



Amnesty International Thailand

Report on the Situation of the Right to Freedom of Assembly for 2025

Introduction

Throughout 2025, Thailand continued to face restrictions being placed on the right to freedom of peaceful assembly, which is protected by Article 21 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). This report has been written to document the actual situation based on our observations during public assemblies across all regions of Thailand. It analyzes law enforcement practices by the authorities and any trends that may affect people's right to peaceful assembly, as well as the pursuit of justice for the problems they face.

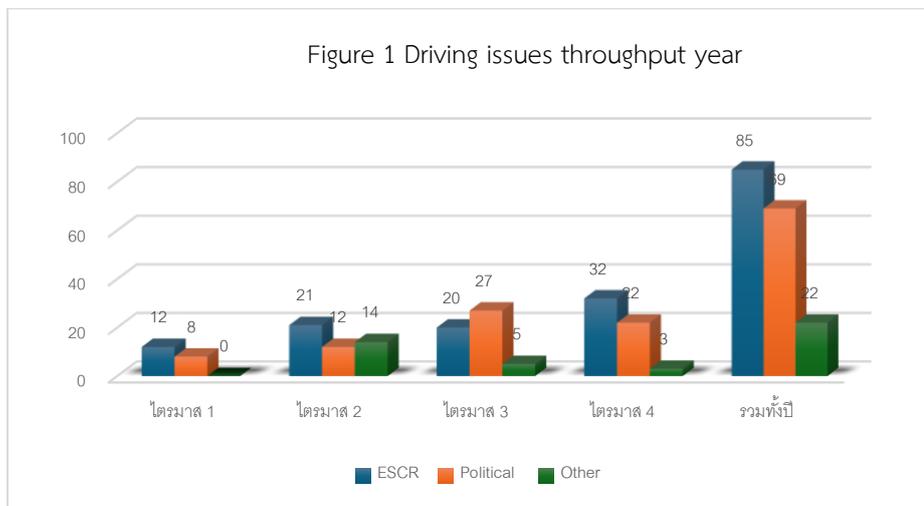
The data in this report derives from relevant events that took place from January to 31 December 2025. Apart from documenting incidents, it also offers an analysis of structural causes, forms of rights restrictions, and the impacts of how the state treats protesters, in order to advocate for genuinely improved protection of freedom of assembly in Thailand.

Overall situation of freedom of peaceful assembly

The overall situation of freedom of assembly in 2025 shows how people still have to rely on using public assemblies as a main tool to demand their rights and fairness. Economic, social, political and security problems prompt a massive number of people to express themselves peacefully in Bangkok and various parts of the country.

During quarters 1-4, at least 176 public assemblies have took place. And If an assembly that lasted overnight is counted as one assembly, there would have been such assemblies taking place over 673 times. Such public assemblies took place in all regions, in large cities, rural area and other areas directly affected by state policies. Quantitatively, the number of public assemblies has risen steadily as the first quarter saw 20 public assemblies, it has since increased to 47 during the second quarter, and then to 52 in the third quarter and 57 in fourth quarter. The sit-in overnight assemblies took place from the first to the last quarters including the assemblies led by the former workers of Yarnapund PCL which reflected how the problem has become chronic and the procrastination of state response and various other social issues that perpetuate. The pattern of assemblies is rather dissipative, albeit Bangkok still serves as a main site for political assemblies. Meanwhile, other provinces particularly in the Northeast, the North and the South, played host to activism about land rights, forest, and development projects. In addition, in the South, public assemblies have taken place to oppose to large-scale development projects that affect the livelihood of people in various provinces. Overall, public assemblies are not exclusively concentrated on political advocacy. Rather, they have become an important tool for many people who fight against

structural injustice in Thailand, including workers, people affected by development projects, and community-based human rights defenders.



According to figure 1, most public assemblies coalesced around two key issues including (1) assemblies based on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR) which drew out the largest number of assemblies, at least 85 last year. This was followed by political issues, at least 69. The latter half of year saw the surge of political issue assemblies due to advocacies on People’s Amnesty Bill, politically motivated cases, demand of the right to bail. In addition, other issues prompted at least 22 other assemblies (issues concerning gender diversity, Thailand-Cambodia-border-dispute, issues concerning foreign politics, and demand of freedom).

