

Abu Dhabi Police call for cooperation to thwart call scams

Police warn that mobile scamsters tend to call low-income groups but even fox literate people

- By Samir Salama, Associate Editor
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Abu Dhabi Police officials in the capital have urged people to treat with suspicion calls declaring they have won cash prizes, especially if there are vague conditions attached or if they have never participated in a draw to be eligible for a prize in the first place.

Senior police officials said they doubted there is any prize in the world or one from a telecommunication services provider whereby someone who is entitled to a cash prize has to part with phone credit.

The officials were urging people to be wary of scamsters after receiving a flurry of new complaints. Most of those duped were expatriates and the cases cumulatively involved millions of dirhams.

"Scamsters succeeded in defrauding residents of 25 nationalities, including Emiratis, of millions of dirhams over last year and the first quarter of this year,' said Brigadier Omair Al Muhairi, deputy director of Police Operations at Abu Dhabi Police.

The scamsters, he added, mostly targeted lower-income groups who use pre-paid services, but their victims include both literate and illiterate people "with the first segment being the most victimised".

Conmen call people on their mobiles informing them they have won prizes from etisalat or du.

The person receiving the call is provided partial details of their SIM card and the call is disconnected after asking the individual to call back. The victims are then asked for ID or bank details and asked to deposit money or transfer phone credit.

Numbers to call

Abu Dhabi Police have asked people to report any fraudulent calls on 02-5088888, the toll-free line 8002626 or to send an SMS to 2828.