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Headline: NBTC tackles cybersecurity for smart TVs

TV CYBERSECURITY RULES STUDIED
NBTC's board has ordered a study to establish cybersecurity standards for smart TVs and Android TV set-top boxes. 2

NBTC tackles cybersecurity for smart TVs

Standards for TV devices to be created

KOMSAN TORTERMVASANA

The board of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) yesterday passed a resolution instructing its management to quickly conduct a study to establish technical cybersecurity standards for smart TVs and Android TV set-top boxes and complete it within 30 days.

The meeting was conducted by six commissioners without the chairman's participation.

The initiative was driven by commissioner Pirongrong Ramasoota, who is responsible for the broadcasting sector.

The move follows growing concerns over possible malware infections and backdoor surveillance risks in home entertainment devices. If a smart TV system is hacked, hackers could use a camera on the TV to monitor people in the residence or other building and access their personal data.

Commissioner AM Thanapant Raicharoen said after the board meeting that this was the first time the NBTC had formally targeted potential malware vulnerabilities in television equipment.

He added that the NBTC management was instructed to complete the technical review within one month, after which formal regulatory notifications and equipment standards will be added to the regulator's existing device supervision framework.

There should be clear measures to inspect and detect malware or backdoors, AM Thanapant said.

"We are pushing the management to accelerate this study, focusing on cybersecurity standards and certification mechanisms for such equipment

— determining whether there should be firmware standards or mandatory firmware update protocols. Currently, firmware updates for these devices are rarely discussed or implemented as a protective measure," AM Thanapant added.



The NBTC board has instructed its management to swiftly conduct a study to establish technical cybersecurity standards for smart TVs and Android TV set-top boxes.

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People often focus exclusively on mobile phone security, but regulatory measures must cover television devices as well to ensure comprehensive cyber protection.

AM THANAPANT RAICHAROEN
Commissioner, National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission

According to NBTC officials, security protocols have been established for critical infrastructure, while mobile phone services, electrical devices and public health systems are covered by existing safeguards. Consumer broadcast receivers — specifically internet-connected smart TVs and set-top boxes — have, however, remained largely unregulated in terms of cyber resilience.

"In the past, we overlooked this threat vector," AM Thanapant said, adding that smart TVs operate on internet protocols similar to those used by CCTV cameras and Internet of Things devices.

Unsecured devices can be exploited as backdoors, allowing unauthorised external actors to view activity inside private residences and monitor household behaviour, he added.

PROPOSED RULES

Under the proposed regulatory framework, all newly imported and locally manufactured television receivers and Android TV set-top boxes will be required to pass mandatory technical certification and meet cybersecurity compliance standards before being granted market approval.

The regulator will also study mandatory firmware specifications, including requirements for regular firmware updates — a security aspect that officials noted has been virtually ignored in current market devices.

For legacy equipment already operating in households that cannot support modern firmware security patches, the NBTC plans to issue public warning advisories and consumer guidelines to educate citizens on mitigating risks.

"People often focus exclusively on mobile phone security, but regulatory measures must cover television devices as well to ensure comprehensive cyber protection," AM Thanapant said.

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