
PRESS RELEASE

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FAKE FACEBOOK ACCOUNTS

The Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) and the Reserve Bank of Fiji (RBF) would like to caution members of the public on recent cases of fake *Facebook* profiles, scam emails and bogus loans involving the Reserve Bank of Fiji.

Fake Facebook profiles

Cybercriminals have created several fake *Facebook* profiles of “Barry Whiteside”, Governor of the RBF. The Governor does not have any *Facebook* profile under his name. Cases have been brought to the attention of the FIU and the RBF that these false personations were used to provide fake RBF approvals for victims to remit funds to secure proceeds of fake lotteries, investments and loans.

Governor Whiteside said that the RBF and its staff do not communicate with anyone via *Facebook* or other social media on official business matters. Governor Whiteside said that anyone who receives any communication or document purporting to be sent from him or any staff of the RBF must immediately refer it to the RBF and FIU for verification and further investigation.

Scam Emails

A number of incidents of scam emails have also surfaced claiming to be from Governor Whiteside with fake messages and documents. Members of the public and stakeholders of the RBF are advised to exercise extreme caution when they receive unsolicited emails or lookalike emails without the official RBF domain @rbf.gov.fj.

Bogus Loans and Grants

The letterhead and logo of the RBF has been used by criminals on documents purporting to offer loans and grants to victims who began to correspond with the criminals using fake social media profiles and emails.

Members of the public are advised that the RBF does not engage in the business of providing personal or commercial loans. The victims should immediately cease communication with the criminals. Members of the public are warned not to provide any personal and financial information on the fake loan documents.

Mr Razim Buksh, Director of the Financial Intelligence Unit said that the above incidents were not caused by any compromise to the RBF’s website or Email servers. He said that in the above-mentioned cases, cybercriminals have abused social media to impersonate Governor Whiteside and commit fraud. Mr Buksh said that members of the public should not open unsolicited and suspicious email messages. Unsolicited email messages (that usually provide a website link or an

attached document) could be infected with dangerous viruses that could compromise your email account, social media profiles, personal computers and mobile devices.

The Cybercrime Unit of the Fiji Police Force is currently investigating the matter.

Members of the public are advised to report suspected cases of impersonations and fraud to the Fiji Police Force or the FIU on phone number 322 3333 or email: info@fijifu.gov.fj.

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