

The Star : Fourteen lose RM85,000 in scam

Written by Administrator

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PENANG: Fourteen people here were cheated of about RM85,000 over the past two weeks after being informed via SMS that they had won luxury cars and cash prizes.

Six cases involving RM37,000 were reported to the George Town police. The remaining eight cases were reported in Balik Pulau, Bukit Mertajam and Butterworth.

The victims were duped into believing they had each won a car and also cash in the Petronas Super Car Craze Contest.

George Town OCPD Asst Comm Azam Abd Hamid said the victims called a mobile phone number stated in the SMS and were told to deposit some money into a bank account as administration fees.

They each banked in between RM1,000 and RM19,700. They only realised that they had been cheated when the prizes did not arrive.

We believe the same syndicate behind the *Akademi Fantasia* scam is behind this latest variation of the scam, he said when contacted yesterday.

ACP Azam said two men here were similarly cheated of RM23,000 last month, adding that he did not understand why people continued to fall for such scams.

These scams have been highlighted by the media many times. The public must wise up or else these scams will continue, he said.

A Petronas spokesman when contacted in Kuala Lumpur said the public should not just believe anyone who contacted them to say that they had won a prize.

They should check with the company personally or just wait for the major newspapers to print their names. We will also never ask winners to bank in any money as administration fees in order to claim their prizes, he said.

According to the state police media relations department, 23 such cases, involving more than RM93,000, were reported statewide in the first two months of the year.