

## News Coverage

**The Straits Times**

1 Mar 2025, Saturday

# Love scam victim with special needs waited in vain at Tanah Merah Ferry Terminal for 'girlfriend'



THK Home for Disabled @ Sembawang collaborated with the police for the first time in October 2024 to conduct a scam prevention talk. PHOTO: THYE HUA KWAN MORAL CHARITIES



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UPDATED MAR 02, 2025, 04:47 PM -



## Summary of news coverage

### **Love scam victim with special needs waited in vain at Tanah Merah Ferry Terminal for 'girlfriend'**

In the Straits Times article, it was mentioned that scam victims in Singapore lost a record \$1.1 billion in 2024, according to annual scam figures released by police on Feb 25. This was the first time an annual loss to scams crossed the \$1 billion mark. So far in 2025, more than 3,500 cases of scams have been reported, with victims losing more than \$80.7 million.

Amid the scam scourge, social service organisations said people with intellectual disabilities are especially vulnerable.

SPD, Thye Hua Kwan Moral Charities (**THKMC**) and Touch Community Services, which serve people with intellectual disabilities, are teaching their clients how to protect themselves against scams. Ms Chloe Lee, the superintendent of **THK** Home for Disabled @ Sembawang, a home for adults with intellectual disabilities, said it is common for its clients to receive scam video calls. Some scammers even use artificial intelligence to impersonate celebrities or police officers. Ms Lee said it is harder for people with intellectual disabilities to process complex information, assess risks or detect deception. She added that most of them would have a very trusting nature because they also desire connection with people.

In October 2024, **THK** Home for Disabled @ Sembawang collaborated with the police for the first time to conduct a scam prevention talk for staff and some residents. It covered online fraud, phone scams and banking security. The home also worked with university students, who designed a pamphlet for its clients, with simple English and visuals, about identifying scam video calls.