



Celebrating Asia's storytellers year round: Welcome to our new dedicated site focusing on ContentAsia Awards' winners

Astro Fights Back

"Wolong: The Mastermind"

Releases 6 Sept

Malaysia's Astro put its new original Chinese series, "Wolong: The Mastermind", on stage this week, gathering a cast from Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia for live appearances, and clearly doing its best to move beyond sports headlines that highlighted prime properties' move to other platforms. The 13-ep drama premieres on 6 Sept.

The full story is on page 3



Media Prima Profit Leaps; Content Sales Shine

Media Prima posted a 9MFY26 profit of RM13.1m, up 89% year-on-year, as cost management offset a 6% revenue decline. Content sales were the quarter's best story.

*The full story is at
www.contentasia.tv*

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Thailand’s Mono Pivots, Originals Expectations Rise

Thai media company Mono Next has put its Mono Originals slate front and centre of its new programming strategy, pairing it with an expensive and aggressive sports play in a clear attempt to stem three consecutive quarters of losses (and nine quarters of losses since Q3 2023). Series upon which the latest ambitions ride include “Begins Necromancer”, “Heart Code”, and “Chasing Love, Chasing Cash”. Films are “Ai Taow Eaw Wan” and “Wukong Jazz”, which released theatrically in March and April and, Mono told investors, garnered positive audience reception. From 1 June, Mono29 will be rebranded Mono Sports.



GMA Network Climbs to #13 Worldwide in April – Tubular Labs

Philippines’ media company, GMA Network’s digital footprint spiked in April, ending the month at #13 – up from #24, the company said citing data from Tubular Labs. GMA generated a total of 11.18 billion video views on its official online properties: 5 billion from Instagram, 3.06 billion from Facebook, 2.40 billion from TikTok, and 719 million from YouTube. GMA said year to date data solidified its position as the highest-ranking media company in South-east Asia under Tubular Labs’ Entertainment and Media category.



9 June Close for 2026 Japan Prize

Submissions for this year’s Japan Prize for educational media close on 9 June. Finalists will be announced on Friday, 7 August. Organised by Japanese public broadcaster NHK, the Japan Prize’s mission is to advance quality educational content around the world. The prize was established in 1965.

Super-charged HOY Sports Kicks Off iCable’s Sports Bosses Promise to “Ignite the Nation”



Athletes Sarah Lee and Rex Tso at HOY Media Network’s broadcast launch for the 20th Asian Games

Hong Kong’s supercharged HOY Media Network is promising to “ignite the entire city with Asian Games fever” in a high-profile campaign centred around its exclusive live rights to the regional event.

The 20th Asian Games (Aichi-Nagoya 2026) will be held in September.

This is the eighth time Cable Broadband Communications has secured exclusive rights for the event in Hong Kong.

During the launch ceremony on Thursday (28 May), Lau Chun, Deputy Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism of the Hong Kong SAR, spoke about continuing to bring glory to Hong Kong.

Kenneth Fok, head of the Hong Kong, China delegation to this Asian Games, reiterated government support for the broadcasting and promotion of major sporting events. “This year’s HOY event is particularly meaningful because it allows the whole city to get involved in the Asian Games fever as soon as possible, uniting the strength of all sectors and promoting the development of sports,” he said.

Tsang On-yip, vice chairman and executive director of Cable & Broadcast Communications Ltd, highlighted the company’s long history in sports broadcasting, and said “we are well aware of the arduous task of exclusively broadcasting international

events” and promised to live up to high expectations with around the clock coverage from multiple angles and across multiple platforms – three television channels (HOY 76, HOY 77 and HOY 78), as well as the HOY mobile application, the HOY official website, and social media platforms.

HOY 76 will air the games live for four hours from 2pm daily. HOY 77 will air either live or replay events for 12 hours from 8.15am. HOY 78 will report on highlights and standout Hong Kong moments. The HOY OTT digital platforms will broadcast some of the matches live and update fans on the latest results by push notification.

Thursday’s event was attended by the group’s senior management and local athletes and celebrities.

One of the highlights announced during the event is Hong Kong fencer Ryan Choi teaming up with singer Phil Lam to perform the theme song for this year’s Asian Games programme.

