# Thailand's Prime Minister reveals AI phone scam experience



Thailand's Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra has recently revealed her unsettling experience with a sophisticated phone scam involving artificial intelligence technology. The incident highlights the vulnerabilities that even high-profile individuals face in the age of rapidly advancing digital technology.

During a public appearance, Paetongtarn detailed her encounter with the phone scam, which featured what she described as an AI-generated voice that closely resembled a well-known world leader. Speaking to CNN, she recalled the initial communication: “The voice was very clear, and I recognized it immediately. They first sent a voice clip, saying something like, ‘How are you? I want to work together,’ and so on.” She elaborated on a subsequent call where the scammer requested a donation, emphasising that Thailand was the only member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) that had not contributed yet.

The prime minister expressed her shock upon realising that the message “probably used AI to take the voice” of the unidentified leader. This incident does not occur in isolation; phone scams have proliferated in Southeast Asia, predominantly due to the activities of transnational crime groups. These groups have increasingly exploited technological advancements and regional instability, particularly the ongoing civil war in Myanmar, to create a billion-dollar scam industry.

The issue extends beyond high-profile victims; numerous ordinary people have been lured to Thailand under false pretences of employment, only to find themselves trafficked to criminal operations in Myanmar. Reports suggest that these individuals are often forced to engage in digital scams, including cryptocurrency theft.

The emergence of AI technology has raised significant concerns about the future landscape of scams. Current scams primarily utilise traditional phone calls and messaging systems, but experts warn that as AI capabilities expand, the potential for malicious use increases dramatically. For instance, OpenAI, the organisation behind the well-known generative AI chatbot ChatGPT, introduced a voice replication tool known as Voice Engine last year. However, it was not released to the public due to concerns surrounding potential misuse.

Paetongtarn, who commenced her political career in 2021 and became Prime Minister in August 2024, is the third member of her family’s political dynasty to hold the office, following her father and aunt. This situation underscores both the pervasive nature of modern scams and the necessity for increased awareness of the potentials and dangers linked with advanced technologies like artificial intelligence.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

* <https://gijn.org/resource/tipsheet-investigating-ai-audio-deepfakes/> - This article discusses the use of AI-generated audio deepfakes in election manipulation and how these can be created and used to deceive voters, which aligns with the concerns about AI-generated voices in scams.
* <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2023/11/ai-is-finding-its-voice-and-that-s-bad-for-democracy> - This article highlights the potential of AI-generated voices to disrupt democracy and how these voices can be used to spread disinformation, similar to the scam described involving an AI-generated voice of a well-known leader.
* <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/fcc-bans-ai-generated-voices-in-robocalls-that-can-deceive-voters> - This article reports on the FCC's ban on AI-generated voices in robocalls, which is relevant to the discussion on the misuse of AI-generated voices in scams and political manipulation.
* <https://gijn.org/resource/tipsheet-investigating-ai-audio-deepfakes/> - This article mentions the ease and affordability of creating AI audio fakes, which can be used in various malicious activities, including scams targeting high-profile individuals and ordinary people.
* <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2023/11/ai-is-finding-its-voice-and-that-s-bad-for-democracy> - This article discusses the scale and speed at which AI can impersonate voices, which is relevant to the sophisticated phone scam involving an AI-generated voice described in the incident.
* <https://gijn.org/resource/tipsheet-investigating-ai-audio-deepfakes/> - This article provides examples of AI audio fakes being used in various countries, including their impact on elections and public figures, which underscores the global nature of the issue.
* <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2023/11/ai-is-finding-its-voice-and-that-s-bad-for-democracy> - This article mentions the difficulty in detecting and regulating AI-generated content, which is crucial in understanding the challenges in combating such scams.
* <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/fcc-bans-ai-generated-voices-in-robocalls-that-can-deceive-voters> - This article highlights bipartisan efforts to regulate AI in political campaigns, which is relevant to the broader context of addressing AI misuse in various forms of communication.
* <https://gijn.org/resource/tipsheet-investigating-ai-audio-deepfakes/> - This article discusses how AI audio fakes can be used in automated robocalls, targeting especially vulnerable groups like older voters, which aligns with the potential misuse of AI-generated voices in scams.
* <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2023/11/ai-is-finding-its-voice-and-that-s-bad-for-democracy> - This article mentions the need for guardrails and regulations to curb the malign use of AI-generated content, which is essential in preventing scams and disinformation.
* <https://gijn.org/resource/tipsheet-investigating-ai-audio-deepfakes/> - This article explains the technical aspects of creating AI audio fakes, including text-to-speech and speech-to-speech methods, which helps in understanding how such scams can be executed.
* <https://edition.cnn.com/2025/01/16/asia/thailand-prime-minister-scam-call-intl-hnk/index.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data