

## Police crack credit card fraud gang in Jeddah

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Police Monday arrested three foreigners and a Saudi for allegedly running a 10-million-riyal credit card fraud targeting big brands, upmarket stores and Westerners

The ring leader was identified as Oba, a Nigerian who overstayed his Umrah visit to allegedly run the racket.

Oba's associates were an Egyptian investor, a Saudi businessman, a Kenyan employee of a local bank, and operatives abroad, police said.

Oba is accused of bringing in forged credit cards under the names of American, Belgian, Australian, and Brazilian businesspeople who have high credit lines.

The gang maxed out the fake cards at sales points across the Kingdom. The fake cards were also used in stores owned by the Egyptian investor and the Saudi businessman.

### Lavish spending

The police said the four men used to meet for planning sessions in fancy hotels and restaurants in Jeddah and mount up bills of at least SR1,500 each time. Their heavy spending aroused suspicions and the police put them under surveillance.

In one fraudulent transaction, the police found that the Egyptian accepted a payment of SR300,000 from Oba who used a counterfeit credit card under the name of a Brazilian businessman.

Investigating the transaction, the police also found that the Kenyan bank employee then approved the transaction amount and deposited it in the account of his Egyptian partner.

The Egyptian man told police that he had come to the Kingdom for honest business but that changed when he met Oba who showed him how to make an easy SR100,000 for each fake credit card transaction. He said he has executed many fake transactions for Oba.

The police said Oba used his ill-gotten money to buy three houses in Safa, Ghulail, and Salamah districts in Jeddah. Also found at Jeddah Islamic Port was Oba's cargo shipment of a Hummer, luxury bedroom sets, office set, and expensive massage equipment due for shipment to Nigeria. The police confiscated the cargo.

The Kenyan man and Oba were found to have stayed at two apartments worth SR3,000,000.

The Saudi businessman, who has a furniture store, admitted to dealing in fake transactions with Oba.

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