Thai CSOs Coalition for the UPR and UN Mechanisms

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Human Rights Violations, Forced Evictions, and Judicial Harassment of the Khlong 5 Community in Pathum Thani Province



Joint UPR Submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review

53rd Session of the UPR Working Group



Joint UPR Submission: Human Rights Violations, Forced Evictions, and Judicial Harassment of the Khlong 5 Community in Pathum Thani Province
April 2026

Submission by

Central Region Women's Health Network (Pathum Thani) and
the Thai CSOs Coalition for the UPR and UN Mechanisms

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1. Introduction

1.1 This submission is made by the Central Region Women's Health Network (Pathum Thani) and Thai CSOs Coalition for the UPR, a community-based organization working to promote and protect the rights of women, children, and youth in Pathum Thani Province, Thailand. This report assesses Thailand's compliance with its human rights obligations following its third Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in 2021, with a particular focus on access to justice and land rights, especially for women in vulnerable communities. The findings are based on first-hand accounts and documentation collected from affected community members. While the Royal Thai Government accepted a number of recommendations in the previous UPR cycle, implementation remains limited. Persistent concerns include barriers to justice and insecure land tenure affecting marginalized women.

1.2 During the 3rd UPR cycle, Thailand did not receive any recommendations specifically addressing the situation of communities affected by land disputes in Pathum Thani Province, including the Khlong 5 Canal community, reflecting a limited recognition of the challenges faced by informal settlements and vulnerable women in land tenure conflicts. Nevertheless, the Thai government received numerous recommendations related to (1) access to justice and fair trial guarantees, (2) the protection of vulnerable groups, including women and marginalized communities, (3) the right to an adequate standard of living, including housing, and (4) land rights and protection against forced evictions. Thailand supported the majority of these recommendations. However, as this submission demonstrates, implementation remains insufficient in practice, particularly in cases involving land title disputes, where affected communities especially women continue to face barriers to justice, insecurity of tenure, and risks of eviction without adequate safeguards.[12]

1.3 This Submission indicates that Thailand doesn't have policies that fully protect vulnerable people especially if they are facing legal issues such as land conflict. This issues will be discussed in the following manner:

- Section 2 explains the Khlong 5 Canal Community, Bueng Yitho Subdistrict, Thanyaburi District, Pathum Thani Province background to build more understanding on this issue.
- Section 3 explains the time line of what actually happened through the lawsuit period against the women community.
- Section 4 discusses the lawsuit process that violates human rights and takes advantage of vulnerable community residents.
- Section 5 discusses threat and abuse through women victims during the land lawsuit process.
- Section 6 discusses humanitarian impact and local realities.

[12] OHCHR UPR outcome report (Thailand 3rd cycle) available at: https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/WG.6/39/THA/1

- Section 7 discusses recommendations to address the structural challenges, rights violations, and lack of effective implementation identified in the preceding sections.

2. Khlong 5 Canal Community, Bueng Yitho Subdistrict, Thanyaburi District, Pathum Thani Province background

2.1. Thailand's legal framework governing land rights is primarily based on the Land Code B.E. 2497 (1954), which regulates land ownership, title issuance, and land administration, alongside relevant provisions under the Constitution that recognize the right to property and adequate housing. While the framework provides formal mechanisms for land registration and dispute resolution, it has been widely criticized for lacking sufficient safeguards to protect vulnerable and informal communities, particularly those without formal land titles. In practice, land administration processes such as title issuance, land surveys, and boundary determinations are heavily reliant on administrative discretion, creating risks of irregularities and unequal enforcement. As illustrated in the case of the Khlong 5 Canal community in Pathum Thani Province, these structural gaps have enabled the expansion of land titles into long-established residential areas, public land, and waterways, resulting in disputes, evictions, and barriers to justice for low-income residents, particularly women and marginalized groups. This reflects broader challenges in ensuring tenure security and equitable access to justice within Thailand's land governance system.

2.2 The Khlong 5 canal-side community has existed for over six decades. Residents historically lived along the canal and gradually settled on land adjacent to it. Approximately 100 families have been living in this area. Most of them have low income backgrounds with majority women, elderly persians and informal workers. These households mostly have limited access to education and legal knowledge. They are mostly house wives, cleaners or factory workers. The land where they are living on was long understood by residents to be either unused or public land, as no ownership claims were made for decades. [13]

3. Timeline of what actually happened through the land grabbing period against the women community

3.1. Until 2014, residents lived peacefully for decades without disputes from either government or private matters. A local road between the canal and the community was registered as a public local highway in 2013. Soon after that in 2014 a private landowner;s legal representative initiated land servers and subdivision of land titles. This action from the private landowner led to some concerns among people living in the community. Firstly, land previously recorded as agricultural land without structures was reclassified. Secondly, land titles were extended to cover community areas, public roadways and parts of the canal. And lastly, there was a rapid transfer and sale of the land to private companies within a few months. During this

