



Doubling Up

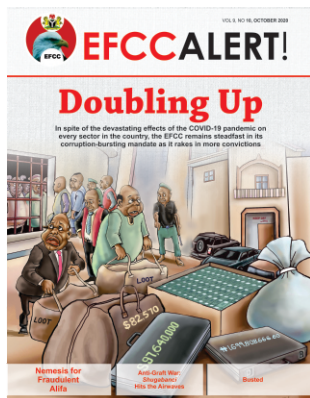
In spite of the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on every sector in the country, the EFCC remains steadfast in its corruption-bursting mandate as it rakes in more convictions



**Nemesis for
Fraudulent
Alifa**

**Anti-Graft War:
Shugabanci
Hits the Airwaves**

Busted



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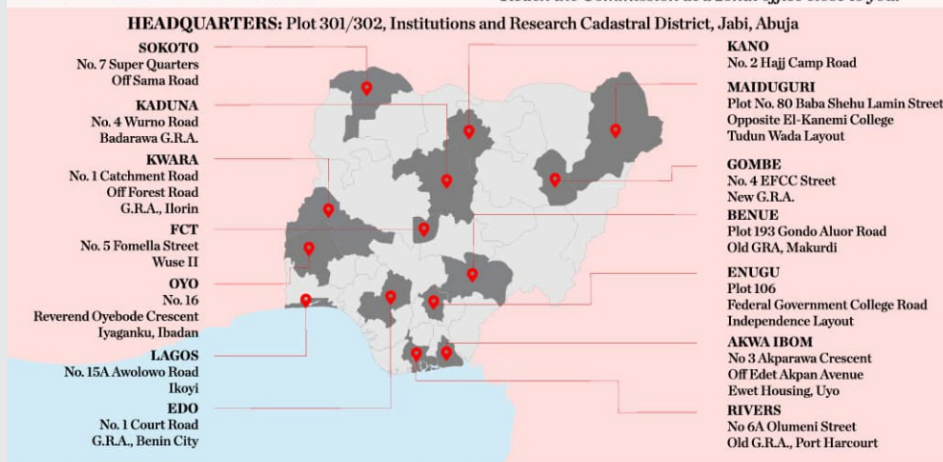
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Reach the Commission at a zonal office close to you.



Doubling Up

In spite of the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on every sector in the country, the EFCC remains steadfast in its corruption-bursting mandate as it rakes in more convictions

By Segun Adeoye



The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC has no doubt remained consistent in the face of the dreaded Coronavirus Disease, COVID-19 to effectively coordinate the anti-corruption campaign, evident in convictions so far secured by the anti-graft agency since the beginning of the year.

This much was emphasized by the acting EFCC Chairman, Mohammed Umar Abba, on October 6, 2020 while addressing the Senate Committee on Anti-Corruption and Financial Crimes at the commencement of the 9th Senate Legislative Anti-Corruption Strategy Implementation Session at the National Assembly Complex.

"The EFCC is doing remarkably well above all other law enforcement agencies in the country and that is why the UNODC and the National Bureau of Statistics in their 2017 survey ranked the EFCC as the most effective government agency in Nigeria," he said, stressing that the Commission has remained consistent in this regard.

He further disclosed that across the 14 zonal offices of the anti-graft agency and

the headquarters, the Commission has in 2020 made a remarkable showing having so far recorded 646 convictions and recovered more than N11 billion in monetary assets.

Indeed, in spite of the debilitating effect of the COVID-19 pandemic, the EFCC has remained focused, determined and unrelenting in its corruption-bursting mandate.

Below is a highlight of a few notable convictions secured in 2020:

BALA AGABA

Even Bala Agaba, a former Executive Director, Maritime Safety and Shipping Development, in the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency, NIMASA, could not believe what he heard on July 15, as he stood in the dock of the Federal High Court, Ikoyi, Lagos, as Justice I.N. Buba declared him guilty of the fraud charges brought against him by the EFCC.

Agaba found himself on the wrong side of the law, after the EFCC began its investigation into a petition alleging fraud

was being perpetrated in NIMASA. Investigations were carried out, which unearthed several suspicious transactions with N1,699,808,666.60 traced to Agaba.

Subsequently, charges were filed against him, which were later amended.