Although most of the assemblies have been held peacefully, the legal enforcement by the authorities have become a major hindrance to the exercise of the right to freedom of peaceful assembly. From the first to the last quarters of the year, orders have been issued to ban public assemblies within the radius of fifty meters the Government House invoking Section 7, last paragraph, of the Public Assembly Act B.E. 2558, even without meeting the principles of necessity and proportionality according to the UN Human Rights Committee’s General Comment No. 37. It attests to how domestic laws concerning public assembly in Thailand are incompatible with international principles including the guidelines for law enforcement officers. Such legal gaps have led to at least five participants being charged in at least four cases in 2025 including the offence against Section 7, last paragraph, of the Public Assembly Act B.E. 2558 and another case against Section 10 coupled with Section 28, punishable with a fine not exceeding 10,000 baht for failure to make the notification.¹

¹TLHR, Statistics of Public Assembly Act cases during 2020-2026, (online). website <https://tlhr2014.com/archives/64581>

1. Key issues prompting public assemblies in 2025

1.1. Public assemblies on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR)

Throughout 2025, the highest number of public assemblies concerned ESCR, 85 times including 12 in the first quarter, 21 the second quarter, 20 the third quarter, and 12 the fourth quarter. Issues that triggered public assemblies from the first to the last quarters including;

1. Public assemblies opposing potash mining by the Dan Khun Thot Khon Rak Ban Kerd Group intensified in 2025, as residents have had to grapple with the impacts over a long period, following the government's issuance of licenses to Thai Kali Co., Ltd. to operate potash mining in the area. These impacts have led to soil and water salinization, damage to buildings, increased costs for purchasing water for consumption, a lack of public participation processes, and the use of Strategic Litigation Against Public Participation (SLAPP). As of 26 October 2025, the Thai government had signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the US government, which effectively allows foreign companies to explore and produce minerals while waiving their obligations to comply with domestic laws. For local communities, this has been perceived as an attempt to undermine rights safeguards and increase potential risks due to the accelerated mining process. Such a predicament prompted a series of continuous public assemblies in Nakhon Ratchasima, with participants marching toward Bangkok from the first to the last quarters of the year to demand that the state halt the project's implementation and review its regulatory processes to ensure compliance with human rights and community rights. The protests included "Stop Bangchak Potash Mining, Exposing the Green Saint" and "A Journey to Bangkok: Blocking the Explosion of My House," among others. To date, no action has been taken by the authorities, including the Ministry of Interior, despite numerous petitions having been submitted.

2. As to public assemblies opposing the Southern Economic Corridor (SEC) Bill in 2025, activities were continuously organized by civil society networks. Major activities started in February, with groups submitting letters of complaint to the government demanding that it remove the SEC Bill from parliamentary sessions, including actions by the People's Network Against the Southern Economic Corridor.² Further public assemblies were held in December in the South to oppose the Chumphon-Ranong Land Bridge Project, a part of the SEC. In August, it was escalated into a major movement through the activities "Walk with Mah Thom or Walk to Stop the Land Bridge Project" organized by the Rak Patoh Network and its alliances. The march started from Laem Ao Ang, Mueang Ranong District to the Ranong Provincial Hall to demand a halt of the third public hearing organized by the state on the Chumphon-Ranong Land Bridge Project slated to

² Mob data Thailand, Situation of the right to freedom of assembly in second quarter, (online). website <https://blog.mobdatathailand.org/2025-04-01>

be held on 5 August 2025 and to oppose the Southern Economic Corridor (SEC) project and lands-grabbing. Letters of petition have been submitted to the Government House demanding the government review the policies on 15 October 2025 focusing on the concern that laws are paving the way for land-grabbing in the community and adverse environmental impacts inflicted without public participation.³

3. Public assemblies by the People's Movement for Just Society (P-Move) Throughout 2025, P-Move organized a series of activities to advocate for structural solutions to land issues, community rights, and justice in local areas. Most of these activities coalesced around three key issues, including land and forest issues, disputes with state enterprises over public utilities, and impacts from large-scale development projects by the state, including special economic laws. Early in the year, P-Move's land network from various provinces have gone to Bangkok to demand to know progress regarding the solutions promised since last year by the government including the acceleration of community land title deeds, solutions to forest-related disputes, and the allocation of backlog farmland. In the middle of 2025, P-Move organized several assemblies at the Government House since the government had failed to carry out the roadmap to address land issues as agreed in the Joint Committee. In particular, ethnic and indigenous groups continued to face legal prosecution for allegedly encroaching the forest and being excluded to their traditional farmland. Many communities were also affected by state land management policies. In various instances, P-Move has escalated their demand for the state to issue a moratorium on legal execution and to advocate for legal reform including the amendment of forest and land laws. In late 2025, **sit-in protest was held to follow up on solutions to the problems at the Government House**. Key events included their gathering and monitoring of the meeting of the Committee to Address Issues raised by P-Move during 2-3 November and the group has submitted five key demands concerning the acceleration of community land title deeds, amendments of forest laws in compliance with community rights and the dissolution of the Land Bank. As Mr. Sophon Saram, the government representative, promised to bring all the demands to the attention of the Cabinet the following day, P-Move decided to **called off the public assemblies temporarily** on 5 November 2025

