

WORLD CUP

New petition filed over footy broadcasting rights

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A fresh petition has been filed with the Central Administrative Court over the broadcasting of World Cup 2022 after it was revealed that the Sports Authority of Thailand (SAT) signed an agreement awarding the exclusive broadcasting rights to True Corporation.

Named in the petition lodged by Noppadon Wongwihok are the SAT, the SAT governor, the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC), and the Office of the NBTC.

They are accused of being neglectful in performing their duties involving the allocation of broadcasting rights of World Cup matches to ensure all people can see the matches.

According to the lawsuit, it is predicted the broadcasting of the matches would be blocked on some platforms but could be accessed by service providers affiliated with True Corporation. It claims that it turns out that almost one million people with IPTV boxes, which are operated by others, cannot watch the World Cup. To be able to do so, they have to acquire additional equipment or services from True Corporation.

Therefore, the broadcasting of the World Cup 2022 does not follow the "must have" and "must carry" rule imposed by the NBTC.

Under the rule, seven major sporting

competitions such as the Asean Games, Olympics, and World Cup are obliged to be broadcast free on TV and other media platforms. The petitioner asked the Central Administrative Court to issue an injunction to make sure the NBTC's "must have" and "must-carry" rule is complied with.

The petition came after the Central Intellectual Property and International Trade Court last Friday ordered Super Broadband Network (SBN), provider of AIS Playbox service, not to broadcast the tournament on its IPTV service.

True Corporation claims it owns the rights to broadcast the tournament on the IPTV and OTT platforms and SBN does not have permission to broadcast the matches.

Shortly before kickoff, the SAT clinched a deal with Fifa to pay US\$33 million (about 1.2 billion baht) for the right to broadcast live all 64 matches.

Half of the money was from the NBTC and the other was from several sponsors including True Corporation.

