Siam Legal International Highlights Supreme Court Ruling Recognizing Bitcoin as Property

November 10, 2026

Bangkok, Thailand - November 10, 2026 -
Siam Legal International, a full-service law firm with more than 22 years of experience assisting Thai and foreign clients, is highlighting a ruling by Thailand's Supreme Court on October 28, 2026 that Bitcoin counts as property under Thai criminal law. As a result, taking Bitcoin by theft, extortion, or robbery is treated as a property crime, giving cryptocurrency holders stronger legal protection.

The case stems from a violent robbery on Koh Samui in 2022. The robbers threatened and assaulted a foreign national, forcing him to convert approximately USD 50,000 into 2.480801 Bitcoin, worth around THB 1.878 million at the time, and transfer it to them.

One accomplice was sentenced to 10 years in prison and appealed to the Supreme Court, arguing that Bitcoin has no intrinsic value. The court rejected that argument and upheld the 10-year sentence based on three key findings.

First, the court found that Bitcoin meets the definition of property under the Civil and Commercial Code and fits the 2018 Emergency Decree on Digital Asset Businesses as electronic data that can be used as a

medium of exchange. Second, Bitcoin has a market price and can be traded, which the court treated as evidence of real value. Third, Bitcoin can be exchanged for Thai baht at a market price, and anything that can be exchanged for cash is property that can be the subject of a robbery.

Because the decision was made by the full bench of the Supreme Court, it carries significant weight for future cases. Holders whose cryptocurrency is taken through theft, extortion, or robbery have the right to pursue legal action just as they would for any other stolen property.

Defendants prosecuted for cryptocurrency theft can no longer rely on the argument that cryptocurrency is not real currency. Victims also have stronger legal backing when demanding the return of their cryptocurrency or compensation for its value in court.

?This ruling settles a question that defendants had been able to raise in cryptocurrency cases, namely whether digital assets have any real value in the eyes of Thai law,? said Rex Baay, Senior Immigration Consultant and Operations Manager at Siam Legal International. ?By grounding its decision in both the Civil and Commercial Code and the Emergency Decree on Digital Asset Businesses, the full bench has given lower courts a clear framework to apply, which strengthens the position of victims seeking the return of stolen assets or compensation for their value.?

The ruling also has clear limits. The court drew a careful distinction between property and money, finding that Bitcoin is property under Thai law but is not legal tender. Under Bank of Thailand guidelines, Bitcoin does not share the status of the Thai baht, and the ruling keeps that position in place.

For those who hold, trade, or invest in cryptocurrency while living in Thailand, the decision clarifies where the law currently stands. Digital assets are protected in the same way as other property when they are stolen, while their use as a means of payment remains subject to the Bank of Thailand's position.

The background to the case, the court's reasoning, and the practical effect for cryptocurrency holders are covered in Siam Legal's Bitcoin ruling update, which examines how Thai courts are approaching digital assets.

Siam Legal International is a full-service law firm with more than 22 years of experience assisting Thai and foreign clients, with offices in Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Phuket, and Pattaya. The firm provides comprehensive legal and immigration support across property transactions, business law, family law, and litigation.

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