

Harmony Meets Security: Bank of Thailand's new 500 Baht

The Bank of Thailand's new 500 Baht note was introduced by Deputy Governor Mrs Tonguari Limpiti in May. It is the third in the 16th series, the introduction of which began in January 2012 with the 50 Baht, followed by the 20 Baht in April last year. Still to be issued are the 100 and 1,000 Bahts. The new note incorporates several new and enhanced security features to facilitate authentication by the public (including the visually impaired) and banknote sorting machines.

Thailand's currency is produced by the Bank's Note Printing Works, and approximately 3 billion notes were produced last year. Around 5.5 billion notes are in circulation. The Bank is one of the most imaginative central banks when it comes to integrating new security features, using commemorative notes (of which it is a frequent issuer) to pioneer new technologies (including the first use of *OVI*® in the late 1980s). The new 500 Baht is in keeping with this tradition, being only the second circulating note to include Louisenthal's new **RollingStar® security thread**.

As with the other notes in the new series, the colour and size of the new 500 Baht remains the same as its predecessor (which was issued in 2001 and which remains legal tender). The front of the note features a new portrait of the monarch, His Majesty King Bhumipol, in which he is wearing ceremonial robes as opposed to uniform. This image is repeated in the mould made watermark.



Celebration of Kings

The principle design theme on the reverse of both the 15th and the new 16th series is the celebration of Thai kings from different periods. In the new 500 Baht, the image of HM King Rama III been replaced with HM King Buddha Yodfa Chulalok the Great (King Rama I), who ruled from 1782-1809 and who was the founder and the first monarch of the reigning House of Chakri of Siam (now Thailand).

The new security features on the notes include a colour shifting ink with latent image which appears on the bottom

left hand of the note in the form of a Thai ornament. This changes from gold to green on tilting, and the latent image of the numeral 500 becomes visible, demonstrating an interesting variation of an OVI ink feature.

A complex registered holographic foil stripe on the right hand side of the note contains the royal emblem with Arabic numerals. Tilting the banknote around the vertical axis leads to a clear and perceptible image flip between the denomination value in Thai and Arabic fonts. The effect is surrounded by a two-dimensional true colour image of a pagoda.

Maintaining Design Synergies

The RollingStar windowed security thread on the reverse combines colour-shift with animated images. The colour changes from gold to green, and illustrates a dynamic 'moving-boxes' effect. The thread also includes *Cleartext*. (This next generation thread was awarded the IACA Best Currency Feature 2014). To maintain the synergies in design across the series, among the features of the 20 and 50 Baht denominations is *ColourShift* thread also featuring *Cleartext*.

The note also includes an iridescent coating containing the numeral 500 in Arabic and Thai, which is printed vertically with yellow iridescent ink.

In addition, three tactile marks in the shape of flowers represent the Braille letter 'F', symbolizing 500.

The 100 and 1,000 Baht notes will go into production soon to complete the series.