The lineup for the Asian Games live broadcast includes “Aichi & Nagoya Asian Games Preview”, which runs on Saturdays at 10.30 pm from 4 July to 12 Sept. The 11 episodes will be led by veteran sports presenter Patrick Ng and will cover everything from predictions, new contenders this year, and lighthearted games trivia.

Astro Originals Fight Back

“Wolong: The Mastermind” Set for 6 Sept Release



Picture: ASTRO

From left: Ribbon Wong (黄若熙), Karena Teo (张惠虹), Huang Qiming (黄启铭), Phoebe Huang (董缤毓), Chu Chien-Lan (朱鑑然), Mimi Kung (龔慈恩), Chen Liping (陈莉萍), Melvin Sia (谢佳见), Liu Jiehui (刘界辉), and April Zhou (周雪婷)

Malaysia’s Astro put its new Astro Originals’ Chinese drama series, “Wolong: The Mastermind”, on stage this week, gathering a cast from Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia for live appearances, and clearly doing its best to move beyond sports headlines that highlighted prime properties’ move to other platforms.

The 13-episode premium series premieres on 6 September in a 9.30pm Sunday slot on Astro AEC, with additional distribution on Astro GO, On Demand and streaming platform Sooka.

The new drama is directed by Zhang Shunyuan and stars Hong Kong’s Zhu Jianran in his first Malaysia series, Gong Cien and Singapore’s Chen Liping, along with Hong Kong’s Mimi Kung and Kevin Chu – all filming in Malaysia. Parts of the series were filmed at Hengdian World Studios in China.

The local cast includes Tong Binyu (aka Chris Tong), who also serves as producer, Karena Zhang, Ribbon Huang, Melvin Xie, Huang Qiming, Juztin Liu and April Zhou Xueting.

“Wolong” blends time travel, mythology, and modern business warfare, using the “military strategies of the Three Kingdoms” to explore the power struggles in a modern catering enterprise.

The story unfolds from an unexpected

event during the Battle of Red Cliffs, where brilliant strategist Zhuge Liang (played by Zhu Jianran) unexpectedly travels to the modern era, possessing the body of a young man burdened with debt whose life is spiraling out of control.

From a despised gambler to accidentally entering a large catering group, he uses his wisdom from millennia-old military strategies to break through in workplace and business battles, simultaneously becoming embroiled in power and emotional struggles among the three sisters of the Lin family.

Astro says the location shoots –including real military camps, warships and thatched cottages – were combined with AI special effects to recreate the scale of the Three Kingdoms period.

Zhu Jianran said during the ceremony that the role’s biggest challenge was maintaining the speech speed and temperament of an ancient person in a modern setting.

“The character occasionally speaks classical Chinese and also mixes in some Malaysian-style Mandarin, which is a very special and interesting way of acting,” he said.

Tong Binyu plays Lin Ruoxi, the eldest daughter of the Lin family, with Gong Cien as the powerful chairwoman of the Lin Group. Huang Qiming plays her son.

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ReelShort inks multi-year exclusive partnership with Asia Productions; new deal fast-track expansion in the Asia-Pacific as microdrama engagement hits new highs

U.S. microdrama platform ReelShort has inked a multi-year global partnership with Kong-based AR Asia Productions to fast-track expansion in the Asia-Pacific region.

The agreement comes as ReelShort's top shows, including "True Heiress vs. Bee", hit record views. "True Heiress" has attracted 395.2 million views, while "Found A Homeless Billionaire Husband for Christmas" not far behind at 282.2 million.

"How to Turn a Silver Fox" at 282.2 million.

Cambodia, Vietnam Talks

Cambodia and Vietnam are talking about working more closely on media, digital tech and journalism, according to local reports after ministerial level meetings at the end of May. The talks ranged wide, including foreign information, combatting fake news, and social media governance, as well as tech collaboration involving national radio broadcaster, Voice of Vietnam.



SG, India, ME Boost Kids Digital Footprint in Slew of TwelveP Acquisitions



"Orange Moo Cow"

Platforms and distributors in Singapore, India and the Middle East have picked up YouTube/digital rights to a slate of titles from Abu Dhabi-based kids content specialist and indie distributor, TwelveP Animation.

