

**BROADCASTING**

# Plan to air World Cup now in doubt

**POST REPORTERS**

A government plan to purchase the rights to broadcast the 2022 Fifa World Cup is up in the air after some National Broadcasting and Telecommunication Commission (NBTC) board members voiced their disagreement, citing budgetary constraints.

Deputy Prime Minister Prawit Wongsuwon on Wednesday said Thai football fans would be able to watch World Cup matches live because the government would buy the event's broadcasting rights.

The 2022 World Cup in Qatar will be played from Nov 20-Dec 18, with 32 teams contesting 64 matches for the sport's most prestigious trophy.

With the tournament less than three weeks away, fans were concerned as no broadcasters in Thailand had shown an interest in securing the rights to air the matches.

Gen Prawit said the government would use the NBTC budget to buy the rights to air all of the games.

Details will be announced once the deal is concluded, he said.

An NBTC source told Isra News



**FIFA WORLD CUP  
Qatar 2022**

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

However, some board members disagreed and called on the NBTC Office to conduct a study on whether

the proposal will be economically viable, the source said.

The proposed study should also consider whether the NBTC's fund has sufficient liquidity as it only has about 2 billion baht left, and whether the proposal is in line with the fund's objective, the source said.

"Members who opposed the idea argued that drawing money from the fund to buy the broadcasting rights is not the purpose of the fund, and the opportunity costs are too high. The money should be spent on other more viable initiatives," the source said.

All 10 Asean countries, except Thailand, have secured broadcasting rights for the 2022 World Cup, at a cost of US\$38 million (1.4 billion baht) for 64 matches.