

I'm not a robot



Thailand police system

The Royal Thai Police, also known as the national police of Thailand, plays a crucial role in enforcing the country's laws and maintaining law and order. With 30 police bureaus and six divisions under its wing, the RTP is divided into various units, each with its own distinct powers. At the top of the hierarchy is the Director General, who serves as the head of the entire police force and oversees over 200,000 officers nationwide. The next in line are Deputy Directors General, Assistant Directors General, Police Commissioners, and Deputy Commissioners. Below these senior ranks lie Superintendents, Deputy Superintendents, Inspectors, Sub-Inspectors, Group Leaders, Patrol Officers, and Police Seniors. Each of these positions has its own set of responsibilities and reports to a higher authority within the police force. The Thai Police is divided into various services and regions, including the Border Patrol Police Division, which comprises 40,000 personnel and handles tasks such as border security, counter-terrorism, and aerial operations. The Central Investigation Bureau is also an integral part of the police force, working to minimize criminal activity and reduce threats. In addition, the Thai Police has various departments and units, including the Special Branch, Crime Suppression Division, Licenses division, Criminal Records Office, Narcotics Suppression Bureau, Office of Royal Court Security, Provincial Police Division, Immigration Police Division, Metropolitan Police Division, and more. The Royal Thai Police plays a pivotal role in maintaining law and order in Thailand, with a rich history and an extensive network of officers committed to ensuring public safety and security. The police force is divided into several key divisions, each specializing in different aspects of law enforcement. One of the primary functions is to enforce the law and maintain public order through various activities such as patrolling streets, responding to emergencies, and investigating crimes. The police have also adopted advanced technologies and modern policing methods to enhance their efficiency. The Tourist Police, a specialized unit, plays a vital role in ensuring the safety of millions of tourists who visit Thailand each year. They provide assistance to tourists, help resolve disputes, and address any security concerns that may arise. Despite their efforts, the police face numerous challenges, including the prevalence of drug-related crimes and corruption within the force. The Thai government and the Royal Thai Police have implemented various reforms and measures aimed at addressing these issues, such as combating drug trafficking and abuse, conducting raids, and arresting individuals involved in the drug trade. However, the scale of the problem requires continuous and concerted efforts to ensure public safety and security. The Royal Thai Police has implemented several strategies to promote transparency and accountability, focusing on community policing and anti-corruption measures. By fostering strong relationships with local communities, they aim to better understand public needs and concerns, thereby enhancing overall safety and security. The police have also established specialized units to tackle cybercrime, collaborating with international agencies to track down perpetrators. Additionally, the Royal Thai Police places great emphasis on training and development, providing rigorous programs for new recruits and continuous professional development opportunities. Furthermore, they play a crucial role in disaster management and emergency response, working closely with other services to provide rescue and relief operations. The police remain committed to upholding the rule of law, protecting citizens, and maintaining public order, continually adapting to meet the evolving needs of society. The Royal Thai Police (RTP) is Thailand's national police force, employing between 210,700 and 230,000 officers. This accounts for about 17% of all civil servants in the country. The RTP is often regarded as Thailand's fourth armed force due to its similar traditions, concepts, culture, skills, and training compared to the military. The RTP has a complex jurisdictional structure, with its headquarters located in Pathum Wan, Bangkok. It operates under the supervision of Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra, who also serves as Commander (as Prime Minister). The agency's executive head is Police General Kitrat Panphet, Commissioner-General. The RTP is divided into 12 bureaus and 9 regional branches, each responsible for a specific set of provinces. These bureaus include the Metropolitan Police Bureau, Central Investigation Bureau, Tourist Police Bureau, Narcotics Suppression Bureau, Special Branch Bureau, Immigration Bureau, Police Education Bureau, Border Patrol Police, Office of Police Forensic Science, Office of Information Communications and Technology, Royal Police Cadet Academy, and Cyber Crime Investigation Bureau. The RTP's operational structure allows for efficient coordination and management