



[Login](#) | [Create Account](#) | [Search](#)

Fake building permit racket uncovered on Koh Samui

SURAT THANI: Authorities on Koh Samui are widening an investigation into construction permit forgery involving at least 10 projects and potentially involving both municipal staff and outsiders.

crime

corruption

construction

By Bangkok Post

Monday 23 March 2026 12:26 PM

← Ads by Google

Send feedback

Why this ad? ⓘ



The probe follows the discovery of forged signatures on a building construction permit (known as Or.1) issued by the public works division of Koh Samui Municipality, raising concerns over regulatory integrity and the safety of several high-end villa projects, according to Matichon Online.

Koh Samui mayor Ramnet Jaikwang has ordered an immediate investigation and legal action, reports the [Bangkok Post](#).

Fraud uncovered in 2025

Pallop Meepian, the municipal legal officer, said the first cases were detected in October last year, involving one private construction project and one commercial building modification.

In both cases, permit holders presented official-looking documents to inspectors. However, checks revealed the permits were not registered in the municipal system, and signatures, including that of the mayor, were forged.

A fact-finding committee later found grounds for misconduct. A clerical officer attached to the public works division who was linked to the documents denied any wrongdoing, but has since been removed from duty pending a disciplinary and criminal investigation.

Senior officials, outside links under scrutiny

Municipal authorities are now expanding the probe to determine whether senior officials in the engineering division were involved or benefited from the scheme.

Officials said it was unlikely that a junior officer could have carried out such actions alone, raising suspicions of a wider network.

←

Ads by Google

Send feedback

Why this ad? ⓘ

Attention is also focusing on possible links to external intermediaries acting as “brokers” to connect developers, particularly villa operators seeking fast-track approvals, with insiders able to produce fraudulent permits.

The suspect at the centre of the case reportedly joined the civil service in June 2022.

Mr Pallop said the municipality plans to file a formal complaint with Koh Samui police on Mar 27 against the official for allegedly forging official documents and misconduct in office.

At the same time, a retrospective audit of all construction permits is under way to determine the true scale of the fraud. Initial findings suggest more than 10 fake permits may have been issued.

Loopholes in fast-track approval system

The case has also drawn attention to Section 39 Bis of the 1979 Building Control Act, which allows developers to begin construction without waiting for formal approval, provided they submit complete documentation certified by licensed architects and engineers.

The mechanism is designed to streamline procedures but relies heavily on the accuracy and integrity of submitted documents. Authorities warned that if plans are later found to violate regulations, developers can be ordered to modify or demolish structures, while professionals who falsely certify documents may face disciplinary and criminal penalties.

The Koh Samui Municipality said the investigation is ongoing and could lead to further legal action against those involved.