

Thai PM Suspended over leaked call with Hun Sen



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Thailand's Constitutional Court has suspended Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra over a leaked phone call with former Cambodian leader Hun Sen, igniting political uproar and intensifying calls for her dismissal. In the audio, Paetongtarn affectionately referred to Hun Sen as "uncle" and criticized a Thai military commander remarks that sparked backlash from conservative lawmakers and the public.

The court voted 7–2 to suspend her while reviewing a petition seeking her removal. She now has 15 days to submit her defense. In the interim, the deputy prime minister will serve as acting PM, though Paetongtarn remains in the cabinet as culture minister, a position assigned just hours before the court’s decision.

The leaked call reportedly involved sensitive discussions about the long-standing Thai-Cambodian border dispute, reignited after a Cambodian soldier was killed in May. Critics accuse Paetongtarn of undermining national interests, but she defended the call, saying her intentions were to “avoid chaos and loss of life,” and reiterated her actions were “more than 100%... for the country.”

If removed, Paetongtarn would become the third member of the Shinawatra family to lose power prematurely, following the dismissal of her aunt Yingluck and predecessor Srettha Thavisin. Her Pheu Thai party has faced repeated judicial setbacks most recently, the court disqualified the reformist Move Forward Party, despite its electoral success in 2023.

The ruling comes as Paetongtarn’s father, former PM Thaksin Shinawatra, faces trial under Thailand’s strict lese majeste law. He returned from exile last year under a controversial deal with former political rivals, including factions linked to the military and monarchy.

At 38, Paetongtarn is Thailand’s youngest leader and only the second woman to serve as prime

minister, but her future now hangs in the balance amid a volatile political landscape.