One of the amended charges reads: "That you, Captain Ezekiel Bala Agaba between the 23rd of December, 2013, and 13th of March, 2014 in Lagos, within the jurisdiction of this Court converted through Seabulk Offshore Operator Ltd the sum of N437,726,666.60 (Four Hundred and Thirty-Seven Million, Seven Hundred and Twenty-Six Thousand, Six Hundred and Sixty-Six Naira, Sixty Kobo) property of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency, which sum you reasonably ought to have known form part of the proceeds of your unlawful activity to wit: criminal breach of trust and thereby committed an offence contrary to Section 15(2) of the Money Laundering Prohibition Act, 2011 as amended and punishable under Section 15(3) of the same Act."

Upon arraignment, he pleaded "not guilty" to the charges prompting full-blown trial.



Bala Agaba



Alkali Mamu



Bulus Adamu

The prosecution called 12 witnesses and tendered several documentary evidences, which were admitted by the Court as Exhibits P1-P77. The documents were to prove that the funds released by the Presidency through the Office of the National Security Adviser, for the International Ship and Port Facility Security, ISPS code activities in 2014, which had Agaba as its Committee chairman, were diverted by him through Seabulk Offshore Operator Ltd, Ace Prothesis Ltd, Southern Offshore Limited, Extreme Vertex Nigeria Ltd and Aroward Consulting Ltd.

Justice Buba held that the EFCC proved its case against Agaba and so convicted him as charged and sentenced him to seven years in prison on each count to run concurrently.

ALKALI MAMU

Air Vice Marshal Alkali Mamu must have thought he had escaped justice after Justice Salisu Garba of a Federal Capital Territory, FCT High Court, discharged and acquitted him of the fraud charges brought against him by the EFCC in 2016.

Mamu was one of the senior military officers accused of abusing their positions by the Presidential Committee on the Audit of Defence Equipment Procurement (CADEP), which was mandated to look into contracts awarded for military procurement.

The EFCC filed a four-count charge against Mamu in 2016 and brought him before Justice Garba. However, delivering judgment on June 29, 2018, he discharged and acquitted him on all four counts and held among others, that the prosecution failed to prove its case.

The EFCC however, vehemently opposed the decision of the lower court and subsequently appealed the judgment.

The outcome of the appeal was that on July 28, the three-man panel of the Court of Appeal, which included Justices Yargata Nimpar, Abdu Aboki and Emmanuel Agim, in a unanimous judgment convicted and sentenced Mamu to two years in prison having found him guilty on count two of the charges. The former Group Managing Director of the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) Holding Company and Air Officer

"The EFCC is doing remarkably well above all other law enforcement agencies in the country and that is why the UNODC and the National Bureau of Statistics in their 2017 survey ranked the EFCC as the most effective government agency in Nigeria,"

Commanding, Training Command, was discharged and acquitted on the other counts.

The judgment, which was read by Justice Nimpar, held that: "the trial court failed in its duty by applying principles of law in a flawed manner, leading to the striking out of the confessional statement."

He was however, given an option of N500,000 as fine.

BULUS ADAMU

The former Chairman, Shongom Local Government Area, Gombe State, was accused of N97,640,000 money laundering fraud. He was charged with a seven-count charge and arraigned before Justice N.I. Afolabi of a Federal High Court, Gombe in 2015.

In the course of the trial, the prosecution presented four witnesses and tendered several exhibits against him.

The TICAN Engineering Enterprises had petitioned the Gombe zonal office of the EFCC on May 9, 2011 accusing him of committing the fraud by way of inflating contracts for the rural electrification of Keffi, Kwara, Gangamari, Daja, Gurwa, Gundale, Bebbulo, Kuka, and Damjigiri

areas of Shongom Local Govt.

Justice Afolabi found him guilty as charged and sentenced him to five years in prison on counts one, two and four without an option of fine. He was sentenced to seven years on count three without an option of fine. On counts five, six and seven, he was sentenced to three years in prison each without an option of fine. The sentences run concurrently from July 10.

The judge further held that he should pay N31,640,000 back to the local government through the registry of the court under the supervision of the EFCC.



