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FEDS HANG UP ON IRS SCAMMERS

**Callers were impersonating agents;
Thousands bilked of \$300 million**



Police in Mumbai, India, raid suspected IRS scammers.

Fifty-six people have been charged with impersonating Internal Revenue Service officials and tricking thousands of victims into handing over more than \$300 million.

The scam: The victim receives a phone call from someone claiming to be from the IRS. The caller says the victim owes money and will be fined or sued if he doesn't pay immediately. The caller then demands payment through a wire transfer or a prepaid debit card. At least 15,000 people—many of them older adults—were coerced into paying, federal officials said. The indictment listed five call centers in the U.S. and India as sources of the scam.

Here's what people should know to protect themselves:

- ▶ The IRS routinely sends all notices of payment due by mail.
- ▶ The agency does not initiate phone calls demanding immediate payment by credit card, debit card or wire transfer.
- ▶ If you are called and are concerned that you might actually owe money, hang up and call the IRS directly at 800-829-1040.