4. Public assemblies to demand labour rights of the former workers of Yarnapund PCL and their alliances including workers from four companies who have been laid off. Their struggle has lasted more than **252 days** throughout 2025, and sit-in protests were held close to the Government House (at the previous office of the Office of The Public Sector Development Commission (OPDC)) from 11 March 2025 onward. Their key demands included the advocacy for the cabinet to approve the use of government contingency fund, **466 million baht**, as advance money to compensate for the 3,000 workers who have been laid off without receiving their legal compensation. They have escalated their protest to staging a **hunger strike** in March-April. Nonetheless, even though their protests have led to their issues being considered in the cabinet and the legal proceeding against the employers who dismissed them, but until

³ Prachatai, Ranong residents marched to demand suspension of hearing on Lard Bridge Project, (online). website <https://prachatai.com/journal/2025/08/114025>

the middle of 2025, the situation remained tense since **the workers were still not compensated**. They have even been charged for violating the Public Assembly Act 2558 as well.

The four issues have kept the public assemblies running the whole year since such **Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR)** affect a wide variety of dimensions. There were also small protests held under the same issues including the public assemblies by the Assembly of the Poor on various issues, the public assemblies of the artisanal fishery networks to oppose Section 69 which would pave the way for fish catch that involves baby fish, the sit-in protests by the ethnic and indigenous peoples awaiting the results of the parliamentary voting on the Ethnic Groups' Way of Life Protection and Promotion Act, the public assemblies to advocate for equal right to housing led by the Four Regions Slum Network (FRSN), the public assemblies to advocate for the allocation of railway land for the poor by the Four Regions Slum Network (FRSN), the public assemblies by the E-san Land Reform Network, and the Phu Sam Phak Nam Conservation Group in Sern River Basin who do not want mining in Chaiyaphum, the public assemblies of the People Living in Forests to advocate for solutions concerning problems from enforcing forest and land laws in Chiang Mai and Bangkok, public assemblies Thai Dam who came to Bangkok to demand their access to their traditional land, public assemblies by the network of community members and villagers from the Khao Kala Conservation Group in the area affected by the industrial stone quarry in Nakhon Sawan Province, public assemblies by villagers from Hua Khao who submitted a letter petition to the Governor of Songkhla to review the order to dismantle their fishing nets; the public assemblies by the Sai Buri River Basin Conservation Network who demanded a project to address drought problem, the public assemblies to oppose the proposal to include Prachinburi Province in the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC), the public assemblies to oppose sugar factory combined with a biomass power plant in Na Pho District, Buriram Province, and the public assemblies to stop Burapha Power Plant project, etc. In addition, public assemblies have been held on labour issues, apart from the Yarnapund PCL workers including the public assemblies by network of workers, the public assemblies by the network of insured person to monitor the change of criteria in Sections 33 and 39, the public assemblies by workers hired to pick berries in Finland-Sweden, the public assemblies by network of workers under the People's Party and the public assemblies by various labour unions of companies including the the Okura Labor Union, the Thai Yashiro Labor Union, and the Daikin Labor Union.

1.2 Public assemblies on political issues

Throughout 2025, a series of public assemblies on political issues have been held in Thailand nationwide including symbolic public assemblies, standing to protest, gathering in front of courts, state agencies, the Government House and the National Assembly of Thailand as well as other activities to raise awareness by civil society. They were aimed at expressing concern about the justice process, political prosecutions, and discontent with the government's policies. As a result, 2025 saw **at least 69 public assemblies on political issues throughout the year including eight in the first quarter, 12 in the second quarter, 27 in the third quarter and 22 in the fourth quarter**.

