

Sharjah police arrest two phone scam suspects

Duo stole most of the life savings from a salesman

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Sharjah: Police on Wednesday arrested two Asian suspects who were allegedly involved in a phone scam and stole Dh135,000 from a salesman.

A senior official at Sharjah Police told *Gulf News* that an Asian salesman had lost most of his life savings after he was conned into buying telephone recharge cards and transferring mobile phone credit to the gang, in addition to sending cash through a popular money exchange office to people living in Abu Dhabi.

"A gang that specialised in phone scams initially informed the victim that he won Dh200,000 from a local-based telecommunications company. In order to convince the victim, the gang also provided him with his full name and serial number of his SIM card," said the official.

The gang claimed that the victim's serial number had been entered into a raffle and that he won the grand prize, and that the callers were employees at the telecommunications company.

In order to claim the prize, the victim was told to transfer a certain amount of credit to a mobile phone number and was also instructed to send money through a money exchange office to residents of Abu Dhabi, who allegedly worked at the headquarters of the telecommunications company.

"The victim continued to receive phone calls from the gang for several weeks, and repeatedly asked him to transfer phone credit and money in order to claim the prize," he said.

"The victim began getting suspicious of the claims when the money he sent was almost equal to the prize money."

Complaint lodged

The victim then lodged a complaint with Sharjah Police, and told police that he easily fell for the scam because the gang had provided his full name and serial number of his SIM card.

Upon receiving further complaints from residents, the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) at Sharjah Police launched an investigation and identified the two suspects as Manawar Hussain, from Bangladesh, and Zait Habib Al Rahman, from Pakistan.

During the investigation, it was revealed that the suspects had entered the country illegally and had conned a number of Sharjah residents by claiming that they won prizes in a raffle, and requested victims to send them money and mobile phone credit.

After completing the necessary legal procedures, police then arrested the two and found that they had 87 SIM cards and five mobile phones in their possession. During interrogation, the suspects confessed that they would sell Dh1,000 phone credit for an amount of Dh800, and that they shared the profits between themselves.

The case has been referred to Sharjah Public Prosecution.

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