

Vietnam holds 59 Chinese, Taiwanese for fraud

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Vietnamese police have detained 29 Chinese and 30 Taiwanese suspects in the region's latest Internet fraud scam, an officer said on Tuesday.

They were picked up during raids Monday morning on four guest houses and hotels in Tuy Hoa, the capital of Phu Yen province in central Vietnam, provincial police spokesman Colonel Nguyen Trung Nghia told AFP.

"These Chinese and Taiwanese were caught red-handed while they were using dozens of high-tech devices connected to two servers installed in the United States and [South Korea](#) to commit their crimes via [Internet telephony](#)," he said.

The spokesman added that the alleged [fraudsters](#) were searching for personal information about their victims, mostly Chinese people, in an attempt to extort money from them.

In similar scams around [Southeast Asia](#), investigators have said fraudsters posed as police or other officials to dupe victims of their money.

In June, officers in Taiwan, China, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand rounded up nearly 600 people, mostly Taiwanese and Chinese, for alleged Internet and telecom [fraud](#) that mainly targeted residents of China.

The coordinated operation came after Vietnamese state media in May reported the arrest of 56 "Asian" foreigners, who were not further identified, in a similar fraud operation.

Vietnam's first crackdown on telecom fraud came in July last year with the arrest of almost 50 Taiwanese and Chinese, police from Taiwan announced at the time.

They said Taiwanese fraud rings had moved offshore after the island's police joined forces with Chinese and Thai authorities to bust their operations.

Foreigners previously detained for alleged high-tech fraud in Vietnam generally paid a fine before being handed over to officials from their home countries, said Nghia, the police spokesman.

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