One of the long-running political issues of public assemblies is the demand of the right to bail among political prisoners. Early the year, key protests included activities to demand the right to bail of political prisoners and justice in the justice process including the “Caravan of Bung’s Friends to Court Bench” and “10th Month in memory of Bung” held to follow up after the death in custody of Netiporn “Bung” Sanesangkhom. In addition, the activities “Speaking Truths Should Not Land One in Jail” and “Justice Hunt: Shining Light to Look For Justice” were held at the Ministry of Justice to express concern about the law enforcement and the overall situation of political prisoners.⁴ In addition, activities were held to show solidarity with members of P-Move, Thalu Fah and Yarnapund PLC workers who faced legal actions and to monitor cases concerning freedom of assembly and freedom of expression and to advocate for a rewrite of the Constitution with public participation.⁵ In the middle of the year, political public assemblies emerged on more diverse political issues including the gathering of the Bright Future in front of the UN Building to oppose the attendance of a meeting by Min Aung Hlaing, the public assemblies in front of the Office of The Public Sector Development Commission (OPDC) to demand an end to legal actions invoking the Public Assembly Act B.E. 2558.⁶

One of the most popular issues of 2025 was the advocacy for **the promulgation of the People’s Amnesty Bill** which has sparked a series of public assemblies since July. Key events began on 9 April 2025 through the activity to show solidarity and to advocate for an amnesty. In July, the National Assembly of Thailand was scheduled to deliberate five versions of the Amnesty Bill including the one proposed by the people’s amnesty network. A public assembly was held on the theme “We Are All Political Prisoners” in front of the Ratchada Criminal Court as participants were standing for 51 minutes matching the number of 51 political prisoners to demand that the National Assembly of Thailand enact the People’s Amnesty Bill. On 9 July 2025, just before the deliberation, the people’s amnesty network held an assembly to closely monitor the parliamentary process at the People’s Plaza inside the National Assembly of Thailand. After the House Speaker brought the meeting to a close before vote-casting and scheduled the next meeting on 16 July 2025. The people’s amnesty network thus proposed to assemble again in front of the Bangkok Art and Culture Centre on 15 July 2025 and on 16 July 2025 to closely monitor the meeting of the National Assembly of Thailand.⁷ Eventually, **the House of Representatives voted by 319:147 to not accept to review the Draft Act to Offer an Amnesty to Persons Who Have Committed a Crime Related to Political Conflicts B.E..... which was proposed by MPs of the former Move Forward/People’s Party, and voted 306:149 to not accept to review the Draft People’s Amnesty Act proposed by 36,723 members of**

⁴ Mob data Thailand, Situation of the right to freedom of freedom of assembly in first quarter, (online). website <https://blog.mobdatathailand.org/2025-01-01>

⁵ Mob data Thailand, Situation of the right to freedom of freedom of assembly in second quarter, (online). website <https://blog.mobdatathailand.org/2025-04-01>

⁶ Mob data Thailand, Situation of the right to freedom of freedom of assembly in second quarter, (online). website <https://blog.mobdatathailand.org/2025-04-01>

⁷ Mob data Thailand, Situation of the right to freedom of freedom of assembly in second quarter, (online). website <https://blog.mobdatathailand.org/2025-07-01>

the public, while voting to accept to review the other three versions of the People’s Amnesty Bill proposed by three other political parties which chose to call them with the same name and similarly imposed restriction against amnesty for Section 112 cases. The votes were cast 299:0 to accept the Promote Peaceful Society Bill B.E.....proposed by MPs from the United Thai Party, 311:0 to accept the Promote Peaceful Society Bill B.E..... proposed by MPs from the former Thai Teachers For People Party/ Klatham Party, and 311:3 to accept the Promote Peaceful Society Bill B.E..... proposed by MPs from the Bhumjaithai Party (BJT).⁸ As a result, the People’s Amnesty Bill proposed by the people was rejected. Nonetheless, an effort to demand the right to bail continued unabated toward the end of the year, although it has turned into different formats including an activity to demand the right to bail through a running contest “Run2free: Run for Freedom” which was held three times. The standing assembly known as “Stand, Stop, Tyranny” to demand the right to bail of political prisoners has still been held every Saturday in Chiang Mai’s Tha Phae since August 2021. In addition, the activity “Making Our Voice Heard for Our Friends in Prison” was held at the Klong Prem Central Prison to show solidarity with people incarcerated in jail as a result of political cases.

