

450 Malaysia snakes, tortoises escape cooking pot

October 28 2011

(AP) -- Malaysian authorities have rescued some 450 endangered cobras and tortoises headed for cooking pots in Thailand.

Celescoriano Razond, Malaysia's wildlife deputy enforcement director, says officials confiscated 302 Asiatic [cobra](#), 145 [tortoises](#) and a [macaque monkey](#) Thursday from a house in northern Kedah state, near the Thai border.

He says two men have been arrested and could be charged for being in possession of protected wildlife, which carries a penalty of up to five years in jail and a fine.

He said Friday that an initial probe showed the animals were being smuggled out of the country to be peddled to restaurants in Thailand specializing in exotic meat.

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