[13] Data collected through an interview with the Khlong 5 community during Manushya's UPR workshop on 31 March 2026

period of land contract signing there are individuals who are wealthy well known persons in the community, government figures and military figures were granted 725,000 THB (22,213 USD) as a financial incentive to support land claims. Moreover local officials from Thanyaburi Land Office and witnesses also benefited from these land claims improperly. The dispute originated when legal representatives of a new land owner, in coordination with officials from the Thanyaburi District Office and the Thanyaburi Land Office, conducted a land survey. This process resulted in the expansion of a land title deed that overlapped with established community areas, local public highways, and extended into the local canal.[14]

3.2 The new land owner party claimed status as the primary landowner, adjacent landowner, and public supervisor. It is observed that the land officers applied the 2011 regulations regarding the expansion of land plot maps but failed to apply the accompanying regulations regarding adjacent land boundary recording. Furthermore, official land records were filed stating that the land was currently in use without any contesting parties. Subsequently, eviction lawsuits were initiated against the first two households located at the beginning of the canal.[15]

4. Lawsuit process that violates human rights and takes advantage of vulnerable community residents

4.1 Beginning in 2018, lawsuits were filed against residents to force recognition of these titles. The lawsuit went by so poorly that it was mostly filed against elderly and illiterate women who live in the area. Beside that, the lawyers of the new land titles use the method of intimidation and lack of transparency in legal proceedings.

4.2 **Case Study 1:** in 2018, the wealthy party's lawyer began mass eviction lawsuits to force the community to recognize the title deed issued in 2016. The litigation strategy specifically targeted illiterate elderly women. Due to a lack of legal knowledge and intimidation by the legal team, many residents signed "compromise agreements" out of fear. These residents were reportedly denied the opportunity to read the contract terms before signing. In exchange for signing away their rights, they were permitted to remain in their homes for only three additional years.[16]

4.3 **Case study 2:** Two women residing near the initially sued households, who had limited educational backgrounds and high levels of fear, were misled by a male official from the Irrigation Department.[17] He encouraged them to file for Adverse Possession and recommended a

[14] ThaiPBS, ร้อง กสม.ตรวจสอบเอกชนออกเอกสารสิทธิทับที่ชาวบ้าน จ.ปทุมธานี, (24 March 2022), available at: https://www.thaipbs.or.th/news/content/313940?fbclid=IwdGRjcAQ_8-BleHRuA2FlbQIxMQBzcnRjBmFwcF9pZAo2NjI4NTY4Mzc5AAEeM4MYbdH2bc9Z67aXNqLjD-SiL2OBkyIZSDGOrFBSf_MR6GdJHUqkXNSb-RA_aem_X9Zet1zDA2_56ljT0em_2A

[15] Data collected through an interview with the Khlong 5 community during Manushya's UPR workshop on 31 March 2026

[16] Data collected through an interview with the Khlong 5 community during Manushya's UPR workshop on 31 March 2026

[17] Matichon Online, ชาวบ้านปทุมฯ ร่ำไห้ ร้องคนตระกูลดังไล่ที่, (15 September 2022), available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iXgW0WZ5mao

specific lawyer. Unaware of the complex history of the land, the women followed this advice. They ultimately lost the case. The new land owner party's legal team subsequently used this court judgment as a precedent and legal weapon to justify further evictions and to contest the rights of the remaining community members before various government agencies.[18]

4.4 **Case study 3:** Only the mother of the community leader, an illiterate woman, chose to contest the lawsuit. Although the leader's sister was the official house registration holder and caretaker of the property, the mother was the one sued. The community leader assisted her mother by gathering evidence and requesting a "disputed land map." This map revealed that the title deed indeed encroached upon Irrigation Department land and local highways. However, the court ruled against the mother, citing Section 1373 of the Civil Code, stating that land officials are government employees with no personal stake in the matter and are presumed to have performed their duties honestly.[19]

5. Threat and abuse against women victims during the land lawsuit process.

5.1 The community leader obtained survey records from the Irrigation Department confirming the encroachment and presented them to a surveyor to object to a new survey. Shortly after, she was arrested under a warrant for "obstruction/trespass" as a follower in an eviction case. She was handcuffed like a violent criminal and detained before being released on a 5,000 THB bail.[20]

Procedural anomalies identified include:

- Withholding of Documents: Court officials initially refused to let the leader view the case file, providing only three photocopied pages.
- Backdating of Records: Upon later inspection of the Legal Execution Department files, it was found that an official announcement was recorded as posted on September 23, 2023, one day *before* the announcement was actually issued (September 24, 2023).
- Fast-tracked Warrants: Arrest warrants for three women (the leader, her mother, and her sister) were requested only 20 days after the announcement, effectively preventing the sister from filing a legal objection in time.

6. Humanitarian impact and local realities

6.1 The community has resided on this land for 60 to 70 years, originally settling from boats. The area once ownerless and not classified as state, park, or irrigation property has grown to over 100 low-income families.