During the end of year, a series of public assemblies were still held constantly and one of the most popular political issues as the year drew to a close was the constitutional reform including the activity “Walk to the Future”, “Our Constitution, Our Future”, which was a walk by foot from Wang Noi District, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province to the National Assembly of Thailand and the Democracy Monument with three demands including (1) abolish Constitution 2017, (2) start process to write a new Constitution as a whole, and (3) all the constitution drafters must be elected directly by the public. The activity started on 6 to 10 December, the Constitution Day in Thailand and it coincided with the day the House of Representatives was to deliberate a constitutional amendment to append Chapter 15/1 for a rewrite of the Constitution in its second round whereby votes would be cast on each of the Section following the vote to accept to review the law in principle on 15 October 2025.⁹ The activity was participated by at least 1,000 people from around the country.

In addition, regarding political public assembly and the sit-in protest that lasted more than 241 days by the Government House was the public assembly led by the People and Student Network for the Reform of Thailand (KPT) in collaboration with the People’s Center for the Protection of Monarchy (SPPS), and Kong Thap Tham to oppose the parliamentary reading of the Entertainment Complex Bill, which were a sit-in overnight assembly. Later, they added the demand for the resignation of Paethongtarn Shinawatra

⁸BBC NEWS Thai, Who support-oppose People’s Amnesty Bill proposed by orange party, after two Bill were voted down, while three voted for, (online). website <https://www.bbc.com/thai/articles/cjrlg8gnww7o>

⁹iLaw, Constitutional Reform Season 7: Keep a watch of second round of parliamentary discussion to determine constitutional drafting committee which might not be voted in by the public, (online). website

https://www.ilaw.or.th/articles/56230?fbclid=IwY2xjawOmUcUleHRuA2FlbQlxMABicmlkETEzelBGeEIPWTh4MkpWS1VOc3J0YwZhcHBfaWQOMjlyMDM5MTc4ODlwMDg5MgABHgMx6i0OhR9L2vBDMko4FAH7_U5LFeibrLICSaHf3zcnlfx3Xi6MD79VZfuK_aem_z6lUZi8-ueHJKzBJuJPsfQ

as Prime Minister and on issues concerning border dispute between Thailand and Cambodia to oppose MOUs 33 and 62. The protest started from 2 March 2025 and ended on 29 October 2025.

In sum, political mobilizations in 2025 demonstrated how the right to freedom of assembly continued to be important for a vast number of people. The most popular issue among the assemblers was “people’s amnesty” which has become a core demand since middle of last year. This was followed by the right to bail, an end to political prosecution, and a scrutiny of the government’s performance. Such public assemblies epitomized an effort by civil sector to advocate for structural reform and protection of political rights in accordance with universal democratic and human rights principles. Bringing together data from the four quarters, we found political public assemblies in 2025 show three distinctive natures including (1) a demand of fairness in the justice process including the right to bail and treatment of political prisoners as attested to by a constant “Stand, Stop, Tyranny” activity and several activities to show solidarity, (2) holding to account and criticizing the government’s performance through submitting letters of petition, symbolic actions and major public assemblies including by the United Thailand Group, and (3) public assemblies in response to cabinet resolutions or state policies which are viewed as an infringement of people’s rights including a public assembly law, law to curb cannabis use, and border security policies, etc. As a result, 2025 became a year of robust political mobilizations which are blatantly connected to various structural issues in Thailand.

2. Enforcement of laws and response of police that affect right to freedom of peaceful public assembly and prosecutions under the Public Assembly Act B.E. 2558

2.1 Enforcement of the Public Assembly Act B.E. 2558

In 2025, the enforcement of laws by the authorities continued to be a major hindrance to the exercise of freedom of assembly. In various instances, the enforcement of the **Public Assembly Act B.E. 2558** has led to unnecessary and unproportionate restriction of the right to freedom of peaceful public assembly. One of the most glaring examples was the issuance of a ban of public assembly within the radius of fifty meters around the Government House and the National Assembly of Thailand in Bangkok invoking Section 7, first paragraph *“No public assembly shall be held within the National Assembly, the Government House and the Courts; provided that, the specific place for public assembly is provided therein. The Courts under paragraph two mean the Constitutional Court, the Court of Justice, the Administrative Court, the Military Court and other Courts established by law. In case of necessary and for the maintenance of public safety and public order, the Commissioner General of the Royal Thai Police or his entrusted person shall, after having considered the numbers of participant and related circumstances of each public assembly, have the power to notify no public assembly zone within the radius of not exceeding fifty meters from the boundary of the places under paragraph two.”* From the first to the fourth quarter, there appeared to have been no probable and reasonable ground to justify the claim of the threat to public order.

