



09 JUN, 2026

Cops: Watch out for red-flag job offers



The Star, Malaysia

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GEORGE TOWN: Be wary of lucrative job offers that seem too good to be true.

With the FIFA World Cup 2026 just a few days away, concerns are growing that unsuspecting individuals could be lured into illegal online gambling operations disguised as legitimate employment.

Penang police chief Comm Datuk Azizee Ismail (*pic*) said betting syndicates are advertising high-paying jobs on platforms like Telegram and TikTok, targeting youths and job seekers with promises of easy income, flexible hours and work-from-home arrangements.

"Applicants are often led to believe they are being hired for roles in digital marketing, customer support, or online administration, only to later discover they are facilitating illegal gambling activities.

"Tasks may include managing online gambling accounts, processing customer transactions, or even acting as mule account holders for money laundering operations," he said when contacted.

Comm Azizee noted that these syndicates are highly organised and technologically adaptive.

Once a website or operational link is blocked by authorities, he said syndicates would quickly migrate to new domains, generate replacement links, or shift operations to encrypted platforms.

He added that the speed at which syndicates alter their digital footprint poses a significant challenge to enforcement, as operators can re-establish gambling platforms within hours of a shutdown.

"The syndicates use sophisticated digital methods to attract punters and evade detection.

"Financial transactions are often channelled through mule bank accounts or cryptocurrency platforms to conceal the movement of funds and complicate investigations.

"Other tactics include mirror websites, Telegram bots and aggressive promotional campaigns offering free betting credits, cashback rewards and referral incentives to lure punters," he said.

Mirror websites are copycat versions of an original site created with a different domain, while Telegram bots are automated accounts that interact with users and perform tasks independently.

Comm Azizee said police would focus on dismantling financial networks, blocking illegal platforms and conducting proactive raids.

"We are working closely with banks and enforcement agencies to freeze mule accounts, monitor suspicious transactions and curb the use of cryptocurrencies and e-wallets linked to betting.

"We are also collaborating with the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission to block gambling websites, Telegram and WhatsApp links, and promotional spam SMSes."

Comm Azizee added that authorities would also cooperate with Tenaga Nasional Berhad to cut electricity to premises operating illegal gambling activities.

Public awareness campaigns will be stepped up, he said, and the public is encouraged to channel information through the 999 hotline.