[18] Case No. 842/2560, Case No.1030/2561; Ms. Amornphan Yangnit (Petitioner) and Mr. Ammarit Sanidvong na Ayudhya (Objector).
[19] Case No. 13/2562, Case No. 325/2563; *Mr. Ammarit Sanidvong na Ayudhya v. Mrs. Veena Khampira.*
[20] Case No. 1486/2566, Case No. 196/2567; Mrs. Pastiya Srichan (1st) and Mrs. Woranan Chaibangsu (2nd)

Observations on the current conflict:

- Lack of State Protection: Despite protests, petitions, and the leader presenting evidence of "unusual" deed issuance, state agencies (Electricity, Water, Local District) claim they cannot intervene due to court orders.
- Physical Harassment: The wealthy party has hired unidentified men and used heavy machinery to demolish fences and homes. This has led to physical confrontations with the residents, who are primarily women and the elderly.
- Economic Hardship: Residents are afraid to leave for work for fear their homes will be demolished in their absence. Some have accepted small "exit payments" to move into rental housing, increasing their financial burden.
- Alteration of Terrain: Boundary markers and ridges that historically separated the wealthy party's land from the community have been removed to merge the plots visually.

The community has filed a lawsuit with the Central Administrative Court to revoke the title deeds. While this case is pending:

- The new land owner party's legal team and land officials have allegedly continued surveying and subdividing the land to facilitate transfers to third parties, including the community chairman and the village headman.
- A memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed at the Thanyaburi District Office to suspend all surveys until the Court rules; however, this agreement has been repeatedly violated by the Land Office and the Village Headman.
- The Irrigation Department has reportedly moved boundary markers from their original positions, with some now placed in the middle of the water, contradicting previous survey records.

6.2 The community remains in a state of high tension. Despite ongoing proceedings in the Administrative Court, the new land title party continues to deploy private security and machinery to evict residents. The community leader continues to face threats of arrest for "obstructing" the landowner, while residents maintain a 24-hour vigil to protect their homes.

6.3 This case raises serious concerns under Thai law including right to adequate housing (constitution Section 33 and Land code (Section 1382))[21]Rights to fair Trial (Section 40 - 2007 Context/Relevant Concept), right of women (CEDAW) that Thailand implements through gender

[21] Possession of property available law at:
https://www.thailandlawonline.com/thai-real-estate-law/holding-possession-and-possessory-rights-to-property

equality legislation and Anti-SLAPP policy that Thailand also recently introduced to protect human rights defenders (section 161/1, section 165/2).[22]

7. Recommendations

7.1 The submitting organization recommends that the Government of Thailand:

Regarding access to justice and fair judicial processes in land-related disputes

- Guarantee that all persons, particularly women and marginalized communities affected by land disputes, have equal access to justice and are able to effectively exercise their rights before courts and administrative bodies, without intimidation or discrimination.
- Ensure access to justice for vulnerable communities, including through the provision of free or affordable legal aid, transparent judicial procedures, and safeguards to guarantee informed consent in legal agreements.
- Ensure the prompt, independent, and impartial investigation of alleged irregularities in land title issuance, and revoke or amend titles found to have been issued unlawfully, in accordance with domestic and international human rights standards.

Regarding land rights, housing, and protection against forced evictions

- Guarantee the right to adequate housing, including security of tenure, protection against forced eviction, and access to appropriate compensation or resettlement in accordance with international human rights standards.
- Ensure that all evictions are carried out only as a last resort, in full compliance with international human rights standards, and suspend evictions in cases where legal disputes remain unresolved or due process guarantees have not been met.

Regarding the protection of human rights defenders and affected communities

- Ensure the protection of human rights defenders, including women community leaders, from harassment, arbitrary arrest, and intimidation, and provide effective remedies in cases of violations.
- Adopt and implement measures to prevent the misuse of legal processes, including strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPP), and ensure that such mechanisms are not used to target vulnerable communities or human rights defenders.

Regarding accountability and oversight of state authorities

- Ensure accountability of state officials involved in misconduct, including through effective oversight mechanisms, disciplinary measures, and access to remedies for affected persons.

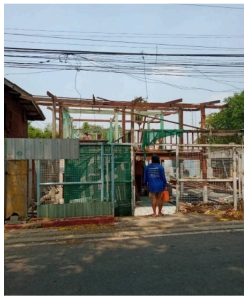
[22] ICJ, Thailand: New law protecting SLAPPs marks progress but much more is needed,10 Jun 2025, available at: https://www.icj.org/thailand-new-law-protecting-slapps-marks-progress-but-much-more-is-needed/

Annex: Evidence supporting the UPR Submission






The struggle to protect community interests resulted in the leaders of the protesting group bringing in police and thugs to oppose and demolish houses in June 2023.




The villagers fought to prevent the demolition, but some houses were unable to withstand the pressure and were demolished because the owners claimed ownership based on land deeds in August 2022.





The villagers fought back by filing a police report at Thanyaburi Police Station, submitting a letter to the district chief, and holding protests because no agency had come to their aid. They endured heavy rain in the hope that someone would take notice and come to their rescue. This took place in October 2022.

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