

Thai man nabbed with 16 tiger cubs in truck

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Rescued tiger cubs at a police station in Vietnam's Ha Tinh province last month. A Thai man has been arrested with 16 tiger cubs in his pick-up truck while driving near the kingdom's border with Laos, police said Saturday.

A Thai man has been arrested with 16 tiger cubs in his pick-up truck while driving near the kingdom's border with Laos, police said Saturday.

The 52-year-old was arrested Friday afternoon in Khon Kaen province in northeastern Thailand during a routine check by authorities, who found the cats, aged between six weeks and two months, in cages in the back of the vehicle.

Police said the man was paid 15,000 baht (500 dollars) to transport the [tigers](#) from [Bangkok](#), but he denied knowing the identity of the animals' owners.

"He said he only talked to them on the telephone not in person," Lieutenant Colonel Kusol Pongbunchan, chief investigator of the local

district police told AFP.

He said the driver faced charges of illegal possession and trafficking of [endangered species](#).

The tigers, which are not thought to have been taken from the wild, were entrusted to officials of the National Park, Wildlife and Plant Conservation Department.

Thailand, a hub of international smuggling, is one of just 13 countries hosting fragile [tiger populations](#). Worldwide, numbers are estimated to have fallen to only 3,200 tigers from approximately 100,000 a century ago.

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