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'Recognise scammers' tactics to be safe'

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PETALING JAYA: Learning how to recognise tactics used by scammers is the best way to avoid getting duped, says a crime watch body.

Kuala Lumpur Crime Prevention Practitioners Association chairman Bok Siew Mun (*pic*) said anyone could become a target of these heartless scammers, including professionals and the highly educated, and that falling prey was not a reflection of a person's intelligence.

"People should equip themselves with knowledge of the various types of popular scams such as Macau, love, parcel, job and investment scams.

"Many Malaysian fall prey each year, resulting in significant

financial losses.

"Over the last two to three years, there was a drastic increase in online scams, with many cases reported to the authorities," he said when contacted.

Data from the Commercial Crime Investigation Department showed that 71,833 cases, amounting to more than RM5.2bil in losses, were reported from 2020 to May 2022.

In addition, 12,877 suspected mule accounts were identified between Oct 12, 2022, and Jan 31 this year.

"Scammers have upped their game and they'll do anything to get hold of your personal details.

"For example, phishing emails and text messages will trick you



into clicking on a link or opening an attachment.

"To determine if you have received a phishing link, look for inconsistencies in the sender's email address, links and domains," he added.

He also reminded the public to always use password protection, never share access with others especially remotely, update their security software regularly and to back up all content on a regular basis.

He said other preventive measures were to avoid using public computers or WiFi hotspots to access online banking or give out personal information and to ensure their computer virus protection was up to date.

"It is best to be suspicious of

any contact you weren't expecting. Taking time to consider an offer and know who you are dealing with could make a difference between becoming a victim of a scam and avoiding it.

"I also highly recommend blocking all unwanted calls and filtering text messages," he said, adding that people should resist demands to act quickly as those who exert pressure to transfer money to other accounts under the pretext of carrying out investigations or to give them your personal details are very likely scammers.

Bok also urged people to talk to someone close such as a family member, a friend or a neighbour before taking the next course of action as it could help them realise that a scammer might be on the prowl.