

Scammers taxing the public

Conmen posing as 'HASiL officers' to cheat taxpayers

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PETALING JAYA: Goay Chan Hong received several calls recently telling him that he owed the state government tax arrears and demanding that he pay up.

The 30-year-old is a full-time PhD student who is not employed and does not earn a salary.

Norasiah Md Baharuddin, a 59-year-old, has also received such a call.

"They told her she has to pay the tax or court action will be taken against her. They said the court is in Terengganu while we live in Kuala Lumpur.

"They even threatened to send the police to our house," said her daughter Nina Yaakob, 36.

Norasiah is a housewife who has never been formally employed.

A syndicate is at work, cheating people by claiming to be from the Inland Revenue Board (LHDN).

The victims are contacted by syn-

dicate members who claim to be HASiL officers or police officers and the victims are ordered to download a fake mobile application of Bank Negara or share their personal banking details on a website which they claimed is operated by the central bank for investigation purpose.

It is quite elaborate and convincing.

LHDN's Director of CEO Office Ranjeet Kaur told *The Star* that victims are contacted by the syndicate through messages, phone calls, letters or emails regarding their tax arrears payment.

"They are then lured to transfer the money into the bank account which does not belong to the HASiL," she said.

Asked if such calls have become more rampant during the tax filing season which is currently ongoing, Ranjeet said these activities have been going on every month regardless of whether it is the e-filing period or not.

"Since the e-filing season started

on March 1, taxpayers will declare their income to HASiL and probably wait for the refund (if eligible) to be credited into their account.

"This situation can be used by the scammers to their advantage," she said.

The syndicate members contact victims randomly by offering them a fast track refund process.

The victims will normally receive emails asking them to click on a link. They are then required to fill up their banking details in order to get their tax refund," she added.

A doctor who spoke on condition of anonymity said she received a call in February where she was told that she would be fined for not paying her taxes.

"They hung up when I asked for an official letter," she added.

Another private sector employee who only wanted to be known as Tan said he has always filed his taxes on time and the payment had been auto deducted on a monthly basis but he still received the call.

LHDN warned the public to never reveal their personal and banking details especially online banking passwords or click on links received via a suspicious email.

"Ensure that tax arrears is paid only to HASiL. Do not be scammed into transferring money to unknown third party accounts," Ranjeet said.

She also advised the public to never download any application requested by unknown callers and only visit LHDN's portal for official numbers.

Any communication with the tax authority must be done through its official domain which is @hasil.gov.my.

Members of the public can also contact LHDN for verification by visiting the nearest branch or through these channels:

- Hasil Care Line at 03-8911 1000 / 603-8911 1100 (Overseas)
- HASiL Live Chat
- Customer Feedback Form: <https://maklumbalaspelanggan.hasil.gov.my/MaklumBalas/en-us/>