



Headline: Macau Scam losses in Selangor hit RM16mil
Publication/Portal: The Star
Date: 18 July 2018

Language: English
Section: Nation
Page: 14

Macau Scam losses in Selangor hit RM16mil

SHAH ALAM: Macau scam losses in Selangor for the first six months this year has hit an all-time high, surpassing the whole of last year by more than RM9mil.

This despite police issuing numerous reminders to the people against falling prey to these fraudsters.

Selangor police chief Comm Datuk Mazlan Mansor said up to last month, these syndicate operators had conned victims of RM16.63mil.

Most of these syndicates are believed to be operating from overseas.

"Last year, these fraudsters pocketed a total of RM6.67mil from unsuspecting victims. Although we have highlighted these scams at the state and national level, the numbers are still increasing," he told reporters after attending the state police monthly gathering yesterday.

The term "Macau scam" was coined because it is believed that such scams originated from Macau or that the first victims came from there, but this has never been confirmed.

Macau scams often start with a phone call from a scammer pretending to be an officer from a bank, government agency or debt collector.

The scammer will then claim that the potential victim owes money or has an unpaid fine, often with a very short window of less than an hour, to settle the payment or face "dire consequences".

These unsuspecting victims will then be asked to make payments to get them off the hook.

Comm Mazlan said fear was one of the key elements used by syndicates to prey on their victims.

"They will play mind games, citing offences like money laundering and funding terrorism activities, to dupe victims. We have even come across several cases in which they pretended to be anti-graft officers," he said.

Comm Mazlan said the number of cases has increased by 22.7%, from 268 cases last year to 329 cases up to June.

"We need to stop this from going up," he said, urging the public to stop sharing their personal data such as mobile phone numbers.

He said the public should be extra cautious when dealing with strangers over the phone.

"If unsure who the caller is stay calm and go to the nearest police station as soon as possible," he said.

"Our personnel from the Commercial Crime Investigation Department will be on hand to assist," he said.