Studios, Universal Television Alternative Studio, NBC Late Night properties, DreamWorks Animation, Universal Pictures Content Group, Telemundo, and more, as well as locally produced content from around the world.

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Genres

We license film and TV content from all genres.

Original production/co-production

NBCUniversal Formats, a division of Universal Studio Group, handles global sales for scripted & unscripted formats. In 2025, the division continued distribution of Korean formats *My Ranking* (DiTurn) and *Drive-Thru Oke* (Space Rabbit), alongside *The Secret Game Show*, co-produced with ABC Japan. Key launches and returning series across Asia included *Monk India* (JioHotstar), *Million Dollar Listing India* Season 2 (Sony LIV), *The Tonight Show Mongolia* (Central TV), *Don't Ask Me Mongolia* (Central TV), *Hollywood Game Night Thailand* Season 8 (Channel 3) and *SNL Korea* Season 7 (Coupang Play). In 2026, this momentum continues with *Top Chef Mongolia* (NTV), *Hollywood Game Night Mongolia* (Edu TV), *SNL Korea* Season 8 (Coupang Play) and *Top Chef Vietnam* Season 4 (VTV3).

Top shows are...

War

Wannabe barrister Johnny Warren, who, in his desperation to break into the closed world of high-end London law, accepts a deeply compromising and unethical job offer. He joins the team at TAYLOR AND BURN, but in reality, he's secretly spying for rival law firm CATHCARTS, reporting back on their every move as they embark on the most high-profile and expensive celebrity divorce case either company has ever undertaken.

The Five Star Weekend

Hollis Shaw (Jennifer Garner) is a famed cook and best-selling author who suffers a devastating loss. Unable to move forward, the death starts to expose the cracks in Hollis' seemingly picture-perfect life. In an effort to overcome grief and find herself again, Hollis hosts a weekend away at her house on Nantucket with three friends from different stages in her life: her childhood, her 20s, 30s, and one surprise fifth star. Set against a luxurious, coastal backdrop, each of them will mature in ways they could never imagine as boundaries are pushed and secrets are exposed.

Dig

This comedy centers on four women working at an archaeological dig in Greece who are at wildly different crossroads in their lives. When the team uncovers a long-buried secret with the potential to rewrite history, they find themselves at the center of a high-stakes international conspiracy.

Trailer 



Asia focus in 2026

“To ensure NBCUniversal's content reaches audiences in ways that are both locally relevant and commercially effective, we are taking a dual approach: building strong, long-term licensing partnerships with leading platforms across each market, and expanding our portfolio of branded destinations — including Universal+, Studio Universal, Universal TV, Universal Action, and Universal Diva — to deliver a more curated, immersive experience. These branded environments are increasingly important as platforms look to differentiate and deepen engagement, offering a clear identity for our content and a scalable, plug-and-play solution for partners. At its core, our strategy is simple: combine the strength of NBCU's global storytelling with a deep understanding of local audience preferences, delivered through the right mix of partnerships and branded experiences.”

Rajiv Dhawn, SVP, Sales Liaison, Asia



Chris Taylor,
Managing Director,
APAC, TV Distribution
and Int'l Networks & DTC



The Big List Digital Directory 2026

ContentAsia's Big List is the only directory of its kind, fully focused on Asia with lists of the top content providers, services, channels, platforms and people in key markets, including streaming/OTT/online players, free-TV broadcasters, pay-TV platforms, production houses, streaming/broadcast tech, regulators/associations and others.

The directory, distributed monthly, offers video value-adds as part of ContentAsia's Screening Room.

The Big List's enhanced listings appear across multiple platforms, including year-round visibility at ContentAsia's online destination at www.contentasia.tv.

The initial distribution is via email to our full database of over 12,900 verified addresses, with links to the enhanced listings to our full database every two weeks.

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What's on where...