across the country. However, recent changes in leadership have sparked controversy, with Torsak Sukvimol being reinstated as national police chief despite earlier reports of his transfer to an inactive post at the prime minister's office. The situation remains unclear, with Police General Winai Thongsong stating that he could not confirm whether Torsak had indeed been reinstated. The RTP's role in maintaining law and order across Thailand is crucial, and its effectiveness relies on the skills and training of its officers. With a strong presence in both urban and rural areas, the RTP continues to play a vital part in ensuring public safety. The investigation timeline was crucial for the assigned timeframe or before Commissioner-General Kitrat Panphet's tenure started in October 2024.[9][10] The Royal Thai Police headquarters, located at Pathum Wan, Bangkok, has a rich history of law enforcement dating back to the 19th century when personnel from the Royal Thai Armed Forces performed both national defence and law enforcement duties alongside civil servants. Initially, responsibility for law and order was divided among six ministries led by state chancellors during the Ayutthaya and Thonburi eras, however, police units were under royal command as part of the army in times of war. It wasn't until the reigns of King Mongkut (Rama IV) and King Chulalongkorn (Rama V) that significant reforms and Westernization of Thai law enforcement forces took place to adapt to changing circumstances and needs. By 1902, the Royal Police Cadet Academy was established to train future police officers, and the same year saw the granting of a symbol to the Police using the Phra Saeng sword and Chaturmuk shield by King Chulalongkorn.[12] The provincial and urban forces were unified under the Ministry of Interior in 1915.[13] with the TNPD undergoing several reorganizations to meet evolving public order and internal security needs. American advice, training, and equipment provided from 1951 through the early 1970s contributed greatly to introducing new law enforcement concepts and practices, aiding in the modernization of the TNPD. During this period, the strength and effectiveness of the police grew steadily. The TNPD headquarters in Bangkok administered all components of the police system and provided technical support for law enforcement activities throughout the kingdom. Major operational units included the Provincial Police, Border Patrol Police (BPP), Metropolitan Police, and smaller specialized units supervised by the Central Investigation Bureau. As of mid-1987, the total strength of the TNPD was estimated at roughly 110,000, with over one-half assigned to the Provincial Police and some 40,000 to the BPP. More than 10,000 served in the Metropolitan Police. The quasi-military character of the TNPD saw it headed by a director general who held the rank of police general, assisted by deputy directors general and assistant directors general holding ranks corresponding to those of the army. This organizational structure reflected the political influence of the police on national life.[citation needed] In 1998, TNPD was transferred from the Ministry of Interior to be directly under the Office of the Prime Minister, acquiring a new name shortly thereafter. The Royal Thai Police (RTP) is the national police force of Thailand. The commander's title was changed from "Director-General of the TNPD" to "Commissioner-General of the Royal Thai Police". The police has about 230,000 officers, with 18,400 being female officers, which is approximately eight percent of the total workforce. In comparison, Sweden holds the highest percentage of female police officers at thirty percent. The RTP previously prohibited women from certain roles, such as "inquiry official", citing domestic responsibilities as a hindrance to their effectiveness. However, this policy has been criticized for violating the 2015 Gender Equality Act and international conventions against gender discrimination. The Metropolitan Police Bureau is one of the main components of the Thai police force, responsible for providing law enforcement services in the capital city and its suburbs. It consists of three divisions, each covering a different urban area, and has a total of 88 police stations across the city. The Metropolitan Police also maintains various units, including foot patrols, motorized units, a canine corps, and building guards, to deal with traffic and public safety issues. The Royal Thai Police (RTPol) has a complex organizational structure that dates back to 1927. The Patrol and Special Operations Division, which is responsible for patrolling roads and responding to emergencies, was initially established as the "Registration Division". TPD officers now work on various tasks including road safety, vehicle crimes, and crowd control. The Protection and Crowds Control Division (PCDD) was formed in 2009 with a focus on protecting key figures such as the monarch, royal family members, and high-ranking officials. The Bureau of Special Investigations is another critical component that oversees specialized