

RAIDS TARGET GANGSTERS IN CHINATOWN

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Body

In **raids** in six states, federal agents have cracked what they believe is a Chinese gang that terrorized New York's **Chinatown** and engaged in murder, extortion, kidnaping and smuggling of aliens.

The **raids** Thursday and Friday in New York, New Jersey, Virginia, Delaware, Colorado and Pennsylvania capped a yearlong investigation of the Fukienese Flying Dragons gang. Authorities described the gang as a violent criminal enterprise made up mostly of young men from the Chinese province of Fujian, also known as Fukien.

Sixty-four who are alleged to be gang leaders and members were charged with a range of violent crimes in eight federal indictments, which were unsealed in Manhattan federal court Friday. So far, 35 have been arrested, and others are being sought, officials said.

"This violent gang was responsible for hundreds of kidnappings, robberies, acts of extortion, and smuggling hundreds of illegal aliens into the United States," Attorney General Janet Reno said.

U.S. Attorney Mary Jo White of the Southern District of New York said the gang, "a large and violent spinoff" from the traditional Flying Dragons organization, has been "the dominant force in **Chinatown** since 1990" and is the only remaining large-scale criminal enterprise there.

With the latest actions against it and other expected arrests, White said, "we believe we will break the back of the Fukienese Flying Dragons and that we are finally on the verge of freeing **Chinatown** from the . . . violence and lawlessness that have plagued it for decades."

The main indictment, in which 41 defendants are charged with racketeering and other criminal activity, covers two murders, one attempted murder, four robberies, five extortions of businesses and eight kidnappings in which more than 100 Chinese were held.

The Fukienese Flying Dragons were made up mostly of Chinese in their mid- to late-20s who entered the United States illegally and, in some cases, claimed political asylum to remain in the country, Immigration and Naturalization Service officials said.

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