

Wheels in Motion for Extradition



<https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/videos/20230201202010132/>

Four Japanese men locked up in the Philippines could soon be facing justice back home. They're suspected of orchestrating multiple crimes even while in detention.

The two countries have no extradition treaty, but the Philippines Justice Secretary is promising to cooperate.

We're confident we will be able to deport all of them in due time. We're working by the day. I can't tell a date because we have to accomplish everything.

On Monday Japanese investigators formally requested the men be handed over. They're suspected of being involved in a string of robberies across Japan while overseas. One case involves an alleged murder. Police also believe they took part in phone scams in Japan in 2019.

The men are currently being held at an immigration facility in Greater Manila. Three of the four are currently on trial for separate charges. Two have local court hearings scheduled this week. Officials say the handover can be scheduled after all pending charges are resolved. The Philippine government is keen to settle the issue before President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. visits Japan next week.

Investigators in Japan are shedding more light on the scale of the group's alleged crimes. They say the men may be linked to a string of recent robberies across 8 prefectures adding they've arrested more than 30 other people since October. And there are more robberies in 6 prefectures that could be connected. In one incident a 90-year-old woman was murdered at her home in Komae city, Tokyo. Police say 3 wristwatches and a ring were stolen worth about 4,600 dollars in total.

The men allegedly recruited accomplices through social media and provided instructions using alias like “Luffy” or “Kim.” Police say Luffy got people involved under the guise of part-time work and then controlled them psychologically. Investigative sources say one suspected accomplice told police he made a deal with Luffy to remain silent if arrested. The suspected reportedly said he was afraid of being purged if he talked. The sources say Luffy demanded information from the recruits about their families. A suspicious person reportedly visited some of their homes.

Source: (NHK World News)

Now discuss the questions with a partner.

1. What information have you heard about this topic?
2. Why do you think the men had access to smartphones and internet while in detention? Is it OK?
3. How do you think the men were able to psychologically control people?
4. During this digital era, how should criminals abroad be punished? Which country has responsibility?
5. How can these types of incidents be prevented in the future?