

FOOTBALL

World Cup broadcast in limbo

POST REPORTERS

The National Broadcasting and Telecommunication Commission (NBTC) said it is waiting for a budget report from the Sports Authority of Thailand (SAT) about purchasing the rights to broadcast the 2022 Fifa World Cup, leaving the domestic broadcasting of the event in doubt.

Trairat Viriyasirikul, acting secretary-general of the NBTC, said the commission last week asked the SAT to send the needed budget documents.

He said if they are not given to the NBTC board members by Wednesday, the commission may need to hold an urgent meeting to consider purchasing the broadcasting rights as the event starts on Nov 20.

Mr Trairat said the NBTC is only

acting as the provider of the budget for the broadcasting rights. The period of negotiation with Fifa World Cup representatives will be up to the SAT, he said.

SAT governor Kongsak Yodmanee, however, has said that the required budget documents were sent to the NBTC on Thursday.

An NBTC source earlier told Isra News Agency that during an NBTC board meeting on Oct 28, Sarana Boonbaichaiyapruk, chairman of the board, proposed drawing 1.6 billion baht from the NBTC's research and development fund to buy the broadcasting rights.

Mr Kongsak said that after gaining the budget approval, SAT and NBTC would need to sign an MoU before

**FIFA WORLD CUP
Qatar 2022**

purchasing the broadcasting rights.

He said arrangements would be finished before the first day of the tournament.

Mr Kongsak added that the conditions released by the NBTC would determine how many public channels would be able to broadcast the matches.

Local fans have expressed concern that no broadcasters in Thailand have shown sufficient interest in securing the rights to air the matches as the event nears.

The 2022 World Cup in Qatar will be held from Nov 20 until Dec 18, with some 32 teams contesting a total of 64 matches.



World Cup follies

Re: "Plan to air World Cup now in doubt", (BP, Nov 3).

I was sick to learn of the government's plan to draw 1.6 billion baht from the 2 billion baht of NBTC's research and development fund so to purchase the right to broadcast the 2022 Fifa World Cup. Fortunately, some NBTC board members disagree with the plan.

I don't see the schedule of the Thai football team playing at the tournament [being worth the] cost of such large sums of taxpayers' money. It will be more rational if the spending were to broadcast a women's volleyball tournament elsewhere in which Thai girls will participate. What NBTC should do is delist the Fifa World Cup tournament broadcasting from "MUST HAVE" programming and let the private sector compete for the broadcasting rights and use the advertising money to fund it.

JAMES DEBENTURES

Sort out this mess

Re: "Rail station in limbo", (Editorial, Nov 3).

Again a Thai government not only lacks vision but doesn't consult the public on what we who elected it would like it to do. Now, Bang Sue rail station has been opened — without knowing what to do with Hua Lumphong. This should have been thoroughly discussed with the public years ago. Instead, we're faced with a mess like when we opened Suvarnabhumi airport without knowing what to do with Don Mueang, and the decision flipped back and forth and back again.

We need in-depth public input quickly. The SRT is not impartial in this matter. Rather, it should hire an independent agency with credible expertise in sampling to do the job — like Dusit or Nida polls. It should not be done through social media because many potential respondents may not use the medium chosen; rather, in-person or telephone sampling would be preferable.

BURIN KANTABUTRA

Feigned blindness?

Re: "No gambling dens in city: police chief", (BP, Nov 2).



The inner area of Hua Lamphong Station pictured on Dec 5, 2021. The State Railway of Thailand plans to develop the station's depot into a commercial area. APINUN CHONMAHATRAKOOOL

Could anything be more reassuring? We hear direct from MPB commissioner Pol Lt Gen Thiti Saengsawang that "definitely there are no gambling clubs operating currently in Bangkok", echoing national police chief Pol Gen Damrongsak Kittiprapas, who "insisted there are no gambling dens in the capital". The courage it takes to expose such critical thinking skills in public can only impress.

The Royal Thai Police are perfectly ignorant of any gambling dens in Bangkok; it does not follow that such dens are not in fact common in Bangkok, merely that for some reason the RTP does not know that. Lest anyone is troubled for any reason by my choice of Xi Jinping as the useful example, replace him with any preferred figure equally revered; exactly the same truth will hold: the perfect absence of evidence of corruption or other abuses cannot logically entail that there is no such ugliness hiding under the suave, ruthlessly managed public façade, no matter how immaculately dressed in rich robes, vestments, or other gaudy uniforms.

FELIX QUI

Going global

Re: "It's time to mainstream the AOIP", (Opinion, Nov 1).

In an instructive article, senior columnist Kavi Chongkittavorna adds to the mantra of Asean's centrality, its intention to gear the Asean Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) to "functional cooperation that would promote openness and inclusivity". What strikes is that — neither in this article nor that of Aziz Durrani Resetting Asean's climate agenda in the same BP issue — attention is given to the position of Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) and the groundbreaking initiative of Vanuatu, with various Pacific students' groups, to request an Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJAO) on climate justice.

