



## NT ยื่น 1.6 ล้านรายชื่อบริษัทไม่ดับหลังหมดใบอนุญาตปี 68

นายเสกสรรค์ มิตรเกษม รองกรรมการผู้จัดการใหญ่สายงานการตลาดและผลิตภัณฑ์ บมจ.โทรคมนาคมแห่งชาติ หรือ NT เปิดเผยว่า ยื่นชื่อบริษัทบนโครงข่ายเดิม (850 MHz) จำนวน 1.6 ล้านเลขหมาย สามารถใช้บริการได้ต่อเนื่องจนหมดอายุใบอนุญาต พร้อมจัดทำแผนคุ้มครองเพื่อประโยชน์ลูกค้าสูงสุดตามประกาศ กสทช. เพื่อไม่ให้เกิดผลกระทบต่อผู้ใช้บริการ โดย NT ถือครองคลื่น 850 MHz, 2100 MHz และ 2300 MHz ซึ่งจะหมดอายุในเดือน ส.ค.68

# UNLOCKING GIRLS' LOVE

Censorship and limited support still plague a genre that can contribute to the country's economic growth

STORY:  
**PORAMET TANGSATHAPORN**

**W**hile the Boys' Love genre has grown in popularity, received support and become an important driver for Thai economic growth, Girls' Love (GL) still lacks support to realise its full potential and create awareness about the diversity of love.

Speaking after the recent "Girls Talks 2024: Girls' Love Series And Novel" forum organised by Girl x Girl Thailand, the production team told *Life* how GL series have been doing in Thailand and why the genre should receive more support.

## MARRIAGE EQUALITY BILL AND GL

Patraputrasorn Warissaraphuricha, the screenwriter of *Gap: The Series* and *My Marvellous Dream Is You*, said the perception of GL in Thailand has been positive but only a small group of people watch the genre. Still, after the recent Marriage Equality Bill passed in the Senate and was published in the

Royal Gazette, she has seen an uptick in people watching shows.

"Surprisingly, the audience has become more diverse than before. In the past, it was only girls who loved girl groups, but [after the bill passed], heterosexual males, gay men and other genders and sexualities are enjoying this genre. I think it is because if there is a law supporting homosexual relationships, it will help people open their heart to accept diversity," Patraputrasorn explained.

Likewise, Patchaya Varadee, the director of *Unlock Your Love*, contended with Patraputrasorn that the Bill's passing has contributed to an increase in viewership, which will help the GL industry grow.

"Even our parent's generation has started to open their hearts towards the content as they realise that the Marriage Equality Bill is about to be used. I think the bill will contribute to the growth of the GL industry because after the bill passed, many LGBTI have come out of the closet, allowing them to show their



*The Secret Of Us.*

PHOTOS: ANDR.COM



PHOTO: REUTERS

The Marriage Equality Bill in Thailand has increased interest for Girls' Love.

true potential [of being themselves],” she added.

**CENSORSHIP**

While the GL genre is well-received, since it contains sexual content, censorship cuts out many love scenes and makes the content incomplete. Sometimes, those cuts are necessary to help normalise homosexual relationships.

“Many scenes are cut or downplayed, but they are necessary. Love scenes are censored a lot even though the content filmed is actually being filtered by the

team already. Those scenes reflect the beauty of love. If we use an artistic viewpoint, those scenes make the whole piece complete. However, when the series are broadcast on normal channels, the content is being deleted and it makes these art pieces incomplete. The regulations are destroying the beauty of art,” Patraputrasorn said.

Therefore, many film producers broadcast the uncut versions on platforms like YouTube to ensure viewers can see the complete art, and the beauty and normalcy of homosexual love. Plus, the uncut versions get a better reception than the edited versions on public TV.

For example, one episode of *Gap: The Series* by Patraputrasorn received around 100 million views on YouTube.

“This kind of response is better than what we see on social media,” Patraputrasorn added.

Likewise, Patchaya’s *Lucky My Love Mini Series* on YouTube has received between 2.5 million to 2.7 million views for each episode.

**FINANCIAL PROBLEMS**

Although GL has started to receive good feedback, it is labelled 18+ by the National Broadcasting and Telecom-

munication Commission, via the TV Broadcasting Guide B.E. 2556.

According to the 2556 Guide, 18+ programmes may contain inappropriate images, sounds, behaviour, violence, sex and language. Those under 18 require guidance to watch such content. And 18+ programmes can only be broadcast from 10pm to 5am.

Sukhaseth Losiri, director of *I’m Your Moon The Series*, explained that these regulations place financial burden on filmmakers at small production houses who rely on advertisements, as there are only a few businesses who will sponsor them when their content is only allowed to be broadcast after 10pm.

“When we are told to screen after 10pm, sponsorship will be minimal because less people watch TV after that. Under such circumstances, many producers cough blood because they have high production costs and the timeslot is not often preferred by ad sponsors,” he added.

Many GL series are made by small production houses, so producers use their own money to film, and the cost of production is higher than what they can bear.

For example, Sukhaseth’s series is a historical drama about forbidden



REGULATIONS ARE DESTROYING THE BEAUTY OF ART



**Unlock Your Love.**



**Lucky My Love Mini Series.**

homosexual love among Thai elites. He needed a palace to film in for authenticity. But without any ad sponsorship, his team was required to pay 20,000 baht daily. Plus, as his film was to be broadcast on public television, his team needed to buy a broadcasting timeslot which added to the financial burden.

As a result, Sukhaseth is calling for support from the state since the GL genre has strong potential and could be a medium to promote Thailand's soft power.

"If the state could partially support us by sponsoring the shooting locations, that would be enough to let us produce a series smoothly. If supported, I believe there will be many film producers coming up with good content," he said.

**WHAT SHOULD BE DONE**

Tunyawaj Kamolwongwat, a People's Party MP, said there has been a decline in viewership for public TV, especially dramas.

The Thai Public Broadcast Service has reported a decrease in the popu-

larity of TV dramas, which has made many broadcasting agencies reduce their budget and production volume. As a result of budget cuts, TV stars and media staff face unemployment.

Tunyawaj added that several limitations in Thai media like dependency on advertisement and restrictions to protect culture and morality by the National Broadcasting and Telecommunication Commission have made media producers extremely mindful of producing content that avoids social conflict.

However, such restrictions are contrast to the global market trend as subscription platforms like Netflix, HBO and Amazon Prime Video are growing.

According to the Ampere Analysis' 2023 report, the subscription media market is facing drastic changes, and Netflix's global market share of around 18-19% is now under pressure from HBO and Amazon Prime Video. Netflix's recent decrease in market share shows the potential of growth for streaming platforms and the capacity to attract viewers.

In 2023, the global value of the sub-

scription media market grew to around US\$300 billion.

Tanyawaj pointed out that new platforms can attract viewers because they broadcast specific content with no advertisements, and there is a flexibility in creating content without having to worry about state restrictions. This provides more space for media producers to create challenging content and new experiences among viewers.

"There are some Thai movies that are successful on platforms like Netflix, such as *Bad Genius* and *Thai Baan The Series*. These are good examples of promoting Thai culture around the world, and the government should support such projects and seek further international collaborations," Tanyawaj said.

"Additionally, there should be a study on content preference among the international markets and their perception of Thai movies. Also, new technologies should be used to increase Thai media capacity to compete in the international market."