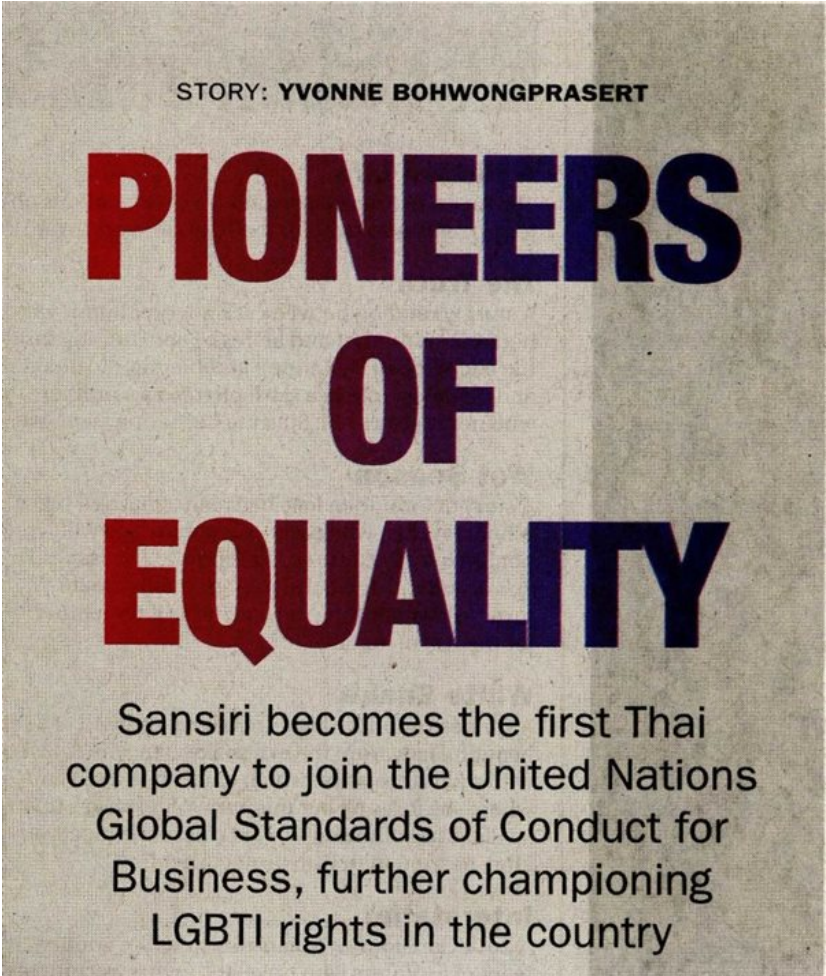
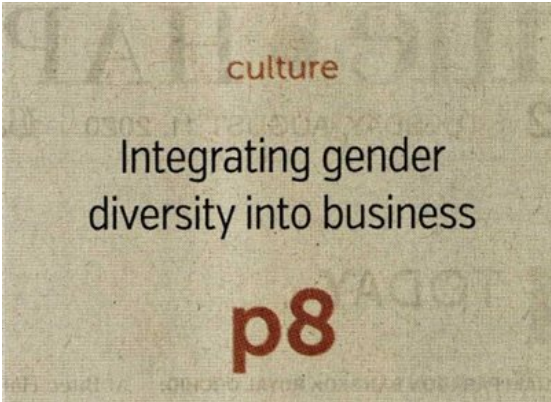




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Arthid Nanthawithaya, chief executive officer of Siam Commercial Bangkok, left, and Srettha Thavisin, right, president of Sansiri, have joined hands to provide equal-opportunity joint home loans to LGBTI couples.

Diversity and equality — a UN standard of conduct for businesses to eliminate discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people — are among the key initiatives by which Srettha Thavisin, president of Sansiri, one of Thailand's leading property developers, has managed his business since the company's inception 36 years ago.

Besides gender-neutral restrooms and zero tolerance for LGBTI bullying, employees are encouraged to be themselves. The company also has an active training programme on diversity and inclusion for company employees, managerial staff, sales and on-site personnel. Moreover, Sansiri provides its employees with equal opportunities and follows non-discriminatory practices that are applied to all levels of engagement with customers, partners, third party suppliers, vendors and stakeholders.