Table 1 Orders to ban public assembly invoking Section 7, last paragraph, Public Assembly Act B.E. 2558

(the orders have been compiled during the observation and documentation when the police read out the ban on each of the public assemblies)

Quarter	Orders to ban public assemblies within the radius of fifty meters
Quarter 1	<p>Metropolitan Police Bureau’s order no. 122/2025 describing that <i>“The participants have a sit-in protest near the Government House and will likely move closer to protest at the Government House. Given a large number of participants, it may cause a nuisance to motorists and pedestrians and block entrance into the Government House causing public disturbance. The public assembly ban has thus been extended to 8-15 March 2025”</i>. As a result of the Notification, at least one public assembly has been ordered to stop including the public assembly against the Southern Economic Corridor (SEC) Bill.</p>
Quarter 2	<p>Metropolitan Police Bureau’s order no. 151/2025 describing that <i>“The participants have a sit-in protest near the Government House and will likely move closer to protest at the Government House. This will give rise to an impact on public order maintenance”</i>. As a result, the police ordered a halt of the “People Living in Forests” public assembly by the People Living the Forest Assembly (Sor Por Chor), the Northern Peasant Federation (NPF), and the People’s Movement for Just Society (P-Move) at the Government House. Through loudspeakers, the police declared <i>“This area is protected by a ban of public assembly within the radius of fifty meters of the Government House invoking Section 7, last paragraph, of the Public Assembly Act. Please return to your site in front of the UN Building”</i></p>
Quarter 3	<p>Metropolitan Police Bureau’s order no. 375/2025 to ban public assembly within the radius of fifty meters of the Government House from 29 August 2025 to 24 September 2025 (detail unknown)</p>
Quarter 4	<p>Order number was unknown, but during the <i>“Thailand Is Not Yours: Actions to stop mineral deals, Thailand-USA MOU”</i> public assembly by the Network of People Who Own Mineral Resources and the NGO Coordinating Committee on Development (NGO Cod) on 2 December 2025 in front of the Government House, the group’s coordinator who notified the Dusit Police Station revealed that <i>“The reply to the letter seeking notification states that as there shall be a public assembly around the Government House, but according to the Metropolitan Police Bureau’s plan to maintain public order and public assembly as well as traffic management in the vicinity of Dusit Palace and the Government House, which falls within the security maintenance radius and may affect public security maintenance and the traffic flow on Ratchadamnoen Nok Rd. and Phitsanulok Rd., the activity is thus deemed an offence against Section 7 of the Public Assembly Act, coupled with according to a resolution</i></p>

<i>from the Metropolitan Police Division 1's meeting. The participants are advised to hold their activity in front of the UN Building instead.”¹⁰</i>
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According to Amnesty International Thailand's public assembly observations, throughout 2025, among public assemblies taking place around the Government House and the National Assembly of Thailand, none of them has been found to show any violent behavior. Therefore, the issuance of orders to ban public assembly in such places, per Table 1, was the exercise of power beyond what is permitted by law and the capitalization of legal gaps in the Public Assembly Act B.E. 2558 of which Section 7, last paragraph, prescribes that “...*the Commissioner General of the Royal Thai Police or his entrusted person shall, after having considered the numbers of participant and related circumstances of each public assembly, have the power to notify no public assembly zone within the radius of not exceeding fifty meters from the boundary of the places under paragraph two (the National Assembly of Thailand, the Government House and the Court of Justice).*” Amnesty International Thailand finds that the public assembly bans per Table 1 were issued before such public assembly and without considering the related circumstances of the participants as required in the last paragraph of Section 7 of the Public Assembly Act B.E. 2558.

