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`In Conversation' with Thai PM on Nov 6

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - The second edition of TV3's "In Conversation" programme, which features Thai Prime Minister Dr Thaksin Shinawatra, will be aired on Nov 6 at 9pm.

The recording of the one-hour programme was made on Oct 18 with the cooperation of four Asean television stations which have fostered a strategic cooperation to expose Asean leaders to the region's population.

Similar to its debut edition which featured Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad last month, four panellists representing television stations in the region will take turns to interview Thaksin.

They are TV3's News and Current Affairs Division senior general manager Chamil Wariya, ABS-CBN Manila's chief correspondent and news anchor Korina Sanchez, Jakarta's RCTI executive producer (news) Roy Tindage and iTV Bangkok's foreign news editor Chib Jitniyom. Chamil is also the programme's coordinator for the four television stations.

In the recording which took place in iTV Bangkok's studio, Thaksin was asked about Thailand's bilateral ties with other Asean member countries, apart from the country's political internal affairs, investment policy and how it strives to recover from the 1997 financial crisis.

Other areas of focus include the future of Asean, regional economic cooperation, globalisation, and the role of big powers in the region.

Response to the English programme has been very encouraging. The interview with Dr Mahathir was placed as one of the top 10 programmes for the week. According to a survey by AC Nielson, the programme was watched by almost a million viewers, most of whom were "opinion leaders" in their societies.

A few foreign television networks have also expressed interest in airing "In Conversation", both in full or partially. Among them, Channel News Asia, a satellite television operating in Singapore and CNN, have written to TV3 requesting to air the programme.

"In Conversation" has also received wide coverage from international media. London-based radio broadcast BBC World Service has aired an interview with the representatives of the respective television stations.

The Guardian newspaper in Britain has also carried an article.

Philippines president Gloria Arroyo Macapagal has agreed to be interviewed for the third edition of "In Conversation" in December.

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