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AUGUST 29, 2014

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Thai court drops murder charges against Abhisit

BANGKOK: A Thai court on Thursday dismissed murder charges against former premier Abhisit Vejjajiva (pix) and his ex-deputy over a bloody 2010 protest crackdown, months after a military coup tipped the balance of power in the politically divided nation.

Relatives of the victims criticised the surprise decision to drop the case as politically motivated. The charges were brought to court under a previous government led by Abhisit's rivals who have since been ousted from office.



Scores of demonstrators died under Abhisit's establishment-backed leadership in street clashes between mostly unarmed "Red Shirt" supporters of fugitive

former premier Thaksin Shinawatra and security forces firing live rounds in Bangkok.

A criminal court in the capital, which previously agreed to hear the charges, ruled that it did not have jurisdiction in the case against Abhisit and his then-deputy Suthep Thaugsuban because they were holders of public office at the time and acting under an emergency decree.

It said the only court with the authority to consider the allegations is the Supreme Court's Criminal Division for Holders of Political Positions.

The ruling comes three months after the military seized power from Abhisit's political opponents in a bloodless coup. - AFP



ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN

FOR LOVE OF THE COUNTRY

... Students joyfully wave flags and sing patriotic songs at a rehearsal for the 57th Merdeka celebrations at Dataran Merdeka yesterday. 'Malaysia ... Di Sini Lahirnya Sebuah Cinta' is the official theme of this year's Merdeka. The theme is taken from the lyrics of the song 'Warisan' popularised by the late Sudirman Haji Arshad.

New lead

MH370 may have turned south EARLIER than thought

CANBERRA: New information unearthed by Australian authorities indicate that Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 "may have turned south earlier" than

initially thought, AFP reported. The new detail came after "further refinement" of satellite data and as investigators attempted to map the position of the jet during a failed attempt to contact

it earlier in its flight path, Australian Deputy Prime Minister Warren Truss said. As such, the hunt for the missing plane will now focus on the southern part of the existing search

zone, he announced yesterday. "The search area remains the same, but some of the information that we now have suggests to us

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