Apart from requirement of place of assembly, the requirement to notify the police of the public assembly under Section 10 of the Public Assembly Act B.E. 2558 has become an obstacle to the organization of a public assembly. For example, the public assembly by the Mok Luang Rim Nam Group, the Fai Lam Thung, the Act Young Club, and the Workers' Union to hold a rally to speak and express themselves symbolically against Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, chairman of the State Administration Council (SAC) and coup leader from Myanmar who was scheduled to attend the “Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation” or BIMSTEC conference in Thailand on 5 April 2025, has led to having **three persons being charged for failure to make notification**, and the charge sheets were issued on 21 July 2025 in which the inquiry officer accused them of “**holding a public assembly without notifying the authority at least twenty four hours prior to the public assembly, which is an offence punishable by a fine not exceeding 10,000 baht according to the Public Assembly Act B.E. 2558's Section 10 coupled with Section 28.**”¹¹

Note that the right to peaceful assembly is enshrined in Article 21 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and according to the UN Human Rights Committee, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' General Comment No. 37 adopted on 23 July 2020, it prescribes that there is a presumption in favour of considering assemblies to be peaceful. Moreover, isolated acts of violence by

¹⁰ iLawclub, Activity “Thailand Is Not Yours: Actions to stop mineral deals, Thailand-USA MOU, (online). website <https://www.instagram.com/p/DRwEXn0j3TU/>

¹¹ TLHR, Police pressing Public Assembly Act offences against three activists following the protest against ‘Min Aung Hlaing’ in front of Myanmar Embassy, ‘Royalist Group’ found to be complainant, (online). website <https://tlhr2014.com/archives/77934>

some participants should not be attributed to others, to the organizers or to the assembly as such. The question of whether or not an assembly is peaceful must be answered with reference to violence that originates from the participants. Blanket restrictions on peaceful assemblies are presumptively disproportionate. Permission must be given for use of a place that enable participants to send their messages to the audience within sight and sound of the assemblies against which they are directed. In addition, the General Comment No. 37 states that having to apply for permission from the authorities undercuts the idea that peaceful assembly is a basic right.

Therefore, the issuing of a blanket ban by the authority under Section 7, last paragraph, despite invoking domestic law, may be incompatible with a basic right, as long as such public assembly remains peaceful.

2.2 Police response

In 2025, the police response toward public assemblies continued to show a tendency of systematic control and restriction of freedom of public assembly placing an importance on law enforcement rather than facilitating the exercise of rights. Apart from the Public Assembly Act B.E. 2558, other laws including traffic obstruction offence, have been used to prosecute the organizers and the participants even though such activities have been conducted peacefully and symbolically. For example, public assemblies to demand political issues and human rights in various places have to encounter strict restriction on places and time, the participants were pushed out from the government offices or public spaces which held a symbolic value, and the deployment of a large number of officers, the installation of iron barricade, and the systematic photographing of participants. These included the public assembly by the Northern Peasant Federation (NPF) and the People Living the Forest Assembly (Sor Por Chor) who were converged at the Government House to monitor the cabinet meeting on solutions to forest and land issues on 1 April 2025 when the police brought iron barricade over and use police vehicles as a wall manned with crowd control police in khaki uniform to block the Chamai Maruchate Bridge, the last intersection before the Government House. Such practice happened with several other public assemblies in 2025, particularly the public assemblies taking place around the Government House.

In addition, police also held people in custody or holding them without pressing charges. For example, during the protest led by Saithan, a 19-year-old student on 4 April to protest against Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services and chairman of the State Administration Council (SAC) who came here to attend the BIMSTEC meeting in Thailand, as host country, **the student was apprehended by the police** in front of the Shangri-La Hotel, Bangkok, and then brought to the Yannawa Police Station, before being released.¹²

¹² TLHR, Police's arrests of "TU student" for protesting against Min Aung Hlaing while attending #BIMSTEC meeting, before letting him go without charges, (online). website <https://tlhr2014.com/archives/74605>

Such practice has given rise to chilling climate and negatively affected the exercise of the right to freedom of expression and public assembly. Meanwhile, there appeared to have been no mechanisms to effectively check or to hold the authority accountable. As a result, and as a whole, the police response in 2025 has still be carried out not in compliance with necessity and proportionality according to international human rights standards and continued to be a key obstacle to the exercise of freedom of peaceful assembly in Thailand

2.3 Prosecutions under Public Assembly Act B.E. 2558

In 2025, at least five cases have been prosecuted invoking the Public Assembly Act B.E. 2558 including three cases stemming from the offences that did not take place in 2025, and the complaints had been acted on retrospectively.

