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# Abhisit Vejjajiva



Abhisit Vejjajiva was Thailand's 27<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister at the age of 44. Born in Newcastle, United Kingdom, the Oxford-educated politician had an academic career teaching at Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy before joining politics.

Abhisit held the office of Prime Minister from 2008-2011 with a platform revolving around "Putting People First" and anti-corruption. Among the achievements of Abhisit's government are free healthcare, higher minimum wage and free education, including textbooks and milk for nursery-school children.

As a former Leader of the Democrat Party, Thailand's oldest political party, Abhisit is a seasoned politician with 3 decades of experience.

During his term of office, the world was in the middle of an economic turmoil, and there were many domestic political tensions in Thailand at that time. Despite these challenges, the Abhisit Government was credited with effective economic policies and bringing Thailand to a stable and sound financial standing through stimulus packages, that were on track and on time, and investing not just in jobs, but also in increasing the competitiveness of the economy. Moreover, the economy was strengthened through the increasing of the country's foreign reserves, reducing debt-to-GDP ratio, lowering unemployment rate, and protecting consumers from fluctuating oil prices.

Thailand chaired the regional grouping ASEAN in 2009 amidst the color-coded political conflicts in the country, when Abhisit was Prime Minister. Prime Minister Abhisit has been held in high regard internationally, and he represented ASEAN at the G-20 Leaders' Summit in Pittsburg, USA in 2009.

Abhisit resigned as Member of Parliament and Democrat Party leader, following the 2019 elections, and remains active in Thai politics, including on the widely supported call for the amendment of the 2017 Constitution.