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MICT goes for zero-sum plan

The cabinet reduced the Thaksin-era telecoms excise tax from 10 percent (mobile phones) and 2 percent (fixed-line phones) to zero; the zero-sum plan devised by Information and Communication Technology Minister Sitthichai Pookaiyaudom reverts to the previous state of things - with no bottom-line effect on operators or consumers - but leaves it open for another rise in the tax; the main effect is to slow all that liberalisation that was going on, bring into question the privatisation of your TOT and your CAT Telecom, and indicate that the state enterprises are regulators again.

In a six-round penalty shootout, TrueVisions scored a decisive victory over ESPN Star to broadcast all Premier League football games for the next three years, starting in August; content officer Attaphon Na Bangxang shelled out something just barely south of 500 million baht; now he sees convergence - football on pay-TV and regular TV and phones and Internet, not to mention another surge in UBC pay-TV subscriptions, and so much English football you'll look back at 2006 as the last year of that dreadful soccer drought.

Thai Airways' budget airline Nok Air signed a contract to the unique Mobiqu service, which sends virtual tickets to yuppiephones in the form of a bar code; the deal made Nok Air the first regional airline to offer tickets by phone. In the greatest energy saving plan since the remote control, Visa announced it will introduce credit cards in Thailand this year that do not require the tough, tiring, physical task of swiping the card through a credit card machine; the new cards only need be held up in front of the machine, a move that will save countless muscle tears and pretty much end the main cause of fatigue in the country.