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From: Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>
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Subject: Fw: Thailand mulls royal pardon, could benefit Thaksin (AP)

From: OpsNewsTicker
Sent: Wednesday, November 16, 2011 06:33 AM
To: NEWS-EAP; NEWS-Mahogany
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Subject: Thailand mulls royal pardon, could benefit Thaksin (AP)

BANGKOK (AP) - The Thai government says it has discussed issuing a pardon for convicted criminals.

This could benefit the prime minister's brother, Thaksin Shinawatra, who fled the country in 2008 to escape a corruption conviction.

Deputy Prime Minister Chalerm Yubumrung says he chaired a Cabinet meeting Tuesday to discuss a royal decree to free convicts.

Although it is issued by constitutional monarch King Bhumibol Adulyadej, the wording of the royal pardon and its terms are drafted by the government.

Chalerm refused to elaborate saying "no final decision was taken."

Chalerm was responding to local media reports Wednesday that said the Cabinet has already approved the royal pardon, which could allow Thaksin to come back home from self-exile without being jailed.

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