

Woman fined

RM10,000 for acting as bank account mule in online fraud case

KUCHING: A 25-year-old woman was fined RM10,000, in default two-month imprisonment, after pleading guilty to acting as a bank account mule for an online fraud syndicate.

Magistrate Nursyaheeqa, Nazwa Radzali convicted Priscilla Peter on her guilty plea to a charge under Section 424C(1) of the Penal Code.

The offence carries a maximum fine of RM150,000, imprisonment of up to 10 years, or both, upon conviction.

Priscilla was found to have indirectly facilitated the receipt of RM13,300 into her bank account without lawful purpose at a coffee shop along Mile 3 Road between Jan 12 and 20.

Based on the facts of the case, a 38-year-old male complainant came across an online loan advertisement while browsing social media on Jan 2.

He subsequently took several personal loans online from unknown individuals between January and March this year, receiving funds in stages and communicating with four lenders via WhatsApp.

Although he made repayment transfers to several bank accounts provided by the lenders, he later received threats that photographs of him and his family would be circulated online if he failed to make further payments.

Fearing for his safety, he lodged a police report, which later led to Priscilla's arrest after police traced part of the repayment funds to her bank account through two transactions.

Checks on her bank statements revealed two deposits of RM6,650 each, credited on Jan 12 and Jan 20 this year.

She was subsequently charged with using her bank account for transactions linked to unlawful activity.

It is also understood that she had previously allowed a third party to use her personal bank account details.

Deputy public prosecutor Muhammad Aidil Akmal Sharidan appeared for the prosecution, while Priscilla was unrepresented.