The ICJAO campaign is supported by a growing group of UN member states. A vote in the UN General Assembly is needed for a request to the International Court of Justice. An Advisory Opinion is not binding but has deep authority. Deliberations of the ICJ may lift policies on environmental governance like the marine territories-based IPOI (Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative) of India, as well as the expanded Asean Maritime Forum, both mentioned by Khun Kavi, beyond a clas-

sical territorial and national sovereignty-based approach to one which addresses the governance of the "global commons".

To explore non-territorial and intersectional approaches to the governance of "global public goods", a High-Level Advisory Board (HLAB) on effective multilateralism has been set up by UN Sec-Gen António Guterres in the framework of his ambitious Our Common Agenda. Whereas the one-year mandate of the HLAB is limited vis-a-vis de enormous challenges of law and governance innovation towards a new 21st-century world order, some core issues may be articulated by the International Court of Justice in a longer-term perspective of an Advisory Opinion on climate justice. One of the innovations could be the application of "public trusteeship" to governance of the global commons and global public goods.

Thailand and Asean will hopefully respond to a recent hint from EU Ambassador David Daly who wrote in *BP* on June 17; "Thailand, and indeed other countries in the region, have played an important role in this process" towards strengthening multilateralism; "let us recall that the negotiation of the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea started under the presidency of Thailand's Foreign Minister HRH Prince Wan Waithayakon who also became president of the UN General Assembly in 1956". Trusteeship of the global commons, and indeed "Earth trusteeship" could be fertile concepts in a shift from "human security" to "eco-peace" in a framework of Asean's "functional cooperation that would promote openness and inclusivity".

HANS VAN WILLENSWAARD

Be kind, not cruel

Re: "Most disagree with drug users being legally treated as 'sick persons': poll," (*BP*, Oct 16).

Half of Thai adults, in a recent poll, believe recreational drug users should be imprisoned for decades, because those users may wind up being dealers. That's like saying all mothers who have ever breastfed a baby should be imprisoned because all drug dealers were breastfed when babies. Or perhaps it's more akin to saying, anyone who drinks a beer should be imprisoned for 18 years, because that person may wind up being an alcoholic drink dealer, and we

all know alcohol is the most dangerous drug causing most wife beatings, killings, and road accidents.

Does Buddhism teach anything about compassion or forgiveness for mistakes? Judging from how Thai leaders (nearly all of whom call themselves Buddhist) treat youngsters who may have popped one pill and gone out to a disco to dance — you'd think Buddhism teaches non-forgiveness. Indeed, those supposedly Buddhist leaders seem to be competing to see who can be the most draconian in punishing a young person who perhaps popped a speed pill to study for a school exam, or a truck driver who doesn't want to fall asleep at the wheel on a long haul drive. I know teenagers who are imprisoned and forced to sleep on concrete floors with 1 thin blanket, within a 32cm wide space every night for 15 to 30 years. The middle halves of their lives are ruined and their families destroyed. I thought Buddhism had something to do with compassion.

NEK NESTREBLA

No mention of coal

Re: "China sets example by blazing green transition trail", (*Business*, Oct 28).

Started reading the comments article and stopped to check the author. I guess, as the president of the Belt and Road Initiative Green Development, Erik Solheim can write an advertisement for China on conservation. But, Solheim makes no mention of the 13 coal-powered power plants China built this year. Shame on you, the *Post*, for publishing this. Kudos to M. Setter for getting us back to business at hand instead of puzzle reviews.

CHERYL HALL

Misguided priorities

Re: "Kids have suffered", (*PostBag*, Nov 3).

I am in total agreement with Jason Jellison. It is a crime against humanity that because of the Covid restrictions the reading skills of Thai school children have suffered dramatically. And in America, there has been a dramatic drop in the math scores of school children. In Nevada, there were children who even committed suicide during the lockdown.

The liberal Democrats and the teacher's unions in America couldn't care less about the children. All they wanted was to get them vaccinated instead of edu-

cated. They also don't care that in that age group the risks of the vaccines far outweigh any hypothetical benefits.

ERIC BAHRT

Vanishing comics

Can't believe in one day, this newspaper does away with four of its comics: *Frank & Ernest*, *Wumbo*, *Insanity Streak*, and *Animal Crackers*. No notice nor apology. Only six comic strips left. Years ago, this newspaper eliminated the *Beetle Bailey* comic that I also very much enjoyed. At some point soon, even long-term subscribers will cancel as the daily features they like disappear.

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Alienating change

You have successfully managed to alienate a majority of readers who enjoy the comics section — the most important part of *Bangkok Post*.

RAKESH SODHIA