units like forensic science and cybercrime. The Border Patrol Police (BPP) has its roots in US intelligence agencies and played a significant role in counterinsurgency efforts in Thailand during the 1950s and 1960s. Today, the BPP continues to patrol borders and prevent infiltration while also conducting guerrilla operations against terrorist groups. The Central Investigation Bureau is the national coordinating headquarters responsible for investigating crimes across the country. It employs specialized units like railroad, marine, and technology police to tackle modern threats. The Crime Suppression Division is a key component of the bureau that handles most technical investigations related to criminal offenses. A new unit called the Special Service Division was formed in 2018 with the specific task of protecting the monarchy and collecting information on individuals who pose a threat to national security. This unit is also tasked with carrying out the king's wishes. Its authority will cover the entire nation.[29] In July 2020, the unit's name was changed back to "Special Service Division" and its powers were increased to include Counter-Terrorism, sabotage prevention, riot control, and bomb disposal in the royal court area.[30][31] The Anti-Trafficking in Persons Division focuses on stopping human trafficking and related crimes. Its main goal is to stop networks that exploit individuals through forced labor, sexual exploitation, or child trafficking. The Highway Police Division ensures road safety, security, and efficiency in Thailand. They patrol highways, enforce traffic laws, manage accidents, and assist drivers. The Economic Crime Suppression Division investigates and prevents economic and financial crimes affecting Thailand's economy and public trust. The Natural Resources and Environmental Crime Division combats crimes harming Thailand's natural resources and environment. They address illegal logging, wildlife trafficking, pollution, and unauthorized resource exploitation. The Consumer Protection Police Division safeguards consumer rights and well-being across Thailand. It investigates and prevents consumer fraud, substandard goods, false advertising, and consumer protection law violations. The Technology Crime Suppression Division specializes in combating technology-related crimes like cyber fraud, hacking, online scams, and Computer Crime Act violations. The Anti-Corruption Division investigates and prevents corruption-related offenses involving public officials, bribery, and power abuse to ensure transparent governance. Thai law enforcement agency (TMPP) oversees security and law enforcement in Thai waters, focusing on combating smuggling, human trafficking, and illegal fishing while conducting rescue operations and ensuring maritime safety. The Central Investigation Bureau Training Center provides specialized training for officers in advanced investigative techniques, criminal analysis, and law enforcement strategies to enhance case-solving capabilities and public safety. Hanuman Special Operations Unit is the CIB's tactical team that handles high-risk operations like counter-terrorism and combating organized crime using advanced training and equipment. The TMPP also includes various divisions such as the Licenses Division, which registers and licenses firearms, vehicles, and other items, and the Immigration Bureau, responsible for issuing travel visas and managing entry and departure in Thailand. However, the Immigration Police have faced criticism from expatriates due to slow service, inconsistent regulations, and excessive paper forms. The Narcotics Suppression Bureau leads counter-narcotics investigations in Thailand, while the Royal Thai Police operates a fleet of aircraft, including fixed-wing and rotary-wing planes, for various law enforcement operations. The police also provide medical and healthcare services, including forensic science and autopsies, at the Police General Hospital. The Royal Thai Police Provincial Police Division oversees various hospitals, including Dara Rasmii Hospital in Chiang Mai, Nawutti Somdet Ya Hospital in Bangkok, and Yala Sirirattanakar Hospital in Yala. Additionally, it operates the Institute of Forensic Science, which trains numerous residents each year. The Provincial Police is headed by a commander who reports to the police commissioner-general and is divided into four police regions. These regions are responsible for providing police services to all towns and villages except metropolitan Bangkok and border areas. In the past, coordination issues among security forces in rural areas led to reorganization efforts, which increased the authority of regional commissioners and improved law enforcement efficiency. The Provincial Police Division consists of 10 regions covering most provinces in Thailand, excluding metropolitan Bangkok and border areas. It also operates various training centers and facilities for police personnel, including the Royal Police Cadet Academy and detective training schools. Given article text here The Royal Thai Police has several specialized units and vehicles