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Scam ring collected RM76,000 in 'ransoms'

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KUCHING: A syndicate here has got at least RM76,000 from homemakers and the elderly by claiming their loved ones had been kidnapped and demanding a ransom for their return.

This is the second such syndicate to use the tactic in Malaysia, with the first operating in the Klang Valley.

Four cases have been reported here while another was reported in Miri.

State Commercial Crime Investigation Department chief Superintendent Mohd Firdaus Abdullah said the syndicate would call their victims and demand a ransom.

The caller would speak in Mandarin with a foreign accent.

"In the background, the victim will hear someone crying. The victims are then told to deposit the ransom into a bank account."

Victims would believe their loved ones had been kidnapped when they heard the crying while actually no one had been abducted.

Checks revealed that the account numbers provided by the syndicate were from banks in China.

Firdaus said the syndicate appeared to pick their victims at random as in some cases, the victims were told their children had been kidnapped when in fact, they did not have any children.

"If anyone receives such calls, please don't act rashly. Do thorough checks first or come to us."