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Dentist loses RM220,000 to scammers

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JOHOR BARU: It is a sombre Hari Raya for a dentist who fell for a scam and lost more than RM220,000 – most of which he had borrowed.

The modus operandi was all so predictable – a caller alleged that he was involved in insurance fraud and money laundering.

It is learnt that the dentist, in his 40s, worried about being shamed, took out loans and borrowed from friends and relatives to raise the amount.

Sources said the dentist received a call several days ago from a “medical staff member” who alleged that he had made a fake insurance claim with a local private hospital.

When the dentist denied it, the next step of the scam kicked in – the call was transferred to a “policeman” at the district police headquarters who threatened to arrest him.

“The victim was reminded that the festive season was approaching and it would be embarrassing if he was put in the lock-up,” a source said.

The dentist was told to open a new bank account and move all his money there while police investigated his other accounts.

The dentist did as instructed, and transferred about RM220,000 kept in different accounts to the new account. Most of the funds were loans.

He was later directed to reveal his new bank account details.

The sources said the dentist only

realised that he had been conned when the scammers continued to demand for more money.

By the time the dentist came to his senses, almost all his savings had been wiped clean from the new account. He then lodged a police report.

Scammers also got the upper hand in another case involving a student, who was baited with free mobile calls and cash vouchers totalling RM1,000 – only to lose RM120,000, which included her father’s money.

Sources said the scam occurred several days ago when the student, in her 20s, got a call from someone supposedly from a telecommunications company.

The caller told the victim that she had been selected and would not need to pay her bills for several months.

“They promised her vouchers totalling RM1,000 to be credited into her account. They asked her to fill up an online form detailing her bank account and bank card details and also her father’s bank details as a guarantor,” a source said.

It is learnt that within hours, large sums of money was withdrawn from both accounts totalling RM120,000. The victim then lodged a police report.

A police officer confirmed both cases and said investigations were under way under Section 420 of the Penal Code for cheating.

He urged the public to be mindful about giving their bank details to strangers and to contact the police hotline at 07-221 2999 for assistance.