



Headline: Scammers looted RM410m up until August since last year Language: English

Publication/Portal: The Malaysian Reserve
Date: 30 October 2019

Section: News
Page: 9

Scammers looted RM410m up till August since last year

Realising the increasing scammer cases, the govt has taken steps to address this issue, says home minister



A TOTAL of 8,489 cyber fraud cases have been recorded with losses worth RM410.68 million between 2018 and the end of August 2019, as revealed by statistics from the Royal Malaysia Police (PDRM).

Home Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said a total of 7,833 cases involving fake loan scams with losses amounting to RM71.74 million had also been reported during the same period.

"Realising the increasing scammer cases, the government has taken steps to address this issue," he said in a written parliamentary reply.

He was responding to Datuk



Muhyiddin says officials will also take action under the AMLATFPUAA 2001 and the POCA 1959

Mohd Fasih Mohd Fakeh (Pakatan Harapan-Sabak Bernam) who asked the ministry to specify the number of "scammer" cases, including the "Macau Scam", "Love Scam" and loan offers that do not exist in this country for the period of 2018 and 2019.

Among the steps taken by the

government to address the rising number of cyber fraud cases include launching a mule account online portal through the official PDRM website.

He said PDRM has also set up a Cyber Crime Alert Royal Malaysia Police Facebook account to share information on the modus

operandi of cyber or commercial crime cases and to warn the public about the issue.

"Officials will also take action under the Anti-Money Laundering, Anti-Terrorism Financing and Proceeds of Unlawful Activities Act 2001 (AMLATFPUAA 2001) and the Prevention of Crime Act 1959 (POCA 1959)," Muhyiddin added.

He said the government had also established a special task force consisting of local and foreign law enforcement agencies, industry experts and service providers in an effort to curb online criminal activity which also includes as a component of cross-border crime among the Asean cooperation.

"Actions are also taken against local bank account holders (mule account) who have lent their bank accounts to criminals.

"For this, collaborations are done with financial institutions and Bank Negara Malaysia to detect and arrest the account holders," Muhyiddin said.

Collaborations were also established between communications

and Internet service providers in Malaysia to locate the website or telephone number used for the syndicate, while awareness campaigns are carried out to keep the public informed so that they would not fall victim to fraudulent crime.

"Macau Scam", a popular example of cheating case, often starts with a phone call from someone pretending to be an officer from a bank, a 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".

As for the non-existent loan scam, victims are promised easy loans as long as they pay "lawyer fees" first — only to find out too late that there is no loan.

As for the "Love Scam", the older generations, who may be less knowledgeable about the dangers of online dating, tend to be targeted by opportunistic thieves who will break hearts, while emptying their bank accounts.