

Thai News Update: 16 March 2021

1. BBL adds withdrawals to 7-Eleven

Source: Bangkok Post ([Link](#))

Bangkok Bank (BBL) has expanded its money withdrawal service at 7-Eleven convenience stores, offering greater convenience to consumers in remote areas. BBL, the country's largest lender by total assets, has extended its collaboration with 7-Eleven, providing a cash withdrawal service at counters in 12,500 7-Eleven convenience stores nationwide. The banks' clients can conduct the service via the bank's mobile banking app, Bualuang m-Banking, and then receive cash at 7-Eleven counters. The innovative service will offer convenience to customers who are residing in remote areas where there are no bank branches or ATMs nearby, providing them with a service available 24/7, said Prassanee Ouiyamaphan, BBL's executive vice-president.

2. Finance Ministry revising criteria for issue of state welfare cards

Source: The Nation ([Link](#))

The Ministry of Finance estimates that the number of people registering for the state welfare card will rise due to the fallout of the Covid-19 situation. The ministry is considering revising the criteria to efficiently screen those who are more deserving of the welfare scheme, a source revealed on 16 March. The source added that the ministry was considering revising the criteria for state welfare card applicants, from having individual income not exceeding Bt100,000 per year to having average family income not exceeding Bt100,000 per person per year.

3. Thailand taps Dutch expertise to tackle Bangkok's flooding problem

Source: The Nation ([Link](#))

Thailand has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Netherlands to help tackle floods and water management. The secretary-general of the Office of National Water Resources, Somkiat Prajamwong, and Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Kees Pieter Rade, signed the MoU regarding cooperation on integrated water resources management and climate change adaptation. Somkiat said after the signing ceremony that this cooperation would be valid for three years and be automatically extended by five years if neither party objects.

4. Welfare card registration likely to reopen

Source: Bangkok Post ([Link](#))

The Finance Ministry looks set to open a new round of state welfare card registration, expecting the number of eligible recipients will outnumber the previous round due to rising numbers of jobless workers. A source from the Finance Ministry who requested anonymity said the new round may offer the benefits to a larger range of recipients, mainly those who were unemployed after the outbreak and were left out of state welfare benefits in the previous round. The state welfare card scheme is one of the key policies initiated by the government. Eligible recipients are required to be Thais with an annual income of not more than 100,000 baht and with financial assets of not more than 100,000 baht per person.

5. Huawei committed to drive investment

Source: Bangkok Post ([Link](#))

Huawei Technologies Thailand, the local unit of China's tech powerhouse, is committed to boosting investment in Thailand under the leadership of its first president so as to support digital transformation for customers, ensure a 5G penetration rate of at least 10% this year and play a part in producing 100,000 digital talents. The company in February named Chawapol Jariyawiroj as president of Huawei Technologies Thailand. The former country manager for Amazon Web Services (AWS) in Thailand has 27 years of experience in the ICT sector, including five years in the cloud computing segment. It is the first time the company has appointed someone to the position of president at Huawei Technologies Thailand.

6. Dusit urges emphasis on quality tours

Source: Bangkok Post ([Link](#))

Thailand should not expect a return to 40 million foreign tourist arrivals in the post-pandemic period, instead focusing on elevating the quality of tourism and preserving revenue for the local industry, according to Dusit International. Suphajee Suthumpun, group chief executive of Dusit International, said after the global pandemic subsides, Thailand should emphasise improving the tourism industry's quality over quantity, offering potential products that can attract higher spending. "If we look at the data for inbound travellers during the pre-pandemic era, average expenditure was not high as most stayed for 4-5 days per trip," she said.