



Headline: Retired Bintulu teacher loses RM199,000 to Macau Scam
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BINTULU: A 63-year-old retired teacher has become the latest Macau Scam victim here, losing RM199,000 of her savings after being deceived into believing she was being investigated for money laundering.

Bintulu police chief Supt Batholomew Umpit said the victim had received a call June 30 from an individual claiming to be from a courier company in Kuala Lumpur, informing her that a package containing an identification card, ATM card and credit card under her name had been seized by police in Sabah.

"The caller then purportedly connected the woman to a police officer in Sabah to 'solve' the problem. The police officer told the woman her name had been blacklisted for involvement in a money laundering case and had also been used to open a bank account in Kota Kinabalu," he said yesterday.

Acting on instructions, Batholomew said the victim opened a new bank account and transferred money from her Amanah Saham Bumiputera account into the newly-opened account.

"She registered the suspect's phone number for online banking transaction, and also gave the suspect her ATM card details and CCV number." According to him, she only realised she had been conned after calling the bank to

check on her account balance, and was told that a total of RM199,000 had been transferred to two other individual accounts via eight transactions on July 1 and 2.

In view of this latest case, which followed that of a 25-year-old female teacher who was cheated of RM142,000 in a Macau Scam on June 30, Batholomew advised the public to practise the 'STAR' concept – Stop, Think, Act and Respond – to avoid falling victim to such scams.

"If you receive calls from unknown individuals claiming to be from any government department, financial institution, insurance company or courier company, the first thing you need to do is end the conversation.

"Then, either check with the authorities via their verified telephone number, or go directly to the said government department or institution. Never use any contact numbers given by the suspects," he stressed.

He also reminded the public not to disclose any personal or online banking details to unknown persons. Phone numbers and account numbers of suspected scammers can be checked via the 'Check Scammers CCID' application or via the police's website <http://semakmule.rmp.gov.my>; CCID scam response centre (03-26101599); or Commercial Crime Investigation Department infoline (013-2111222).