While Sansiri is well-grounded in the principle of LGBTI rights and inclusion, it was only recently that the business became the first Thai company to ink their adherence to the UN Global LGBTI Standard of Conduct for Business, further championing diversity and inclusion of the LGBTI community in the country.

By doing so, they have joined the ranks of 200 other global companies — a few of which include the likes of Google and Netflix — which are also committed to this cause.

During Pride Month in June, Sansiri's "Everyone Is Family" awareness campaign showcased their commitment to the cause not just with inspiring art installations and inclusive corporate culture felt and observed at the workplace, but also by joining hands with Siam Commercial Bank (SCB) and a string of other banks to offer all types of home loan options to Sansiri's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex clientele.



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“For me, it is more about sustainability and being aware of what is right. We care about people and don’t see them just as clients. Similarly, we value our employees and the society we live in. This is the belief that I follow.”

Offering an example of what he meant, he continued: “Due to Covid-19 and the impact it has made on businesses, I didn’t need to keep 4,000 staff members. Yet, there have been no layoffs or salary cuts during this time. I cannot guarantee how long I can do this, but for the foreseeable future we have no plans to let people go. I have a personal mission to keep all my staff. Over the past decade, we have made decent returns from sales. If a medium-to-large-sized corporation like ours can retain the staff we have during rough times for at least 18 months and if everyone else had the same philosophy as us, I believe the economy would rebound. In fact, it would be even better than before.

“I have four to five pillars to balance as the company’s president, which includes managing shareholder returns and the morale of staff, clients and society. A lot hinges on how well you can balance these pillars. During the good times, the shareholders’ returns were great while employee benefits were also high on the list, but looking after the

environment was a low priority because society did not care as much. Different times lead to different priorities under each pillar.”

When asked how the LGBTI community ties into his business philosophy, Srettha said that the need to support people is integral no matter their sexual orientation because the gender people have subscribed to has nothing to do with their work performance.



Sansiri’s LGBTI initiatives
are geared towards
making people feel in
equal standing with the
rest of their peers

“I believe that if we support people for who they are, they will be able to generate a far better outcome in their work than if we did not. I believe the world would be a better place if people in the [LGBTI] community could voice their grievances over issues of bullying and mistreatment in an environment they feel safe. We have an official committee that just looks after this with an anonymous whistleblower channel and an independent and fair investigating committee.”

Sansiri’s LGBTI initiatives are geared towards making people feel included and in equal standing with the rest of



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Thai LGBTI couples who are looking to co-borrow for a home with their spouse/partner can do so now with comfort.

their peers. To ascertain that everyone is on the same page, the company sent an online sign-up form to its 4,000 staff to show their commitment to eliminate discrimination towards LGBTI staff.

To further practise what they preach, for the entire month of Pride, Sansiri added the vivid colour scheme of the LGBTI rainbow flag to their company's iconic navy-blue logo, as well as planned online activities and social media campaigns to raise awareness in all its online and digital communication channels both internally and externally.

As for himself, Srettha has made a concentrated effort to cut vocabulary from his conversations deemed inappropriate to LGBTI people, explaining: "Sometimes there are phrases in Thai that are derogatory to individuals of different gender and sexual orientation. Over the years, I have become more aware of this and have decided to not use such language in my conversation."

On Sansiri's latest commitment to financial equality for all, their initiative to make home ownership and starting a family more accessible to LGBTI customers by partnering with SCB, Kasikornbank, Government Savings Bank and United Overseas Bank, will help pave the way for partners and life couples to be able to secure a joint home mortgage loan more smoothly, Srettha said.

Moreover, Sansiri is making it financially more conducive for LGBTI couples to own their own home during these tough and trying times by paying their mortgage for up to 24 months.

"We hope by doing what we do, other private institutions will also jump on the bandwagon and follow suit. What Sansiri has been doing so far with the LGBTI community has helped to generate better staff performance. There is more to gain than lose by supporting the UN Global LGBTI Standards of Conduct for Businesses."



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Sansiri headquarters
offers its staff and visitors
gender-neutral restrooms.

