

End of service begins for 2G

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THE NATION

THE NATIONAL Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) yesterday approved the three major telecom operators' plan to pull the plug on their 2G cellular service at the same time – 11.59pm on October 31.

The three operators are Advanced Wireless Network (AWN) of Advanced Info Service (AIS), DTAC TriNet (DTN) of Total Access Communication (DTAC), and TrueMove H Universal Communication (TUC) of True Corp.

After the board meeting, NBTC secretary-general Takorn Tantasith said that as of this month there were some 4.9 million subscribers to 2G service, of whom 1.9 million are with AWN, 2 million with DTN, and around 950,000 with TUC.

In December last year, the number of 2G subscribers stood at around 5.2 million, of whom 2 million were with AWN, 2.2 million with DTN and 1 million with TUC.

The state telecom agencies TOT and CAT Telecom do not operate 2G services.

The NBTC will ask the telecom operators to submit for its approval their plans for public campaigns in the lead-up to turning off the 2G service.

Takorn said the shutdown is part of the country's move to develop the 5G service, which NBTC aims to get off the ground in 2020. He said the watchdog is expected to auction the 700MHz licence for 5G in May.