

Chinese gang preying on Indian casino gamblers

By Sam Stanton and Chelsea Phua, Sacramento Bee

On a bright, sunny afternoon last week, about 60 people gathered inside Thunder Valley Casino, pressed together five deep at the midi baccarat tables, where the stakes go up to \$2,000 a hand.

Others sat intently at the pai gow poker tables nearby.

Almost all were of Asian descent. Most were women.

And each was potential prey in what state and casino officials allege was an unusual and audacious attempt by a Chinese gang to target gamblers at Sacramento-area tribal casinos for extortion and loan sharking.

After a seven-month probe, state Department of Justice officials announced this month they had broken up a scheme that targeted gamblers of Asian descent who frequent Red Hawk, Thunder Valley and at least one other area casino.

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