to handle various tasks and protect high-profile individuals. In Udorn Thani, Ubon Ratchathani, Chiang Mai, and Songkhla, the Special Branch Bureau is responsible for controlling subversive activities and serving as the major intelligence organization of the Thai Police. The Tourist Police Bureau was established in 2017 to cater to the growing tourism industry and protect foreign nationals. The priorities of the Tourist Police include cooperation with foreigners and promoting their security. As of 2022, the agency has 2,000 officers and 70 tourist police cars, as well as a fleet of aircraft including a six-passenger police jet. The Royal Thai Police uses various vehicles for traffic regulation and patrolling, such as pickup trucks, SUVs, sedans, motorcycles, tuk-tuks, minivans, bicycles, all-terrain vehicles, boats, and helicopters. The agency operates electric patrol cars to protect "VVIPs" and has introduced a new fleet of vehicles. The police officers are responsible for purchasing their own pistols, with options ranging from the M1911A1 .45 ACP pistol to the 9 mm Glock 19. In recent years, the Royal Thai Police has allowed officers to purchase US-made SIG Sauer P320 pistols for 18,000 baht each. The Thai police have access to a variety of firearms, including pistols, shotguns, and submachine guns, due to special exemptions from import quotas and duties. In December 2017, 150,000 SIG Sauer P320SP pistols were made available for purchase by police at a subsidized price of 23,890 baht each. The Royal Thai Police (RTP) will also distribute an additional 55,000 pistols to police stations nationwide, with each station receiving 60. The firearms used by the Thai police are mostly imported from Western countries, including Germany, Croatia, and Belgium. Commonly used pistols include the Heckler & Koch USP, SIG Sauer P226, and Beretta 92, while submachine guns such as the Heckler & Koch MP5 and FN P90 are also widely used. • FN P90 is Belgian submachine gun used by Arintharat 26 Special Operation Unit, Naresuan 261 Special Operation Unit and Royal Thai Police units. • The UZI submachine gun 9×19mm Parabellum was also utilised by these forces. • KRISS Vector and other weapons were part of the arsenal too. • M16 assault rifle is being phased out, while M4 carbin will be used instead. • A unique feature of Thai police uniforms are their style which tends to resemble army dress more than conventional police attire. • Royal Thai Police officers must have short hair all over the body (except at the top) or be bald, following a practice adopted by royal guards. • The Royal Guard has been a model for this haircut and is known for its short, required hairstyle. Phao Sryanon served as Director General of Thailand's national police from 1951 to 1957. Sarit Thanarat held the position from 1959 to 1963, followed by Praphas Charusathien from 1963 to 1973 and Pao Sarasin from 1977 to 1989. Pratin Santiprapop was Director General from 1994 for a brief period. Isarapong Noonpakdee served in the same role in 1992, while Pol Boonyajinda held it from 1994 to 1997. Pracha Promkok was the last Director General and first Commissioner-General of the Royal Thai Police, serving from 1997 to 2000. Sant Sarutanon took over as Commissioner-General from 2001 to 2004, followed by Kowit Wattana from 2004 to 2007. Sersephisuth Theemeyaver served as Commissioner-General from October 2007 to April 2008, before being removed from office due to corruption charges. His supporters claim these charges were fabricated to punish him for targeting mafia leaders and prosecuting cases against former premier Thaksin Shinawatra. Chan-o-cha, a decree granted to commissioned officers of the Royal Thai Armed Forces, gives them extraordinary power to suppress and arrest suspects without warrants or charge for up to seven days. This allows them to freeze bank accounts, seize documents and property, ban travel, and even detain people secretly. The military is fully immune from prosecution in cases of abuse, leaving no oversight or recourse. The decree effectively turns soldiers into police officers, giving them greater immunity than regular police forces. It took immediate effect and remains in force as of 2020. This has led to the military gaining more power than the police and less accountability. The government claims that this order aims to combat organized crimes such as human trafficking and extortion. However, critics argue that it is actually a means to silence dissenting voices. The order does not exempt defendants from going through the normal judicial process, with police involved in investigations. A statement by Human Rights Watch and other organizations condemned the move. The Office of the Ombudsman reported on its activities since inception, noting that the Royal Thai Police was found to be one of the most corrupt agencies in Thailand. The lack of transparency around key officials, such as Chief Ombudsman Panit Nitthanprapas, is also notable. Experts point to centralized police bureaucracies and low salaries as major contributors to corruption among police officers. Thai