

# Thai cops bust \$3 million phone scam gang

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Thai police have arrested hundreds of foreign criminals in a "good guys in, bad guys out" policy, as the kingdom looks to shake out crooks based in the country

A gang of 44 people from China and Taiwan have been arrested in Thailand for running an elaborate phone scam that conned \$3 million from scores of victims, police said Monday.

Raids on houses in the capital Bangkok and the sleazy resort town of Pattaya snared the well-organised gang, whose targets were mainly based in China.

Police seized homemade sound-proof booths used to call the victims, who were carefully selected for their vulnerability.

"There were about 120 victims of this fraud, which was worth about 100 million (baht) (\$2.9 million)," an officer from immigration told AFP, requesting anonymity.

Nineteen of the suspects are from China and 25 from Taiwan.

Posing as police, bank officials or money laundering inspectors the suspects spun stories of financial irregularities linked to the victims' bank accounts.

"They told victims their [bank accounts](#) had been frozen due to [criminal activity](#) such as drug dealing," Immigration Police Chief Natthathorn Prousoontorn told reporters on Sunday.

They then persuaded the victims to transfer money to clear the cooked-up problems, through other 'officials' working with the gang.

"Each fraudster played a different role... some pretended to be bank officials... some pretended to be police."

The [victims](#) lived alone and had no-one to consult before falling for the scam, Natthathorn added.

With porous borders, cheap living and large communities of ex-pats to hide amongst, Thailand has long been a regional hub for [crime gangs](#).

Recently immigration [police](#) have arrested hundreds of foreign criminals in a "good guys in, bad guys out" policy, as the kingdom looks to shake out crooks based in the country.

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