

Media Title : The Star
Headline : Be wary of scams tied to World Cup
Date : 23 April 2026
Section : Nation
Page : 12



Be wary of scams tied to World Cup

Experts warn consumers to only make purchases on official platforms

By **BENJAMIN LEE**
benlkh@thestar.com.my

PETALING JAYA: With the 2026 World Cup less than two months away, the Association of Banks in Malaysia (ABM) has warned the public over potential scams related to the highly anticipated football tournament.

It said scammers are known to exploit major global events or festivities to target unsuspecting victims overseas through the use of social media.

“Any major events, particularly those featuring prominent and popular international acts, are often accompanied by a significant rise in ticket scams as these scammers always look to exploit high demand for event tickets,” it

said in a statement.

The association cautioned consumers to be alert of potential red flags when buying match tickets or merchandise related to the World Cup from unofficial channels.

These includes ticket prices or merchandise that are below official price ranges; being pressured to make quick payments and only accepting non-traceable payment methods such as wire transfers, gift cards or cryptocurrency.

It warned against buying tickets from anyone claiming to have tickets before FIFA’s official sales phases conclude.

It said FIFA has also clarified that tickets will only be distributed using mobile-only digital tickets which must be accessed via the FIFA app which means there

will be no physical paper tickets, PDF files or screenshots of tickets accepted.

To protect themselves from these scams, ABM recommended consumers to only use credit cards when purchasing tickets or merchandise.

“They provide dispute rights and chargeback protections that debit cards, wire transfers and online payment apps lack.

“Those eager to buy resale tickets should wait for FIFA’s official resale marketplace that they will launch closer to the tournament as the only guaranteed secondary channel,” it added.

Federation of Malaysian Consumers Associations (Fomca) chief executive officer Saravanan Thambirajah said consumers

should only buy tickets, merchandise, or even fan experience events from official platforms.

“Avoid deals from unknown sellers on social media or messaging apps.

“Consumers should always avoid newly created seller accounts, especially those with limited information as fake digital tickets and duplicated QR codes are increasingly common,” he said.

Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (Utar) Centre for Media and Communication Research chairperson Dr Sharon Wilson cautioned consumers to be wary of scam websites that attempt to mimic official FIFA channels.

“Many scam websites use slightly altered URLs, unusual

domain names, or poor-quality content with spelling and grammatical errors.

“Users should avoid clicking on links to such websites offering World Cup tickets or merchandise, as these are common phishing tactics designed to steal personal and financial information.”

International Islamic University Malaysia cybersecurity expert Mohamed Ridza Wahiddin said Malaysians consumers should also avoid unofficial platforms that ask for overly personal details.

“If a site asks for unusual personal information, login credentials, or banking details beyond what is needed for a normal purchase of tickets or merchandise, stop immediately.”