Police Corruption: Low Salaries and a Culture of Greed According to various reports, Thai police officers face extremely low salaries, with entry-level constables earning as little as 6,800 baht per month in 2012. The high number of officers, estimated at over 250,000, means that increasing their salaries by just 5,000 baht would be a costly proposition for the government. Some critics argue that the culture of corruption within the police force is too entrenched to be easily addressed. Former massage parlour magnate turned legislator Chuvit Kamolvist claims that "police reform" has been a recurring mantra with little tangible result. He alleges that low-ranking officers, earning as little as US\$460 per month, often solicit bribes from businesses or individuals in order to tap into the lucrative world of protection and promotion. A 2008 article by The Economist noted that in many high-profile cases, the prime suspects are often found to be police officers themselves. More recently, a Sakon Nakhon Police Facebook post went viral, highlighting the struggles of junior officers who must rely on loans and debt just to make ends meet. When asked if their meagre salaries were enough to support their families, one officer replied that they could not afford it, while those in higher ranks appear to be financially secure. Academics have also spoken out about the lack of progress made by police reform committees, which often see their recommendations ignored by authorities. One such expert, Associate Professor Police Lieutenant Colonel Krisanaphong Poothakool, notes that despite claims of ongoing reform efforts, little appears to be happening in practice. The video footage appears to show police officers suffocating a man with plastic bags until he collapsed and died during an interrogation in Muang Nakhon Sawan Province. The police allegedly demanded a two million baht bribe from his family for his release, citing that he had overdosed on methamphetamines in the medical report. This incident is not an isolated case of police brutality and corruption in Thailand. In 1976, Thai authorities were seen shooting at protesters at Thammasat University, resulting in numerous casualties and further abuse to survivors. More recently, vendors on Ko Samui island protested rampant bribery among local police officers after a woman's employee was arrested for selling counterfeit purses near Chaweng Beach. The vendor claimed that the police initially demanded 50,000 baht but later raised it to 190,000 baht, which she couldn't afford. On Phuket island, tourists have faced numerous cases of corruption and over-reaction by the Thai Police and justice system in 2009. An Australian woman was arrested for allegedly stealing a bar mat, despite her friends confessing that they had placed it in her bag as a joke. She spent four nights in jail and 14 weeks on bail before being released after the governor intervened. Another American couple was accused of burning down their own house due to an electrical fault but were forced to compensate the owner and make under-the-table payments to settle the country. Around \$45,000 was spent as a result.[77] In 2007, a 15-year-old Danish boy was involved in an insurance scam when a Chinese couple intentionally crashed into his Jetboat, resulting in the death of one of them. Although the court ruled it an accident, the police detained the boy and held his passport until he paid DKK300,000 to escape the case within weeks.[78][79] To be appointed to the National Legislative Council (NLC), prospective members had to disclose their assets and liabilities. The revelations by would-be NLC members shocked many Thais, particularly when Police Chief Somyot Poompanmuang's net worth was revealed at approximately 355.8 million baht (\$11 million), raising questions about how his lifelong career in public service enabled him to amass such wealth.[80] It has been alleged that Thai police profit significantly from enforcing music copyright infringement laws. Bars and restaurants in Thailand are required to obtain a licence from local copyright agencies to play recorded music, supposedly protecting international artists and record companies. Thailand has more music licensing companies than any other country, making it confusing for business operators to determine which agency to contact. In cases where fees have not been paid, licensing companies work with the police to collect royalties and sometimes additional amounts.[81] The discovery of 33 bodies from shallow graves in southern Thailand's mountains has galvanized Thailand into action. The exhumed bodies are believed to be migrants from Myanmar and Bangladesh who were held captive by traffickers while their families were extorted for ransoms. This has embarrassed Thailand, which is already under pressure from the United States and European Union to crack down on human trafficking both on land and in its fishing fleets. Police officers face extremely low salaries, with entry-level constables earning as little as 6,800 baht per month in 2012. 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