

# Voice TV back on air after admin court vetos blackout

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»Voice TV is back on air after the Central Administrative Court issued an injunction against the broadcasting regulator's 15-day blackout order pending a trial.

The National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) on Wednesday ordered the company to stop its TV broadcasts from midnight the same day, using its power under the Broadcasting Act.

The regulator said two of its news programmes had seditious and confusing content. It claimed complaints had been filed regularly against Voice TV and the station was found to have violated the law four times in 2015, 11 times in 2016, 10 times in 2017 and nine times in 2018. Despite numerous warnings, the programmes continued to break the law, leading to the suspension, the NBTC said.

The NBTC, however, did not reveal which content it found illegal, citing the need to protect the operator. As a digital media company, Voice TV was able to run all of its programmes normally via

Facebook Live since the order covered only its digital TV operation.

Two days after the blackout, the company, owned by former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra's children, asked the Central Administrative Court to consider an injunction.

Both sides presented their cases to the court the next day. The court decided on Friday the constitution explicitly protects the rights and freedom of members of the media and the NBTC can exercise its power to stop them only when two factors are met — when they broke Section 37 of the Broadcasting law, and such action causes serious damage.

Section 37 allows the NBTC to suspend TV licences when the content leads to the toppling of the rule of constitutional monarchy, undermines national security, disrupts peace and order and affects good morality.

The court agreed with the petitioner and issued the injunction, allowing Voice TV to go back on air late on Friday. The court also scheduled a hearing on Wednesday, followed by a trial and ruling on Feb 25.

