



Headline: Two elderly men lose RM500,000 to Macau scammers Language: English
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Two elderly men lose RM500,000 to Macau scammers

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JOHOR BARU: Two elderly men endured harassment for almost three to four weeks from Macau scammers before losing more than RM500,000.

One is a 60-year-old retired medical assistant, who lost RM280,000, while the other is a senior executive who lost about RM265,000.

In both cases, the scammers claimed to be Customs officers, policemen, debt collectors and bank officers.

The Macau Scam operators usually use VoIP technology to replicate the telephone number of enforcement authorities, including the police, Customs department and Bank Negara.

The pensioner first received a call from a man claiming to be a Customs official who accused him of having evaded paying the Goods and Services Tax (GST) for a number of iPads that were smuggled from Thailand.

The daily harassment started in May.

"There was even a woman claiming to be from the police who also accused the man of smuggling drugs," sources said.

It is learnt that the pensioner, who was worried about the investigations, moved his money

to another account.

He was subsequently duped into disclosing his new personal account details.

Posing as the pensioner, the syndicate managed to activate online banking facility before transferring large sums of money from the new account.

The victim lodged a report when he realised that his account had been emptied.

Batu Pahat OCPD Asst Comm Abdul Wahib Musa urged the public never to transfer large sums of money through online transactions.

He said those in doubt should call the police hotline at 07-221 2999 for advice.

The executive, in his 50s, also received a call about purported GST evasion totalling RM16,000 in early May.

Sources said the scammers, claiming to be police, threatened to arrest and charge the victim for drug-related offences.

The suspects asked the victim to transfer his savings to a "safe temporary account" until the investigations were over.

However, within days of the money being transferred, the victim lost contact with the group and was unable to get back his savings.

Both cases are being investigated under the Penal Code for cheating.