Titles include pre-school series "Orange Moo Cow" and "Rockoons", both acquired by Singapore-based Powerkids Entertainment as part of a broader deal that already involves co-producing "Adventures of Akira & Mowgli", a spin-off of "The Jungle Book" animated franchise.

Out of India, Yoboho New Media has licensed Rockoons for distribution across its global network of digital channels.

In the Middle East, TwelveP has partnered with Fixitoons to launch "Orange Moo Cow" on YouTube in multiple territories.

Spaceton and TwelveP have also joined forces to co-produce episodes of "Orange Moo Cow" marking local holidays including Eid-al-Adha and Mother's Day.

TwelveP has also sold a bouquet of digital rights – including "Claymotions" – in Latam and Canada.

iWant Gets Steamy with Yen Santos

Philippines Star Picks Vertical Drama for Screen Return



Picture: ABS-CBN

Rafael Rosell, Yen Santos, Angelica Lao and Tony Labrusca

Philippines' actress Yen Santos is back after five years in ABS-CBN's iWant streaming platform's new vertical drama, "Twist of Fate". The series debuts this weekend (30 May).

The new show builds ABS-CBN's vertical video storytelling ambitions, kicked off in April this year by iWant chart topper, "The Chambermaid's Daughter". The debut series is about an overlooked chambermaid whose life changes after a Korean guest hires her as his private translator.

Directed by Andoy Ranay, "Twist of Fate" – billed by ABS-CBN as "steamy" and "sizzling" – also stars Rafael Rosell, Tony Labrusca and Angelica Lao.

Santos, who made her screen debut in a 2010 version of "Big Brother", plays Ginny, a

devoted wife trapped in a toxic and abusive marriage with her successful husband Sam (Rosell), who is having an affair with his seductive colleague Clarissa (Lao). Broken and betrayed, Ginny reconnects with her former flame, Donny (Labrusca), who also happens to be Clarissa's husband. As the two wounded lovers reunite, passion reignites, and a dangerous revenge plot begins to unfold.

iWant is offering the first five episodes for free on its dedicated app as well as on its Facebook page and its YouTube channel. Episodes 6-30 are available exclusively in iWant, which costs PHP35 a month in the Philippines, US\$12.99 a month in the United States, and US\$4.99 a month for the rest of the world.

CONTENTASIA INSIDER

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2THE POINT

with Patrick Frater & Janine Stein

Power Shift Asia's New Media Map with Vivek Couto



GREENLIGHTS & GROUND TRUTHS

ContentAsia's
Conversations with
Asia's Creators



How one Italian festival changed Asian Cinema with Thomas Bertacche & Sabrina Baracetti



Sixty Seconds to Tears: Inside the Microdrama Hustle

Where is the International Appetite for Asian Content? That Depends Where You Look.

The Asia Angle Cannes vs Udine

with Patrick Frater
& Janine Stein



Ding Zhong on Chinese Animation, Mythology and Into the Mortal World



How To Tame a Billion \$\$\$\$ Business with Anne Chan

Nezha 2 The Truths Behind A US\$2.25B Success with Chris Chan



Has He Cracked Streaming in Indonesia? Mark Francis on Vidio's Local Content Strategy





ContentAsia's interview series goes behind the trophies, into the decisions, risks and creative calls that turned shortlisted ideas into ContentAsia Awards' winners. The 2026 Awards ceremony will be held in Bangkok on 27 August.

A Thai Father's Agony Ends: "My Son, There You Are! There You Are," Wilas Thenna Cries After 15-Month Gaza Hostage Ordeal

CNA Correspondent Saksith Saiyasombut takes us behind the scenes of ContentAsia Awards 2025 winner, "They Are Coming Home"

A father waited for more than a year for his son – Thai agricultural worker Pongsak Thenna – to return. Like many others, he had gone to Israel in search of work and higher pay. Instead of a better life, he ended up being taken hostage.

CNA Correspondent episode "They Are Coming Home" puts the spotlight on Thai workers caught up in the war in Gaza and the wait their families endured before they got their sons back. The programme won the **ContentAsia Awards 2025 Best Current Affairs Programme Made in Asia for a Single Market in Asia**.

