

Consumers advised not to pay for unsolicited items

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PETALING JAYA: Consumers who have received unsolicited products from online retailer LuxStyle should neither pay for the items nor send them back, the National Consumer Complaints Centre advised.

Its legal and policy senior manager Shabana Naseer Ahmad said the company's modus operandi was to link its online advertisements to product listings without prices. Customers were required to register with their home and e-mail addresses to find out the prices.

Even if the customers did not make any purchase, she said, the company would still send products to their homes and demand payment via credit card or PayPal, or for the items to be returned to its headquarters in Denmark.

My advice is to not send the item back. If you didn't order it, why should you pay to return it? Don't make any payment either or they may target you again, Shabana told a press conference here yesterday.

She said the centre had received more than 50 complaints about the company over the last two weeks, with victims being mostly young women in the Klang Valley.

She said some victims had also lodged police reports.

They were all sent a package of blackhead removal masks, which apparently cost RM150 with an additional RM40 for processing and delivery.

The centre was drafting a position paper to the Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism Ministry on the matter and has also urged the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission to block the website.

We aren't saying they are scammers since products are delivered, but their sales method appears deceptive and contravenes the Personal Data Protection Act 2010, said Shabana.

The centre's legal and policy manager Mandeep Singh said recipients should not open or use the products.

Malaysian Digital Economy Consumer Association secretary-general Muhammad Shaani Abdullah said a consumer's credit rating could actually be affected by not paying the invoice, an issue that had affected victims in Australia.

So far, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission and the European Consumer Centre Finland have both issued similar warnings, while Facebook Canada has banned advertisements by LuxStyle. Victims in Singapore have formed a Facebook group to collect complaints.

An e-mail was sent to LuxStyle, but it did not reply by press time. The website did not list a phone contact.

It was reported by Canadian media that Lux International CEO Jacob Mathiesen was aware of the claims against his company, but denied them and said the problem was blown out of proportion.

Read more at <http://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2017/06/02/consumers-advised-not-to-pay-for-unsolicited-items/#8SYz6tBck80dEUUB.99>