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Regulations of the Mass Communication Organization of Thailand (MCOT)

No. 46/2535

Concerning News Broadcasting of the MCOT

In order to ensure that news broadcasting by the MCOT's television and radio stations and that of the Thai News Agency are in compliance with the principles and philosophy of journalistic professionalism, with the aim of presenting news about all parties concerned with accuracy, speed, promptness impartiality and fairness, by taking the public right to news and information into consideration, and to broadcast all news inclusively for the benefit of the state, society and people; to ensure that MCOT's employers are protected from external influences, during a state of normalcy and abnormalcy, while executing their duties; and to make news work development, news coverage as well as news presentation a part of the MCOT's policies and major responsibilities,

By virtue of Article 19(4) stipulated in the Royal Decree on the Establishment of the MCOT, B.E. 2520, amended by the Royal Decree on the Establishment of the MCOT, B.E. 2535 (Second Version), the MCOT has issued the following regulations concerning news broadcasting:

Item 1. These regulations are to be known as the "Regulations of the Mass Communication of Thailand Concerning Its News Broadcasting."

Item 2. In these regulations, the following terms have been defined:

"The MCOT" refers to the Mass Communication Organization of Thailand;
"The Board" refers to the Board of Directors of the MCOT;
"The Director-General" refers to the Director-General of the MCOT;
"Employers" refer to employers of the MCOT;
“Administrators” refer to those authorized or being in the position to give order or to direct the MCOT’s affairs in accordance with the administrative network system within the MCOT, or employers holding a position of not lower than department head;

“News” refers to news from the Thai News Agency, broadcast by the MCOT’s television and radio stations, or circulated in its publications and other media, excluding business and social news;

“The Editor” refers to the person authorized by superiors in the administrative network system to control and give orders in the presentation of daily news;

“Television News Production and Presentation Supervising Committee” refers to the committee for the supervision of television news production and presentation, appointed, with the approval of the Board, by the Director-General;

“Ad. Hoc News Team” refers to those responsible for news work under the administrative network system of the Thai News Agency and related person, as stated in these regulations. This team consists of the President of the MCOT’s Board or his representative who is also a MCOT Board member, the Director-General, members of the Television News Production and Presentation Supervising Committee, the Head of the News Publication and Radio News Section. Chaired by the President of the MCOT Board, the team has to select its secretary from those present at each meeting;

“The state of normalcy” refers to the condition when the MCOT can administer news work in accordance with the Royal Decree on the Establishment of the MCOT, B.E. 2520, amended by the Royal Decree on The Establishment of the MCOT, B.E. 2535 (Second Version), and any other regulations of the MCOT without intervention, influence or direction from outsiders;

“The state of abnormalcy” refers to the condition when the MCOT is unable to administer news work, as defined for the state of normalcy, due to
intervention, influence or direction from outsiders, causing the Director - General or employers to fail to respond promptly to the order or decision of the Board or the Director - General, as each case may be applied.

Item 3. The MCOT has to include news work development, news coverage and news presentation as part of its policies and major responsibilities.

Item 4. In executing news work and news presentation, the following principles and policies should be adhered to:

4.1 Principles related to the objectives of the MCOT according to Article 6 (1), (3) and (4) of the Royal Decree on the Establishment of the MCOT, B.E. 2520, amended by the Royal Decree on the Establishment of the MCOT, B.E. 2535 (Second Version) as follows:

1. Undertaking mass communication work inside and outside of the country;
2. Undertaking mass communication business as well as other related or affiliated business that contribute to mass communication work.
3. Using mass communication work as a means to disseminate knowledge and to create understanding so as to develop the people's quality of life, to upgrade the people's quality and ethics, and to maintain the security of the state, by taking account of righteousness, fairness and the benefit of the state ruled under the constitutional monarchic system.

4. Promoting and enhancing people's chance to obtain news with accuracy and speed, as well as an array of knowledge and different forms of entertainment, that are deemed useful and not in conflict with the country's peace and order and public morality.

Principles in 4.1 have to be considered side by side with the implementation of 4.2.
4.2 According to the principles and philosophy of journalistic professionalism, the MCOT, in its capacity as an organ of mass media, should consider it its duty to present news from all angles and treat all parties involved with accuracy, speed, promptness, impartiality and fairness, whilst taking the public right to news and public expression into consideration. News broadcasting should be inclusive for the benefit of the state, society and people.