CNA's Bangkok-based correspondent, Saksith Saiyasombut, talked to us about the programme.

Why did you decide to tell this particular story? This was an unexpected conclusion to a series of reports and documentaries we had done on the Thai hostages in Gaza, so it felt important to see the story through to the end.

How did you choose which of the Thai workers to follow? Over the course of the entire ordeal, we interviewed many families and former hostages. But when the first anniversary (of the Hamas attack on 7 October 2023) approached, only Wilas Thenna was willing to speak to us, because he wanted to keep the memory about his son and his ordeal alive when others could or would not at that particular point in time. Once we learned that his son Pongsak was going to be released in late January 2025, it felt natural to continue and conclude the story with him.

How closely did you follow the CNA Correspondent format – and what leeway, if any – did you take? The show's strength is that there's no rigid format. If a correspondent wants to take over the whole episode, they get the whole 21



CNA Correspondent Saksith Saiyasombut with Wilas Thenna, the father of Thai hostage Pongsak Thenna who was released from Gaza after a 15-month ordeal.

minutes at their disposal. Especially when it's a single topic, that gives you ample time and breathing space to tell your story with the proper context it deserves, but also with stylistic choices to draw the audience in.

There's a larger message about migrant labour and the search for work. Is this something you intended at the outset? As a child of immigrant parents, the idea of leaving your loved ones behind and traveling half-way across the world for a better future is something that deeply resonates with me. In this case, there's an added layer: Thai migrant workers in Israel are not only exposed to hard manual labour, but also lethal danger, as we saw on 7 October 2023. It was the deadliest single incident involving Thais abroad in recent memory. And yet, the reaction here in Thailand was largely one of surprise that so many Thais were even there. That disconnect was the spark for me to shine a spotlight on this issue.

Where did you decide to stop the story and why? Any human interest stories creates a big wave of media attention. But we deliberately took a different approach: when the first Thai hostages returned (in November 2024), we waited a week or two before we visited them at home to give them space to breathe and process.

With this CNA Correspondent episode, we made the conscious decision not to follow the Pongsak or any other hostages home immediately upon their return.

We already had everything we wanted to tell the story by that point and we didn't need to be part of the media circus that usually happens with these stories.

Adapted from the original version of this article, published on ContentAsia's dedicated Awards platform on 15 May 2026. Access ContentAsia Awards Focus here



DW is Germany's international broadcaster. As an independent media outlet, we provide unbiased news and information around the world so that people can form their own opinions. DW's coverage of current events is fact-based, with regionally relevant and dialog-oriented content in 32 languages on the focus topics of freedom and human rights, technology and innovation, health, education, science and environmental protection as well as German and European culture. DW's TV and online services generate over 337 million users every week.



Deutsche Welle
Kurt-Schumacher-Strasse 3,
53113, Bonn, Germany
T: +49.228.429 - 0
E: info@dw.com
W: www.dw.com/en
<https://corporate.dw.com/en>

Who's who...

Daniel Vogelgesang
Head of Distribution Asia/Australia
E: Daniel.vogelgesang@dw.com

Trends & Outlook 2026

“There are several key trends shaping Asia this year. Short-form and vertical video continue to dominate across social and mobile platforms, while local production and regional storytelling grow in importance. DW blends international perspectives with local needs. Collaboration with trusted distribution partners across Asia remains essential to building deeper audience connections and driving sustainable growth.”

Content

DW content is distributed via its own platforms including TV channels, social media and the DW website as well as globally by around 3,000 distribution partners, regional and local media.

Our primary focus is on leveraging social platforms to reach our target audience of young urban, educated, globally engaged adults aged 14-40, including professionals, decision-makers, academics, students, and internationally minded households seeking trusted European and international information.

DW's Asia distribution strategy is strengthened by extensive language customization and strong regional key partnerships in countries like Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam, China and South Asia.

Most content is sourced from DW's global newsroom, documentary units, international correspondents, and Asia-focused regional editorial teams. For 2026, the focus remains daily news, current affairs, documentaries, science, business, culture and lifestyle topics plus continued local original digital production in South and Southeast Asia.



