

## London couple arrested for allegedly holding three women captive for 30 years

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FACUNDO ARRIZABALAGA/EPA

Detective Inspector Kevin Hyland talks to reporters about the arrest of a London couple who allegedly held three women captive as slaves for 30 years.

A London couple was arrested Thursday after three “highly traumatized” women were rescued from their home — where the women claim they were held captive for three decades, the city's Metropolitan Police said.

One of the three victims — a 57-year-old Irish woman, a 69-year-old Malaysian woman and a 30-year-old British woman — allegedly called a

charity group for help last month after watching a documentary on forced marriages, officials said.

The caller told the group, The Freedom Charity, that she and two others had been held against their will in a south London home for more than 30 years, police said.

The organization promptly alerted police, who later arrested a man and a woman, both 67, after an investigation into the alleged slavery and domestic servitude, said Kevin Hyland, head of the police department's human trafficking unit.

"When we had established the facts, we conducted the arrests," Hyland told reporters outside Scotland Yard.

"Their lives were greatly controlled," Hyland said. "For much of it, they would have been kept on the premises."

Police worked with The Freedom Charity to rescue the women.

"All three women, who were highly traumatized, were taken to a place of safety where they remain," read a statement from Scotland Yard's.

Investigators do not believe any of the victims are related and said there did not appear to be any evidence of any sexual abuse. It was not immediately clear if the 30-year-old victim was born into captivity, but police said they suspect she had been held in domestic servitude for her entire life.

Aneeta Prem, founder of the Freedom Charity, told Sky News said the women saw her on the

television before they called for help.

"That gave them the courage to make that phone call," Prem said.

"I can't go into too many details, but they managed to get to a phone and make a call to us."

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