

NBTC and ITU host Girls in ICT



Office of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC), in collaboration with International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the Ministry of Digital Economy for Society (MDES), hosted "Girls in ICT Day" event on 28 April 2022 at Carlton Hotel Bangkok Sukhumvit, Bangkok. The purpose is to celebrate and encourage girls and young women's potential in ICT worldwide. The girls and young women could apply ICT skills to further their studies and pursue careers in ICT, as well as improve their lives in the future. Since 2011, Girls in ICT Day has been celebrated each year in every region worldwide on the fourth Thursday of April. Over 377,000 girls and young women from 171 countries participated in the celebration.

Professor Piroongrong Ramasoota, Ph.D., NBTC Commissioner presided over the opening ceremony and delivered a keynote speech that highlighted on prioritising ICT related development while also emphasising on both internet accessibility and user safety which is this year's theme. Mr. Notsachard Chintakanond, Executive Director of the International Affairs Bureau, Office of the NBTC, updated the meeting on the succession of the activities related to Girls in ICT Day and how ICT has helped develop and further girls and young women's potential in the ICT sector. The meeting was conducted in a hybrid manner, the physical meeting was held at Carlton Hotel Bangkok Sukhumvit, with a total of over 300 participants. A nationwide live stream was also broadcasted to all interested participants.

This year, many high-level representatives from various organisations participated in the Girls in ICT Day celebration, namely, Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin, BDT Director of ITU; Ms. Atsuko Okuda, Regional Director of ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific; Mr. Masanori Kondo, Secretary-General of Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT); Mr. Allan McKinnon, Ambassador of Australia to the Kingdom of Thailand; Ms.



Left to right: Mr. Notsachard Chintakanond, Executive Director, International Affairs Bureau, Office of the NBTC; Mr. Masanori Kondo, Secretary-General, APT; Ms. Atsuko Okuda, Regional Director, ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific; Prof. Piroongrong Ramasoota, Ph.D., NBTC Commissioner; Ms. Ararin Pattanapanchai, Permanent Secretary, MDES; Mr. Thira Bhwangkanantha, Inspector-General, Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education; Ms. Gita Sabharwal, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Thailand



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Ararin Pattanapanchai, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society; Mr. Thira Bhwangkanantha, Inspector-General, Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education; UN Resident Coordinator in Thailand (UNRCO); United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP); UN Women; United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); Chulalongkorn

University; Thammasat University; CISCO Thailand; Huawei Technologies (Thailand); Microsoft Thailand; and students from high school and universities.

During the meeting, topics related to the theme "Access and Safety" were discussed such as ICT knowledge and skills, cybersecurity, infrastructure development, and internet accessibility. Topics related to AI, cybersecurity, emerging technologies, basic knowledge of computer software and hardware and portable devices, security and networks, and entrepreneurship were set to be lectured by experts from April-June 2022.

Furthermore, Office of the NBTC invited two influencers, Ms. Chatpawee Trichachawanwong (IT Expert, Lecturer, Newsreader) and Ms. Marie Broenner (Actress, YouTuber), to share their personal experience and success in applying ICT in their careers and inspire young women to pursue studies and careers in the ICT sector. In the closing session, Ms. Atsuko Okuda and Mr. Notsachard Chintakanond delivered the closing remarks. Participants also shared their thoughts and takeaways from the meeting.

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AN ORBITAL FRACTURE

The new NBTC board is expected to decide on a resolution for the country's first auction of satellite slot packages. **B3**

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Board deals with NBTC auction debacle

KOMSAN TORTERMVASANA

The new board of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) is today expected to come up with a resolution for the country's first auction of satellite orbital slot rights, after a sale was scrapped last year and remains stuck in limbo.

On Aug 18 last year, the NBTC board decided to cancel the auction scheduled for Aug 28 as SET-listed Thaicom, through its wholly owned company TC Space Connect, was the only bidder. Four satellite orbital slot packages were put up for auction.

The new NBTC board, which came into office last month, has yet to determine whether it will hold the auction for only one slot, earlier targeted by Thaicom, or offer various packages.

A source close to the NBTC board who requested anonymity told the *Bangkok Post* that the board is likely to make a cautious move by directing NBTC management to hold public hearings to seek the proper way forward for the planned auction.

The board is still new to its governing role in the telecom and broadcasting fields, the source noted.

Among the five sitting commissioners, Air Marshal Thanapant Rai-charoen is the only one perceived to have a strong command of the satellite field as he is the former deputy secretary-general of the NBTC and the former head of the planned auction of the satellite orbital slots.

The source said the NBTC management earlier suggested the auction should only be for the 119.5 East slot, which was targeted by Thaicom, but AM Thanapant disagreed, saying the bidding should be carried out with all four packages as previously planned.



Satellite dishes at Thaicom's headquarters in Nonthaburi province. PATTARAPONG CHATPATTARASIL

The source said some orbital slots granted for Thailand's use are at risk of being cancelled this year if the country fails to coordinate with the International Telecommunication Union, a UN specialised agency for information and communication technologies, and other countries that hold the rights on other adjacent slots, in the seven-year deadline.

Some slots held by Thailand have no satellites in orbit.

"Although some slots may fall short of commercial attraction for satellite business, the loss of the orbital slots would make it more difficult for the NBTC to make the new filing in the future while having to queue up for a long time," the source said.

Lining up in the queue would mean Thailand would lose the chance of being given priority in securing the slots, the source said.

One slot can technically be used by

several satellites but requires cooperation between satellite operators, the source said.

Digital Economy and Society Minister Chaiwit Thanakamanusorn earlier said one solution for the auction would be to allocate some specific slots to National Telecom, which could use them for security purposes.

He said governments around the world have a policy of keeping some slots for particular purposes while enabling others to be auctioned off.