



POLICE NEWS RELEASE

CRIME ALERT: NEW VARIATION OF PHONE SCAMS - 'EXTORTION SCAM'

1. Police have recently detected a new variation of phone scams in which culprits make extortion calls to business offices demanding money. Like the earlier versions of phone scams, they are designed to trick victims into parting with their money. The calls are believed to be made from overseas.

Modus Operandi

2. Typically, the culprit would call business offices threatening to use violence to disrupt the victim's business activities or cause harm to family members if payments were not made. The culprit is also known to converse in Mandarin with a China / Taiwanese accent and may use one of the following threats on the victim:

- i. He may demand for a sum of money, claiming that it is needed to assist the victim's associate/relative who has allegedly murdered someone to flee the country;
- ii. He may tell the victim that his family and company are being watched and threaten to harm them if his demands are not met;
- iii. He may threaten to kidnap female victims and take nude photos of them if they fail to comply with his demands;
- iv. He may claim that he has links with secret societies and needs money to help his men flee Singapore after committing serious crimes;
- v. He may claim to be in possession of firearms / explosives and threaten to harm the victim or disrupt business operations.

Crime Prevention Advisory

3. While the culprits have been unsuccessful so far and none of the threats made have been carried out, members of the public are advised to be aware of and vigilant against such scams. Members of the public should never reveal any of their personal details, including those of their business or family to the caller. Members of the public should also not transfer money to unknown persons and report the case to the police as soon as possible.

4. Members of the public are advised to remain vigilant against the other variations of phone scams as well such as the kidnap, lottery and impersonation scams. More details of such scams and the relevant crime prevention advisories

can be found at the Singapore Police Force website at www.spf.gov.sg or the Commercial Affairs Department website at www.cad.gov.sg.

**PUBLIC AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT
SINGAPORE POLICE FORCE
16 JUNE 2009 @ 5pm**