- **Case no. 1** Incidence taking place on 8 October 2024 as the participants marched to the Government House with five alleged offenders
- **Case no. 2** Incidence taking place on 16 October 2024 as the participants marched to the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives with one alleged offender
- **Case no. 3** Incidence taking place on 18 October 2024 as the participants marched to submit a letter of petition at the National Assembly of Thailand with one alleged offender

The three cases involved the public assemblies led by P-Move during 7-24 October 2024 at the Government House and the cases have been filed separately in relation to the marching of the participants to carry out their activities. Essentially, the protests were promoted by the fact that Prime Minister Paethongtarn Shinawatra had failed to set up a committee to solve the problems of the People’s Movement for Just Society (P-Move) and failed to solve the people’s problems effectively. This has prompted them to get organized and to follow up on the matter. All the cases have been reported by Pol. Lt. Col. Chaithat Chiangtha mainly for “being assembled by violating the ban of an assembly within the radius of fifty meters of the Government House” under the Public Assembly Act’s Section 7, last paragraph.

In addition, at least two other cases happened in 2025 facing prosecution including;

- **Case no. 1** stemming from the public assembly by the People Living the Forest Assembly (Sor Por Chor) and the Northern Peasant Federation (NPF) on 1 April 2025 at the Government House. There were seven alleged offenders in this case and their main offence was “being assembled by violating the ban of an assembly within the radius of fifty meters of the Government House” under the Public Assembly Act’s Section 7, last paragraph.
- **Case no. 2** concerning the public assembly by the Mok Luang Rim Nam Group, the Fai Lam Thung, the Act Young Club, and the Workers’ Union to hold a rally to speak and express themselves symbolically against Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, chairman of the State Administration Council

(SAC) and coup leader from Myanmar who was scheduled to attend the “Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation” or BIMSTEC conference in Thailand on 5 April 2025. In this case, **three alleged offenders were accused of failing to make notification of public assembly**, and the charge sheets were issued on 21 July 2025 in which the inquiry officer accused them of “holding a public assembly without notifying the authority at least twenty four hours prior to the public assembly, which is an offence punishable by a fine not exceeding 10,000 baht according to the Public Assembly Act B.E. 2558’s Section 10 coupled with Section 28.

The 2025 report on the situation of freedom of peaceful assembly offers a clear overview that public assemblies remain an essential tool for people to use to demand their rights, fairness and political participation. The Thai state, however, has failed to protect such rights genuinely. Throughout 2025, a vast number of peaceful assemblies had to encounter systematic restriction of rights through the law enforcement, the issuing of assembly bans, the imposing of unnecessary restrictions and the legal prosecution against participants even in cases whereby neither violence nor threats to public order appeared to happen.

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2560’s Section 44 upholds the right to freedom of peaceful and unarmed assembly and requires that any restriction of such right can only be done when necessary and without impacting the substantive rights. Nonetheless, the report’s findings shed light on how the enforcement of the Public Assembly Act B.E. 2558, and its Section 7, last paragraph and Section 10, in particular, has been used to expand restriction of such rights more than necessarily and proportionately. It has led to public spaces which are supposed to allow political and social expression being controlled and impeded relentlessly.

As a state party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Thailand is obliged to act in compliance with its Article Section 21 to respect, protect and promote the right to peaceful assembly. Such principle is reiterated in the UN Human Rights Committee’s General Comment No. 37 which clearly states that a public assembly must favorably be assumed to be peaceful and restriction of rights can only be done when necessary and proportionate objectives are met. The issuing of a blanket and advance ban on public assembly, the pushing of participants from the symbolic area and the prosecution of participants for failure to make notification are all incompatible with the said international human rights standards. Moreover, the police response in 2025 which tend to emphasize control, putting pressure and enforcing the law rather than facilitating has given rise to a climate of fear and chilling effect toward the exercise of people’s rights. How forces are deployed, the use of iron barricades, the photographing of participants and by holding a person in custody without pressing charges against them does not only dismantle trust in the law enforcement process, but also reflects a lack of checks and balances to ensure accountability and effective exercise of state power.

Amnesty International Thailand deems peaceful assemblies not a threat to national security. Rather, it is the vital part of a democratic society, the rule of law and human rights. Defending the right to

public assembly is therefore not merely a responsibility according to international law. Rather, it is a basic commitment of the state to respect human dignity of all people. This report calls on the Thai government to promptly review and reform the laws and practices regarding public assembly, particularly the Public Assembly Act B.E. 2558 to ensure their compliance with international human rights standards. We also call for an end to weaponize laws to suppress rights and an effort to create an enabling environment conducive to public participation freely, peacefully and safely to ensure genuine protection of the right to peaceful assembly, not just in the legal language, but in reality, in Thai society.