July 2026	20-22	Bangkok International Content Market (BICM) 2026	Bangkok, Thailand
August 2026	19-22	Beijing International Radio, TV & Film Exhibition 2026	Beijing, China
	26-27	ContentAsia LIVE 2026	Bangkok, Thailand
	27	ContentAsia Awards 2026	Bangkok, Thailand
September 2026	10-13	Gwangju Ace Fair 2026	Gwangju, Korea
	10-16	Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) Market 2026	Toronto, Canada
	14-16	BCWW 2026	Seoul, Korea
October 2026	6-15	31st Busan International Film Festival (BIFF) 2026	Busan, Korea
	10-13	Asian Contents & Film Market 2026	Busan, Korea
	10-11	MipJunior 2026	Cannes, France
	12-15	Mipcom 2026	Cannes, France
	21 Oct-1 Nov	37th Singapore International Film Festival (SGIFF) 2026	Singapore
	26 Oct-4 Nov	39th Tokyo International Film Festival 2026	Tokyo, Japan
	28-30 Oct	TIFFCOM Market 2026	Tokyo, Japan
November 2026	6-9	Taiwan Creative Content Fest 2026	Taipei, Taiwan
	10-11	DICM 2026	Madinat Jumeirah, Dubai
	28-30	JAFF Market 2026	Indonesia
December 2026	1	ATF 2026 - ATF Leaders Dialogue	Singapore
	2-4	ATF 2026 - Market & Conference	Singapore
February 2027	12-17	Canneseries 2027	Cannes, France
	21-26	The London TV Screenings 2027	London, U.K.
March 2027	15-18	Hong Kong Filmart 2027	Hong Kong
	19-26	Series Mania Festival 2027	Lille, Hauts-de-France
April 2027	13-15	World Content Market 2027	Moscow, Russia
May 2027	26-28	Busan Content Market 2027	Busan, Korea
June 2027	7-10	Nem Dubrovnik 2027	Croatia
	23-25	20th Content Tokyo 2027	Tokyo, Japan
	29 Jun-1 July	Telefilm Vietnam 2027	Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

* As of 13 July 2026

The full list of events is available at www.contentasia.tv/events

Be included



ContentAsia Screenings & Conversations | ContentAsia Awards, Bangkok (Aug 2026)
MIPCOM, Cannes (Oct 2026) | DICM, Dubai (Nov 2026) | ATF, Singapore (Dec 2026)

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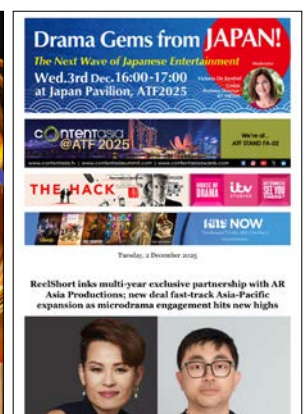
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Pakistan ♥ India's "Mirzapur"

Indian crime thriller tops Parrot Analytics digital demand

"Mirzapur" is clearly the gift that keeps on giving for Amazon; just the release of the trailer for the new season of the Indian crime thriller was enough to generate levels of demand that placed the title at the top of Pakistan's digital originals demand rankings for the week of 22-28 June.

Of all the titles measured by data science platform Parrot Analytics in Pakistan, "Mirzapur" ran fourth only to global blockbusters "House of the Dragon",

"Jujutsu Kaisen" and "Game of Thrones".

The top Pakistani title on the list is "Zanjeerain" at #9. The romantic and social drama series, which airs on HUM TV, explores the emotional struggles and complex relationships of characters caught between rigid traditional customs, family secrets and social pressures.

"Kurulus: Osman" at #10 speaks to the ongoing popularity of Turkish drama in Pakistan.

Top 10 overall TV originals: Pakistan

Rank	Title	Difference from Market Average (x times)
1	House Of The Dragon	39.8
2	Jujutsu Kaisen	31.7
3	Game Of Thrones	29.7
4	Mirzapur	19.1
5	Widow's Bay	17.2
6	One Piece	17.1
7	Euphoria	16.6
8	From	16.5
9	Zanjeerain	16.3
10	Kurulus: Osman	15.8

Top 10 digital originals: Pakistan

Rank	Title	Platform	Difference from Market Average (x times)
1	Mirzapur	Amazon Prime Video	19.1
2	Widow's Bay	Apple TV	17.2
3	Spider-Noir	MGM+	15.7
4	Love Island USA	Peacock	14.3
5	Stranger Things	Netflix	14.0
6	The Boys	Amazon Prime Video	13.1
7	Mighty Little Bheem	Netflix	13.0
8	Daredevil: Born Again	Disney+	13.0
9	Bebefinn	Netflix	12.9
10	The Children Kingdom (El Reino Infantil)	YouTube	12.8

Date range: 22-28 June 2026

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 10 times more in demand than the average TV show in this market



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