

NBTC to look into airing of doctored clip

Media told to obey journalistic ethics

**KOMSAN TORTERMVASANA
MONGKOL BANGPRAPA**

The National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) will probe a Nation TV programme which has sparked criticism of media standards after it aired an alleged conversation on the election between Future Forward Party leader Thanathorn Juangroongruangkit and ousted prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra in a fabricated clip.

The NBTC's decision to look into the issue followed a complaint lodged at its headquarters yesterday by media crews who call themselves a "media club for democracy". The group set up late last year to monitor the election.

The club's secretary-general, Chatuphong Phummun, said he wants the NBTC, which regulates media content, to take action against the *Khao Khon Khon Nation* programme which broadcast the audio clip on Tuesday night.

His demand came as media professional groups and The Nation's group founder Suthichai Yoon joined a chorus of disapproval of the 40-second clip that was allowed to go on the air without any careful screening.

NBTC secretary-general Takorn Tantasith said the broadcast regulator will consider the complaint against the programme and will announce its decision at a

"not-too-late time".

Last month, the NBTC's subcommittee on TV content resolved to temporarily suspend broadcasts by Voice TV, arguing some of its programmes caused confusion and incited conflict.

In the case of *Khao Khon Khon Nation*, Mr Thanatorn — who insisted such a conversation never took place — demanded an apology from Nation TV. He also raised doubts about its standards.

"The programme's host who aired the clip made an apology in his programme on March 20," said a statement jointly issued by the News Broadcasting Council of Thailand, the National Press Council of Thailand, the Thai Broadcast Journalists Association and the Thai Journalists Association.

On March 19, Kanok Ratwongsakul, a co-anchor of the programme, put the clip on air. Though he did not mention whose voices were on the clip, a graphic accompanying the clip appeared to represent Mr Thanathorn and Thaksin.

The four media agencies insist the media must always abide by journalistic ethics.

In this social media-dominated age, journalists, TV reporters and anchors need to be more careful as they can be fooled by fake news or disinformation, they said.

"Press freedom comes with more responsibility," they added.

Mr Suthichai would not be drawn on whether the clip was fake but said he wanted to emphasise the media's role as a gatekeeper — as media crews are required to screen information before allowing it to pass through the gate.