

## Malay Mail : Be wary of SMS offering big prizes

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CELL phone users are advised to be wary of scams operating through the short messaging service.

These scams use the names of well-known companies to convince unsuspecting cell phone users that they have won attractive prizes.

Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission corporate communications department director Muhamad Tahir Muhamad Noor yesterday revealed that the messages are usually sent from international destinations.

Anyone receiving a text message from unknown sources promising prizes should report the matter to the police or their telecommunications service providers.

The public is advised not to reveal any banking information such as account numbers or bank balances and not to transfer money to unknown accounts, he said in Kuala Lumpur.

An example of such messages is: TAHNIAH! Prepaid Anda Memenangi HADIAH WANG RM30,000 dari PETRONAS Sila call/telefon: +62XXXXXXXXXX Penghantar: PETRONAS Sender: +62XXXXXXXXXX, he said.

Muhamad Tahir said among the organisations, products or popular shows that have been quoted in these scams are Petronas, Maxis, Hotlink, Celcom, DiGi, Gang Starz and Akademi Fantasia.

The messages claim that the users have either won prizes or have been selected as winners of lucky draws, he added.

He said that MCMC and the tel cos were co-operating with the police in their investigations of SMS-based fraud cases and are taking action to curb such scams.

Muhamad Tahir said the telcos have taken the initiative to educate and warn the public by placing notices on their websites, posting printed warnings at payment counters and sending alerts to their customers.

SMS-based fraud is an offence punishable under Section 420 of the Penal Code. Offenders are liable to be jailed between one and 10 years, whipped and fined, if convicted.

Consumers can lodge complaints with the MCMC's complaints bureau by calling 1-800-888-030, e-mailing [aduanskmm@cmc.gov.my](mailto:aduanskmm@cmc.gov.my) or faxing 03-86881880.