Asia focus in 2026

“Our primary focus in Asia in 2026 is to leverage DW's strengths in international and local storytelling, combining both with our trusted brand. We work with strong regional distribution partners to reach the right audiences effectively. At the same time, we emphasize dialogue and reflect diverse perspectives, including an authentic approach to women's stories. Our aim is to bring global stories to life in locally relevant ways.”

Daniel Vogelgesang, Head of Distribution Asia/Australia





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...

June 2026	8-11	Nem Dubrovnik 2026	Croatia
	10-12	20th Busan Content Market 2026	Busan, Korea
	16-18	APOS 2026	Bali, Indonesia
	17-19	19th Content Tokyo 2026	Tokyo, Japan
	22-26	31st Shanghai TV Festival 2026	Shanghai, China
	22-24	37th Sunny Side of the Doc 2026	La Rochelle, France
	23-24	DW Global Media Forum 2026	Bonn, Germany
	24-26	Telefilm Vietnam 2026	Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
28 June-4 July	4th Da Nang Asian Film Festival 2026	Da Nang, Vietnam	
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 Screenings & Conversations 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	21-26	The London TV Screenings 2027	London, U.K.
March 2027	19-26	Series Mania Festival 2027	Lille, Hauts-de-France
April 2027	13-15	World Content Market 2027	Moscow, Russia

* As of 28 May 2026

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

Prime Video Sweeps Vietnam Digital

“The Boys” Tops Overall Demand – Parrot Analytics

Prime Video’s “The Boys” dominates both digital and overall demand in Vietnam, ending the week to 17 May more than five points clear of its nearest competitor, according to Parrot Analytics.

But the two sets of rankings – overall and digital – tell very different stories about the country’s taste for the programmes measured in the market.

The digital originals top 10 is almost entirely Western live-action – Prime Video

alone places four titles (“The Boys”, “Invincible”, “Fallout”, “Gen V”), with Netflix and Disney+ filling most of the remainder.

The lone outlier is Canadian/Crave BL series “Heated Rivalry” (carried on HBO Max in Asia) at #9, and the Korean title “Can This Love Be Translated?” at #10 on Netflix – the only Asian-language title on the digital top 10. The overall TV chart flips the balance, where anime dominates led by “Jujutsu Kaisen”.

Top 10 overall TV originals: Vietnam

Rank	Title	Difference from Market Average (x times)
1	<i>The Boys</i>	33.4
2	<i>Jujutsu Kaisen</i>	28.2
3	<i>Attack On Titan</i>	23.1
4	<i>Kamen Rider Zetz</i>	21.2
5	<i>Perfect Crown</i>	21.1
6	<i>Invincible</i>	20.1
7	<i>Frieren: Beyond Journey's End</i>	19.2
8	<i>My Hero Academia</i>	19.1
9	<i>Detective Conan</i>	17.8
10	<i>Phineas And Ferb</i>	17.1

Top 10 digital originals: Vietnam

Rank	Title	Platform	Difference from Market Average (x times)
1	<i>The Boys</i>	Amazon Prime Video	33.4
2	<i>Invincible</i>	Amazon Prime Video	20.1
3	<i>Stranger Things</i>	Netflix	16.8
4	<i>Daredevil: Born Again</i>	Disney+	15.1
5	<i>Monarch: Legacy Of Monsters</i>	Apple TV+	14.5
6	<i>Arcane</i>	Netflix	12.3
7	<i>Fallout</i>	Amazon Prime Video	12.3
8	<i>Gen V</i>	Amazon Prime Video	12.1
9	<i>Heated Rivalry</i>	crave	11.8
10	<i>Can This Love Be Translated?</i>	Netflix	11.6

Date range: 11-17 May 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



Editorial Director

Janine Stein

janine@contentasia.tv

Events Manager

CJ Yong

cj@contentasia.tv

ContentAsia Marketing & Awards

Heather Berger

awards@contentasia.tv

Design

Rae Yong

Research

Rhealyn Rigodon

iyah@contentasia.tv

Associate Publisher

(Americas, Europe) and VP, International Business Development

Leah Gordon

leah@contentasia.tv

Assistant Publisher

(Asia/Middle East)

Malena Amzah

malena@contentasia.tv

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