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'Imposter-general' cheats woman of RM5,000 in scam

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KUALA LUMPUR: A man claiming to be the inspector-general of police (IGP) allegedly cheated a woman of RM5,000.

MCA Public Services and Complaints Department head Datuk Seri Michael Chong said yesterday the man had told the 48-year-old woman that she was a victim of identity theft.

The victim, identified only as Chong, said she received a call on Nov 11 from a supposed bank officer.

The caller told Chong that she had withdrawn RM6,000 using a credit card at a bank branch in Kinrara, Puchong.

When Chong said she did not have a credit card, she was told that one was applied under her name on Sept 21 at a bank in Johor.

"The person then transferred the line to a 'Bank Negara Malaysia official' to supposedly lodge a fraudulent report for identity theft,

"This person introduced himself as Alan Chong Wai Mun and asked for my banking

details but he did not ask for information that would lead to suspicion such as my PIN number.

"This made me think that it was genuine and I decided to proceed with the 'complaint'," she said at Wisma MCA yesterday.

The victim was then connected to one "IGP Inspector Teo", who instructed her to transfer RM5,000 from her foreign bank account to a local bank account, claiming that the local bank was safer.

"He instructed me to perform a transaction via ATM and to change my PITA code (magnetic code in the black strip on ATM cards) with a code that he provided and told me to throw away the transaction slip," she said.

Chong later found RM5,000 from her account had been transferred, and lodged a police report on Nov 14.

Michael Chong said eight such cases were reported this year involving a total sum of RM381,000.

"Women are most vulnerable to these scams as the scammers take advantage of their soft nature."