

A market for property scams

Many fake real estate agents using Facebook to lure victims

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PETALING JAYA: Facebook Marketplace has been identified as the most frequently used platform by individuals posing as property agents to dupe victims, with most cases involving bogus real estate agents.

Bukit Aman Commercial Crime Investigation Department (CCID) director Comm Datuk Rusdi Mohd Isa (*pic*) said statistics showed a significant rise in property agent-related scams since 2023 with total losses amounting to RM6.49mil.

“In 2023, 10 cases were recorded involving losses of RM240,287. This increased to 18 cases in 2024 with losses totalling RM1.14mil while in 2025, 24 cases were reported with losses amounting to RM5.1mil,” he said in an interview recently.

Overall, a total of 52 property agent scam cases were recorded over the three-year period, he added.

Comm Rusdi said 15 suspects were arrested in 2023, followed by 10 arrests in 2024 and four arrests in 2025.

He explained that investigations found most property-related scams were not linked to organised syndicates, but were carried out by individuals acting alone.

“The modus operandi typically involves individuals impersonating property agents and advertising properties on Facebook Marketplace.

“These cases rarely involve the use of forged documents,” he said.

Comm Rusdi said among the main factors that lured victims were offers priced well below market value, coupled with psychological pressure by claiming the offer was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

“In some cases, the properties offered are said to be under development, with victims being promised low entry prices before the property’s value allegedly rises sharply,” he added.

To overcome such scams more effectively, he said CCID has esta-



blished strategic cooperation with the Board of Valuers, Appraisers, Estate Agents and Property Managers Malaysia.

Members of the public are also encouraged to use the phone number, bank account and company name search functions on the SemakMule portal or application, and to follow scam prevention advisories shared on CCID’s official social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram and TikTok.

Comm Rusdi said there has so far been no significant increase in reports involving specific victim

segments, such as first-time homebuyers or foreign investors.

“At this stage, CCID has also not detected the use of new technologies such as deepfake or artificial intelligence to impersonate property agents and scam victims,” he said.

He advised the public to remain vigilant, stressing that anyone could fall victim to property scams.

Among the preventive measures recommended are conducting thorough checks on any offers received with relevant authorities such as the Land and Mines Office, and verifying information through legitimate sources.

“Before making any payment transactions, the public is advised to verify phone numbers, bank accounts and company names through the CCID SemakMule portal.”

Comm Rusdi added that those who suspect they have been scammed or have doubts over a transaction should immediately contact the National Scam Response Centre for assistance.