Mother, son convicted of \$82,570 Fraud

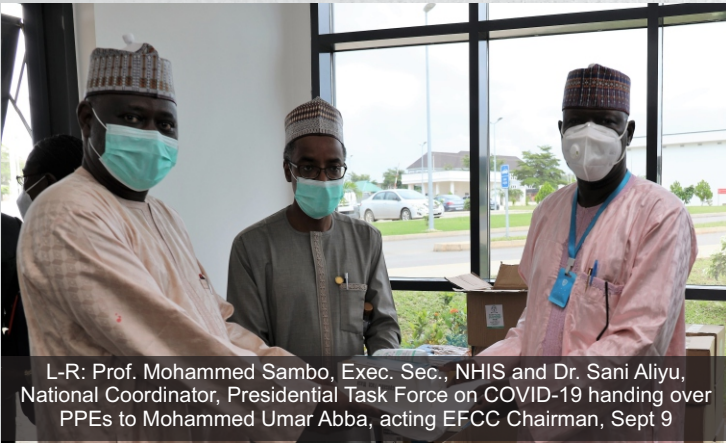
For Damilola Adeyeri and his mother, Alaba, January 28 witnessed a new chapter in the history of their life, as they were found guilty of a \$82,570 fraud charge brought against them by the EFCC.

They were arrested following investigations into a petition from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI against Damilola accusing him of engaging in money laundering and computer-related fraud. Investigations further revealed that he hacked into the official email address of American Cranes Manufacturing company, by impersonating its Chief Executive Officer, and used same to perpetrate the fraud.

Damilola was arrested on September 6, 2019, after which his mother was apprehended when she went to withdraw money from the bank upon hearing that EFCC was investigating her son. She purchased properties in the name of her son with the money made from the fraud.

Justice Chukwujekwu Aneke of a Federal High Court, Ikoyi, Lagos found them guilty of the four-count charge and sentenced them to three years in prison on each of the count to run concurrently. ■

PHOTO-GALLERY



Nemesis for Fraudulent *Alifa*

Matters came to a painful halt for Sokoto-based Muslim prayer specialist, who specialize in conducting fraudulent prayer for wealth for his patrons

By Salamatu Habu

Monday, October 12, 2020 was a day of retributive justice for Umaru Isma'il. While it is not proven how long he has been in the business of obtaining by trick, he made a fraudulent living by packaging himself as a Muslim alifa (prayer specialist) who could make his patrons wealthy by means of a special prayer. Between March, 2017 and July, 2018, he milked one Sani Musa of N668,000.00 (Six Hundred and Sixty Eight Thousand Naira), having successfully presented himself to him as capable of making him become wealthy overnight by way of prayer.

Isma'il's fraud against Musa, backfired, leading to his arrest and prosecution by the Sokoto Zonal Office of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, (EFCC), and five years prison term, without an option of fine by Justice Bello Duwale of the Sokoto State High Court.

He faced an amended eight-count charge, bordering on obtaining money by false pretence to which he pleaded not guilty.

One of the charges read; "That you Umaru Ismaila sometime



With the case of fraud proven against him beyond every doubt, Justice Duwale convicted Isma'il on all the charges, sentencing him to five years imprisonment on each of the counts, without an option of fine.

between the months of March, 2017, June and July, 2018 at Sokoto, within the jurisdiction of this honourable court, with intent to defraud, did obtain the total sum of N668,000.00 (Six Hundred and Sixty Eight Thousand Naira) from one Sani Musa, when you falsely represented yourself to him as capable of making him become rich (wealthy) by praying for him, a pretence you knew to be false and thereby committed an offence contrary to Section 1 (1) (a) of the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Fraud Related Offences Act of 2006 and punishable under Section 1 (3) of the same Act."

His "not guilty" plea set the stage for his trial in which prosecution counsel, Habila Jonathan, tendered several incriminating documents and called six witnesses to prove

the case against him.

With the case of fraud proven beyond every doubt, Justice Duwale convicted Isma'il on all the charges, sentencing him to five years imprisonment on each of the counts, without an option of fine. The 40 years cumulative prison term, would however, run concurrently, leaving the convict to spend just five years behind bars.

Additionally, Ismaila would restitute the sum of N668, 000.00, being proceeds of his crime to the victim through the EFCC.





Acting Chairman of EFCC, Moh'd Umar Abba and other Senior officers of EFCC in group picture with officials of MacArthur Foundation

Anti-Graft War: *Shugabanci* Hits the Airwaves

The anti-corruption crusade of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) recently got an added boost with the donation of a new radio drama series that promote good governance and corruption-free society to the agency

By Salamatu Habu

Corruption prevention campaigns are critical in the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission's (EFCC) anti-corruption efforts. To get the job done, the Commission deploys varied corruption prevention measures aimed at redirecting the minds of members of the public away from corruption and educating them on the ills of the scourge.

On a weekly basis, the Commission's flagship anti-corruption programme: "Eagle" is aired on national radio and television networks across the country, and on various social media platforms.

In the states, EFCC's zonal offices, covering the 36 states, developed anti-corruption radio programmes in native languages within their domains.

