

# She Lost \$366 to Scammers. Then She Lost \$293,000 Trying to Get It Back.

*Fake law firms promising 90% recovery rates are targeting fraud victims in Malaysia, officials warn*



A Malaysian woman who fell victim to an online scam tried to recover her losses by hiring what appeared to be a legitimate law firm. She ended up losing nearly 800 times her original loss.

The woman had initially lost just 1,500 ringgits, about \$366, to scammers. After responding to an online advertisement from a firm claiming a 90% success rate in recovering stolen funds, she was cheated out of 1.2 million ringgits, roughly \$293,000.

**'Scammers Scamming Scam Victims'**

"This is basically scammers scamming scam victims," said Michael Chong, head of the Malaysian Chinese Association's Public Services and Complaints Department, at a press conference in Kuala Lumpur on Monday.

His office has recorded two such cases. In the second incident, a man who lost 390,000 ringgits to fraud was cheated out of an additional 33,000 ringgit by a fake recovery firm.

Chong said claims of high success rates should raise immediate red flags. "Based on my experience handling scam cases, our success rate is zero per cent," he said. "So how can anyone claim they have a 90 per cent or 95 per cent success rate?"

### **Targeting Specific Communities**

Senior lawyer Muhammad Shafee Abdullah, who joined Chong at the press conference, said the fraudulent advertisements appear designed to target Chinese communities in particular.

In his legal practice, Chinese clients are more likely to ask about a firm's success rate, making such claims an effective lure. "They hook you with an interesting story, and then they wipe you off completely," he said.

Muhammad Shafee noted that the same criminal group may be operating under multiple fake law firm names. He pointed to a telling inconsistency in the advertisements: firms claiming to be "cross-border" legal operators prominently request payment in ringgit.

"Ringgit is not a widely traded currency," he said. "This shows their intended victims is Malaysians."

*This article originally appeared in SCMP*