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The lucky few who did not fall for it

PETALING JAYA: While Malaysia is said to be prime hunting ground for Macau scammers, there were also stories of those who didn't fall for the con.

One such case is that of sales executive Veronica, 35, who was almost scammed in February.

"A lady who claimed to be from the Seremban sessions court called me to say that I have to attend a court session at 3pm.

"In a state of panic, I asked what was the case about and she said that I owe Maybank RM38,000 for a credit card loan.

"She said I needed to go down to the Seremban police headquarters to meet the sergeant and if I didn't, I'd have to pay up the full amount in court.

"I was in Kuala Lumpur and at work so I told her that I would call the police station myself with the case reference number that she gave me," said Veronica.

However, she sensed something amiss when the woman on the other end of the line started to panic.

She was trying to convince Veronica that no one else could help.

"She tried to urge me to pay up quickly. I know that scammers play with your mind by scaring you with urgency, so that you really think that you're in trouble.

"I insisted that I will call the police headquarters myself – and she abruptly hung up," she said.

When Veronica called the police to recount what just transpired, the officer confirmed that it was an attempted Macau scam and that it was common in Malaysia nowadays.

Senior citizens are also common targets.

Retired civil servant Jothi, 83, however, was saved by her quick thinking and ability to remain calm.

A few months ago, a man called her, claiming that he had a letter from the Alor Setar High Court and that she owed the government

RM11,000 in taxes.

"I denied this and he passed the phone to a man who claimed to be a policeman who told me that he was coming to my house to arrest me.

"The man was crass and dominating. I was scared but I stood my ground, denying that I owed any money.

"I told them that my husband was a high ranking policeman and that I would consult my lawyers and sons before I engage further in the conversation," said Jothi.

She said her hands were shaking from fright. She called her sons who told her that it was a scam.

Trader Rahman, 64, almost fell for the scammers when they called him to say that he owed the bank RM7,000 in credit card debt.

"I was shocked and explained that the last time I had a credit card was in the 1990s. But they were so convincing that I actually thought I had missed some payments.

"They told me that they were debt collectors working on behalf of the bank and would come by my house in half an hour to seize my furniture and valuables.

"I was afraid and started gathering my valuables to give to them when they showed up. But my children, who noticed what was going on, convinced me that they were just scammers," he said, adding that he then filed a police report.