4.3 The MOCT is to be designated a news agency with independent editorial policies without intervention from any power, influence or profit group so that it can fulfil the role of a news and information center of the people, for the people and for the benefit of the country.

4.4 It is deemed to be an important policy that outsiders will not be permitted to interfere with, exploit or influence the MCOT's news work, in any way whatever.

4.5 It is deemed to be a major policy that the MCOT will conduct their news operation, in both production and presentation, by using their own personnel, with the exception of news announcers, Masters of Ceremonies, news analysts and foreign language experts, who, when necessary, may be hired from outside. This exception may also be extended to the purchase or acquisition of foreign news and news documentaries as well as important domestic news in cases where the MCOT cannot proceed with this work in the time allowed.

4.6 The MCOT is required to set guidelines and standards, based on the principle of journalistic professionalism, for the news production and presentation of the Thai News Agency so that their employers can use them as an ethical base in the execution of news work for the Thai News Agency.

4.7 In administering the news work of the MCOT, the policies and the administrative network system of the Thai News Agency and those of the Television News Production and Presentation Supervising Committee should be
well co-ordinated so as to yield the utmost efficiency, with strict adherence to the principle of these regulations.

Item 5. In presenting news during a state of abnormalcy which might cause news presentation to be different from that presented during the state of normalcy, the following guidelines and methods are required:

5.1 When an incident that can be regarded as a state of abnormalcy occurs, the following measures need to be taken:

5.1 (1) The editor has to make a prompt report to his superiors along the line of seniority in the administrative network system of the Thai News Agency and inform the Director-General in order to call for a meeting of the Ad. Hoc. News team to announce the state of abnormalcy. The Chairman of the Board or his representative has to be at the meeting. After the announcement of the state of abnormalcy, the Ad. Hoc News team is to consider how to improve the situation and decide on what action is to be taken.

5.1 (2) The Chairman of the MCOT's Board or at least three members of the Board, when regarding the incident as a state of abnormalcy, can propose that the Board or the Ad. Hoc. News team consider announcing a state of abnormalcy as well as finding ways to improve the situation and decide on measures for action.

Under such circumstance, it is demanded that the announcement be signed by Chairman of the Ad. Hoc News team meeting or Chairman of the Board meeting.

5.1 (3) If procedure 5.1 (1) fails to be followed in time, the editor is entitled to give order, as appropriate or necessary. He then has to report to his superiors along the line of superiority so as measures stated in 5.1 (1) can be taken as soon as possible. In this case, it is assumed that the action and decision of the editor or those of the superiors concerned will be protected by the regulations.
The aforementioned execution has to be reported to the Board by Chairman of the Ad. Hoc. News team or by Chairman of the meeting.

5.2 The MCOT should try to maintain its trends in news broadcasting, following the principles in item 4 and journalistic ideology, and by adhering to work ethics, particularly in terms of accuracy, fairness and impartiality in presenting facts. The public right to news and information should be taken into consideration so that people under the constitutional monarchic system can use them as part of their decision-making. Decision in news presentation is under the editor's responsibility or that of the superiors along the line of superiority, or must comply with the order of the Ad. Hoc. News team according to the measures stated in 5.1.

5.3 In case the principles, guidelines and methods in these regulations cannot be fulfilled due to force of circumstance, the editor is entitled to give orders and then promptly report this to the superiors along the line of superiority. The Director - General is to take action according to 5.1 as soon as possible.

In case the Director - General is unable to contact the Board or propose the Ad. Hoc. News team to call for a meeting, he can proceed with what his judgement deems as appropriate to the situation. His action should implicitly be protected as stated in 5.4.

5.4 As the Director - General and the employers try to comply with these regulations during the state of normalcy and abnormalcy; it is implied that they and their work security are safeguarded by their superiors and the Board from outside influences.

Item 6. To maintain the principles and ethics of journalistic professionalism, it is forbidden that the administrators or employers give orders or engage in any activity using the MCOT's properties, personnel or any form of media for political,
business purposes and or others for a person, a group of persons or any other profit
groups, deemed to be in conflict with these regulations.

Item 7. The Director - General is authorized to maintain these regulations
and to give any order in accordance with these regulations.

Item 8. These regulations will take effect from this moment.

Issued on November 23, 1995.

(Mr. Apilas Osathanonda)
Chairman
the Mass Communication
Organization of Thailand