The latest addition to all these is a radio drama series, titled "Shugabanci," in Hausa language, which would emphasize good and purposeful governance, devoid of corruption.

The radio drama which already enjoys strong listenership in parts of the country would be on radio waves of the Commission's choosing for the next three years, covering 156 episodes.

Produced by Moving Image Limited and funded MacArthur Foundation, the 156 drama copies were on Friday, October 23, 2020 presented to the EFCC management at a brief ceremony in the Commission's headquarters, Abuja.



Abba (right) receiving copies of *Shugabanci* drama series from Abdulkarim Muhammad

Speaking through a zoom link, Kole Shettima director, MacArthur Foundation Africa, noted that government and civil societies needed to work together to win the war against corruption.

He stated that the anti-corruption radio sensitisation programme became necessary to change people's attitude, allowing them to own the fight against corruption.

He emphasized that Foundation offered to fund the radio drama series based on its belief that it would play a vital role in instigating behavioural change among the people at the grassroots.

On his part, managing director, Moving Image Limited, Abdulkarim Muhammad disclosed that the drama series was

made possible through a \$450,000 grant from Mac Arthur Foundation.

According to Muhammad, the programme will bring government's efforts at rooting out corruption in the country nearer home to grassroots listeners. "By the time people see the damage corruption does, they will key into the anti-corruption fight. In fighting corruption, you keep pushing," he said.

The Acting Chairman of the EFCC, Mohammed Umar Abba expressed gratitude to Mac Arthur Foundation for choosing the Commission as its core partner, noting that the radio drama initiative fits into the Commission's corruption prevention mandate.

"We in the EFCC prioritise corruption prevention, and this led to the creation of Enlightenment and Re-orientation Unit in the Public Affairs Directorate of the Commission to drive and sustain the rigorous education and sensitization programme of the public on the ills of corruption and economic and financial crimes in the country."

Abba further disclosed that the EFCC has strategic programmes directed at different population segments in the society, of which drama is one of them.

Drama, he said "mirrors life, teaches life, motivates audience, changes attitudes and remains longer in the memories of both the listeners and viewers alike. This is why we consider your kind gesture today as a great contribution to the anti-corruption drive of the EFCC." ■

Busted

The EFCC investigates man caught at the Murtala Muhammed International Airport in possession of 2,886 ATM cards and four SIM cards



What on earth will a man be doing with 2,886 Automated Teller Machine, ATM cards, when he is not a mobile or human bank? Why would he be in possession of a carton that is supposed to contain noodles, yet contains the cards and four Subscriber Identification Module, SIM cards?

These are some of the questions Ishaq Abubakar has to answer, after he was taken into custody by officers of the Lagos zonal office of the EFCC on September 10.

Abubakar got into trouble when he was arrested, on August 22, 2020, by officers of the Nigeria Customs Service at the Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Lagos, on his way to Dubai with the 2,886 ATM cards and SIM cards carefully concealed in the cartons of noodles.

Deputy Comptroller, Enforcement, Abudulmumuni Bako, who handed him over to the EFCC, said: "Officers of the Nigeria Customs Service at the Departure Hall of the Murtala Muhammed International Airport, on August 22, 2020, intercepted the

"This raised the suspicion of the officers who insisted he should be physically and thoroughly checked after the scan machine had revealed he was carrying parks of noodles."

suspect with 2,886 ATM cards and four SIM cards, which he carefully concealed in parks of Noodles.

"The suspect, who claimed to have come from Kano to travel to Dubai aboard the Emirate Evacuation flight, was seen with someone who was assigned to facilitate his movement through the airport checks.

"This raised the suspicion of the officers who insisted he should be physically and thoroughly checked after the scan machine had revealed

he was carrying parks of noodles."

In his response, the zonal head of the EFCC Lagos Office, AbdulRasheed Bawa, who received the suspect on behalf of the Commission, assured the Service that the Commission would duly investigate the suspect and any other accomplice that might be involved in the alleged criminal offence.

He said: "On behalf of the Commission and the acting Chairman, Mr. Muhammed Umar, we have taken over Ishaq, and I can assure you that we are going to investigate the matter thoroughly and unveil everybody involved in the syndicate.

"There are a number of possibilities. There is an element of conspiracy, foreign exchange malpractices and money laundering.

"Indeed, banks and bankers are definitely involved."

