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Teacher loses over RM250k to Macau scam

KOTA KINABALU: Tricked into believing that her name has been misused, a teacher lost over RM254,000 to a Macau scam syndicate recently.

The teacher in her 30s from Sipitang had received a call on March 14 from someone claiming to be from the Inland Revenue Board, saying that she had over RM38,500 worth of unpaid taxes overdue.

The caller claimed that these unpaid taxes were for a company registered under her name.

The caller then connected the

victim to another person, who claimed to be a sergeant from the Kuala Lumpur police contingent.

Sipitang OCPD Deputy Supt Champin Piuh said the scammer told the victim that there was also a bank account with laundered money amounting to RM312,000 that she was linked to.

“The caller requested her personal and banking details for investigation purposes under the Anti-Money Laundering Act,” he said.

He added that the victim was instructed to transfer a total of

RM254,600 to six different bank accounts provided by the caller, between March 14 and 26, for “safety reasons”.

DSP Champin said the victim only realised she had been cheated on March 30, and immediately lodged a report on the matter.

“She was afraid that the documents she provided to the scammers would be abused,” he said.

The modus operandi of Macau scammers is to make threatening phone calls posing as police officers, tax agents, central bank

workers or others, claiming that the person they called is implicated in a criminal offence and being investigated.

The scammers’ motive is to scare people into believing that they are in trouble – unless they transfer sums of cash into certain bank accounts.

In some cases, the scammer tells the victim to contact another scammer posing as an officer from the same agency to make the scam seem realistic.

The term “Macau scam” was

coined because it is believed that it originated from Macau and that the fraudulent behaviour is common there.

DSP Champin said this was the third such case reported in the district this year, the others involving an education officer and a health officer.

He said the case was being investigated for cheating.

He also urged the public to be wary of suspicious calls and to reconfirm with the authorities if they have any doubts.