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Housewife loses RM136,000 to Macau scam

KEPALA BATAS: A housewife lost RM136,000 after falling victim to a Macau scam syndicate which duped her into believing that she was under investigation for “selling” a bank account to a man for RM10,000.

The victim, in her 70s, was alleged to have pocketed RM23mil from the transaction by an “inspector” from the Johor police headquarters.

North Seberang Prai OCPD Asst Comm Noorzainy Mohd Noor said the scam started with a phone call

from a man claiming to be an employee of the Kuala Lumpur post office.

“He told the victim that she has a package with an identity card and eight ATM cards. The call was later transferred to a ‘police inspector’.

“The officer claimed the victim was a suspect in a case and that she should co-operate.

“Shocked and scared, the victim followed his instructions to transfer her money through an ATM branch

near her home,” he said.

ACP Noorzainy said the victim made seven transactions into four bank accounts provided by the scammers.

“She was told that the money was for investigation purposes,” he said.

Later, the victim sensed something amiss before lodging a report.

The case is being investigated under Section 420 of the Penal Code for cheating.

ACP Noorzainy urged the public to

not be taken in by phone calls made by unverified callers and contact the nearest police station for assistance.

A Macau scam often starts with a phone call from someone 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 that needs to be settled, often within a very short window of less than an hour or face

“dire consequences”.

These syndicates will also pay drug addicts and the unemployed for using their bank accounts to receive payments from victims.

To make the scam more convincing, these syndicates often use Voice Over Internet Protocol or spoofing so that the caller identification number that appears on the victim’s phone looks identical to the phone number of the agency they are pretending to be from.