Bawa also emphasized the possibility of the suspect being a member of a network, noting that there had been a trend in which unsuspecting Nigerians are lured into opening accounts to be bought at a fee. ■



Interpol to the Rescue

The Interpol has renewed its pledge of assistance to the EFCC in the recovery of Nigerian looted funds, stashed away in foreign safe havens and the extradition of the fugitive looters

By Iliasu Bala

There is no hiding place for looters and plunderers of the nation's resources as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC is leaving no stone unturned in its determination to bring them to Justice. Mohammed Umar Abba, the acting chairman of the anti-graft agency did not mince word on Tuesday, November 24, 2020 when the leadership of the National Central Bureau of Interpol visited him. "We need the intervention of the Interpol to help bring fugitives who looted the nation's resources to justice", he declared, adding "We most graciously need your intervention and assistance, so that we can get enough information that could lead to the extradition of some of our suspects."

The EFCC boss indicated that the category of high-end corruption suspects for which the Commission needed the direct intervention of the Interpol include cybercrime suspects plying their ignoble trade on the West Coast of Africa as well as persons indicted of grand corruption. In the latter category are two suspects linked to the notorious Process and Industrial Developments Nigeria Limited (P&ID), believed to be hibernating abroad.

"There are two suspects being investigated in regards to the P&ID case, they are Italians who are also on the run from the country. The information we have is that they are currently in Italy, we want the assistance of the Interpol in this regard, especially for information that could lead to their extradition," Abba stated.

The EFCC boss expressed delight over the long-standing robust collaboration between the Commission and Interpol, noting that the EFCC has earned positive outcomes from the collaboration.

In his remarks, the Head of Interpol Nigeria, Garba Umar assured the

"We most graciously need your intervention and assistance, so that we can get enough information that could lead to the extradition of some of our suspects."

Commission that the Interpol was on the same page with the EFCC on the P&ID case and would not relent in its efforts to ensure that justice is served on all in the matter.

"You are aware that we are working hand-in-hand with you and we are the catalyst that aided the EFCC in making sure the P&ID case was a success and so, we are looking forward to seeing that this partnership goes a long way. There are a lot of things that we can share and be beneficial to each other, so that is why we are looking forward to having this robust relationship and enhancing policing in Nigeria, Umar said.

The Interpol played crucial role in the extradition of a former attorney general and minister of justice, Mohammed Bello Adoke, who is currently being prosecuted by the EFCC on money laundering charges. Other high profile persons accused of corruption but currently out of the reach of the EFCC, include a former minister of petroleum resources, Diezani Alison-Madueke and a former chairman of the Pension Reform Task Team, Abdulrasheed Maina, and his son, Faisal. Maina and his son are believed to have fled Nigeria after they were granted bail by a Federal High Court, Abuja, where they are being prosecuted on separate charges of fraud and money laundering. Their bail had been revoked by Justice Okon Abang and a warrant issued for their arrest. ■

Oily Comeuppance

It was a day of reckoning for six foreign thieves, made up of two Pakistanis, two Ukrainians, a Ghanaian and an Indonesian as they bagged seven years imprisonment each, lost their vessel to the federal government and their company, liquidated for stealing Nigerian oil



It was a deserved comeuppance for six foreigners: Mohammed Ejaz, Nasser Khan (Pakistanis); two Ukrainians: Oleksandr Nazarenko, Oleksandr Kashernvi; one Ghanaian: Romeo Annang, and one Indonesian: Fredrik Fatin Omenu as they were dispatched to prison on November 23 by a Federal High Court in Port Harcourt Rivers State for stealing Nigerian crude oil. They bagged seven years imprisonment, each after Justice J. k. Omotosho found them guilty of sailing into Nigerian waters and lifting crude oil without licence.

They were docked alongside a company: Asztral Shipping Corporation SA, and a Vessel, MT. TECNE (a.k.a MT STAR), on four-count charges, bordering on conspiracy, dealing in petroleum products without a licence and tampering with oil pipelines.

Count one of the charge read: "That you, Victor Azebiri, David Otuhohi, Mohammed Ejaz, Naseer Khan, Oleksandr Nazarenko, Oleksandr Kashernvi, Romeo Annang, Francis Ahorlu, Kwesi Attah, Victor Mikpayi, Frederik Fatin Omenu, Astral Shipping Corporation SA, MT TECNE a.k.a MT STAR (Vessel), Peter Ala (at large), David Ogoma, a.k.a Ambassador (at large) and others now at large, on or about the 20th and/or 25th

day of April, 2017 at Escravos, within the jurisdiction of this honourable court did conspire among yourselves to commit felony to wit: distribute, deal in, or with petroleum product without appropriate licence and thereby committed an offence contrary to Section 3(6) of the Miscellaneous Offences Act CAP M17 of the Revised Edition (Laws of the Federation of Nigeria) 2007 and Punishable under Section 1(17) of the same Act".

