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'Stay wary, don't be fooled'

Police: RM1bil in losses from online scams so far this year

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KUALA LUMPUR: Online scam cases have spiked 37.5% this year, with losses surpassing RM1bil, says Comm Datuk Seri Ramli Mohamed Yoosuf.

The Bukit Aman Commercial Crime Investigation Department (CCID) director said a total of 32,462 online scam cases were recorded between January and November, resulting in losses of about RM1.3bil.

"The number of cases increased some 37.5% compared with the same period last year, when 23,608 cases were recorded.

"The losses last year were lower with RM771.1mil recorded, and this year, it has risen some 33%," he told a press conference after launching the Scam-Free Malaysia

Carnival in Bukit Jalil here yesterday.

Of the online scam cases this year, the most were investment scams with RM421mil in losses, said Comm Ramli.

"This is followed by ecommerce scams (RM382mil), telecommunication scams (RM327.9mil), efinance scams (RM103.6mil), love scams (RM40.9mil) and loan scams (RM38.5mil)," he said.

Comm Ramli said it was astonishing that scam cases, especially on investments, continued to increase nationwide.

"People must not be duped by offers that are too good to be true. One should not believe that 'money will fall from the sky'.

"Only invest in legitimate schemes that have been approved by the relevant authorities instead of unbelievable, 'get rich quick'

schemes," he said.

On the carnival, Comm Ramli said it is aimed at creating more awareness on scam prevention, especially in terms of accepting calls from scammers.

The event is jointly organised by the police and Whoscall, powered by Gogolook, an anti-scam caller ID app.

"Whoscall has provided the services of a lawyer against scam calls via its caller ID.

"So far, CCID has shared 318,147 scam numbers with Whoscall, leading to 41% of the numbers being blocked by users.

"The collaboration has also led to a drop of 50% in scam calls pick up rate," he said.

Comm Ramli said cooperation between the police and other parties, such as the private sector, is important to curb commercial

crime, especially scams.

"We also hope society will be more vigilant and aware of scam tactics.

"On our part, we will step up investigations and operations to ensure scams are curbed. We will never tire of creating more awareness on the matter," he said.

Gogolook chief executive officer Manwoo Joo said the company decided to give away a one-year Whoscall premium worth RM87mil to help safeguard Malaysians from scams.

"The one-year Whoscall premium provides users access to diverse anti-scam tools such as caller ID, auto spam calls block, and auto update database.

"We are honoured to work with the police, especially CCID in creating more awareness against scams," he said.