Another count charge read "That you Victor Azebiri, David Otuhohi, Mohammed Ejaz, Naseer Khan, Oleksandr Nazarenko, Oleksandr Kashernvi, Romeo Annang, Francis Ahorlu, Kwesi Attah, Victor Mikpayi, Frederik Fatin Omenu, Astral Shipping Corporation SA, MT TECNE a.k.a MT STAR (Vessel), Peter Ala (at large), David Ogoma, a.k.a Ambassador (at large) and others now at large, on or about the 25th day of April, 2017 at Escravos within the jurisdiction of this honourable court did without appropriate authority or licence, distribute, deal in, or with petroleum product to wit: 1905.836 cubic litres of crude oil, conveyed in a vessel christened "MT TECNE" (vessel) and thereby committed an offence contrary to Section

1(17) (a) of the Miscellaneous Offences Act CAP M17 of the Revised Edition (Laws of the Federation of Nigeria) 2007 and Punishable under Section 1(17) of the same Act".

The defendants pleaded not guilty to the charges when they were read to them. Their pleas prepared grounds for their prosecution by the EFCC, which for three years, presented evidence and witnesses that testified against the defendants in court.

While sentencing them and their Nigerian accomplice, David Otuohi, to seven years imprisonment, Justice Omotosho gave them an option of N2,000,000 fine.

The company involved in the crime: Asztral Shipping Corporation SA was wound up by the court, while the vessel carrying the offensive crude oil: MT TECNE, a.k.a MT STAR was forfeited to the Federal Government.

The convicts ran into troubled waters when their ship was intercepted by the NNS DELTA on April 25, 2017 at Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC), Afremo 'A' Terminal, South East of Escravos in Burutu Local Government Area of Delta State, for suspect illegal loading of crude oil. The crew members connived with Victor Azebiri (the 1st defendant); one Peter Ala and David Ogoma (a.k.a) Ambassador, who are now at large, to siphon about 1905.836 cubic litres of crude oil. ■



When it Rains...

The arrest and imprisonment of Obinwanne Okeke, chief executive of Invictus Group in United States of America, USA, for wire fraud have set off a string financial forfeitures, back home in Nigeria

These are certainly not the best of times for Obinwanne Okeke. His steep fall from the heights of global admirability as an emerging business leader, into the hell hole of infamy is not about to end. Months after he was arrested and jailed for multi-billion naira wire fraud in the United States of America, the whiz-kid has now also kissed good bye to his cash in Nigerian account, courtesy of a forfeiture order of court instigated by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC. The chief executive of Invictus Group has by the order of Justice A.M. Liman

Okeke, who is the Chief Executive Officer, CEO, Invictus Group, was arrested sometime in August 2019 in the United States of America, USA, and charged with two counts of computer and wire fraud, to which he pleaded guilty.

of the Federal High Court, Lagos, lost to the Federal Government, the sum of N235, 451, 969.89 (Two Hundred and Thirty-five Million, Four Hundred and Fifty-one Thousand, Nine Hundred and Sixty-nine Naira, Eighty-nine Kobo) traced to his account. Justice Liman had, on March 23, 2020, ordered the interim forfeiture of the money, domiciled in First City Monument Bank, following an ex parte application, dated December

18, 2019 by the Lagos Zonal Office of the EFCC.

In granting the interim forfeiture order, the judge had ordered the Commission to advertise same in any national newspaper for anyone to show cause why the said money should not be finally forfeited to the Federal Government of Nigeria.

Following the publication of the order in a national newspaper, the Commission, on June 2, 2020, filed a motion on notice, seeking the final forfeiture of the money to the Federal Government.

During the proceedings on November 12, 2020, counsel to the Commission, I. Sulaiman, urged the court to grant his prayers for final forfeiture of the money, which is reasonably suspected to be proceeds of unlawful activities.

In his ruling, Justice Liman granted the applicant's prayers and ordered that the money be finally forfeited to the Federal Government.

Okeke, who is the Chief Executive Officer, CEO, Invictus Group, was arrested sometime in August 2019 in the United States of America, USA, and charged with two counts of computer and wire fraud, to which he pleaded guilty. ■





Launder and go under.
EFCC will smoke you out!

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