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EFCCALERT!



Eagle Eye App Debuts

The EFCC sets a new record among law enforcement agencies, as it launches its novel Application for online reporting of corrupt practices



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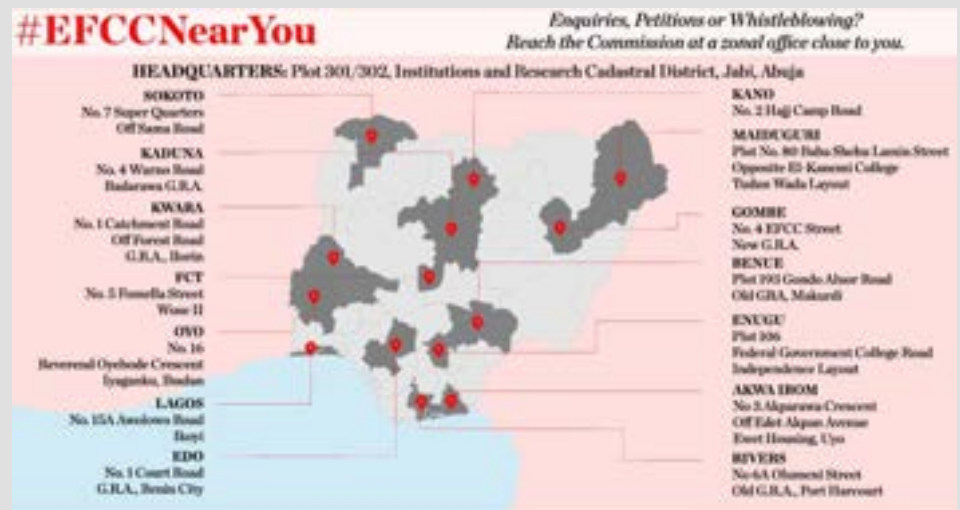
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Eagle Eye App Debuts

The EFCC sets a new record among law enforcement agencies, as it launches its novel Application for online reporting of corrupt practices



Wednesday, July 14, 2021 will, no doubt, go down in the history of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, as a momentous day. History was made as the Commission in its characteristic groundbreaking feats, launched its novel Eagle Eye Application for both the Play Store and the App Store, designed as the "EFCC case reporting tool". The App is aimed at further making the anti-corruption agency easily accessible to whistleblowers, in and outside of Nigeria.

Understandably, the atmosphere at the EFCC Headquarters, Abuja, was in a most joyous and celebratory mood. Chairman of the EFCC, Abdulrasheed Bawa, who unveiled and formally launched/presented the App to the public was beside himself with satisfaction and delight.

He said: "For us at the EFCC, this event is unique in several ways; it is the first of its kind by any law enforcement agency in Nigeria.

"Second, it is the product of ingenuity by a staff of the Commission being an application that was conceived, designed and developed by the EFCC.

"Thirdly, it is a clear demonstration of my pledge on assumption of office to run an agency that is technology-driven."

According to him, the App represented a new experience in information sharing and crime reporting between the public and the EFCC.

"Apart from complementing the existing channels for reporting economic crimes, the unique advantage of this application is

that it eliminates direct person-to-person interface in the reporting process and guarantees anonymity which is an added incentive to effective whistle blowing," he said.

He enjoined members of the public to utilize the fluidity of the App in bringing cases of corruption and economic crimes to the knowledge of the EFCC.

"With the App, those who hitherto were afraid to report corruption cases to the Commission either for fear of being identified by the culprits or having their identities revealed, can now do so with the assurance of full anonymity," he said.

The App, which is geared towards further boosting the whistleblower policy of the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari in fighting corruption in Nigeria, comes

as an easy to navigate application that enables anyone anywhere in the world, to take a picture of a property suspected to have been fraudulently or corruptly acquired and seamlessly report same to the EFCC, especially cases of money laundering through real estate.

While assuring members of the public that with the App "you have at your fingertips a device that will ultimately ensure that there is no hiding place for the corrupt in Nigeria", he also warned that "there are penalties clearly stipulated in the laws, for giving false information that could mislead the Commission".

The App, which has so far enjoyed generous reviews on both stores, can be downloaded by searching for "Eagle Eye" on both stores.

From Petition to Justice

As the Eagle Eye application joins the growing platforms of connecting and reporting corruption cases to the EFCC, other channels remain valid and acceptable, as they all start with writing and submitting a petition to the anti-corruption agency. Invariably, petitions can still be submitted in person at any EFCC office nearest to you, and must be addressed to the "Executive Chairman". The petition should be accompanied with relevant documents supporting the allegations raised in the petition, including photographs.

The investigation process begins with the receipt of a petition. It can be anonymous, and it may not. Such petitions are accepted either in person at the offices of the agency spread across the country, or via the official email address of the Commission, (info@efcc.gov.ng) and now via the EFCC Eagle Eye app.

The petitioner may be called upon for more details. Every petition is looked into, based on its merit. For a petition, which background investigations authenticate to be genuine, a case file is opened, documenting the findings in the course of investigations, and thereafter, passed to the appropriate Operations unit. A petition adjudged not to be genuine is discarded.

Operations units

The EFCC is empowered by the EFCC (Establishment) Act 2004 to establish units to aid the effective discharge of its duties. Over its 17 years of existence, the number of units have grown in numbers to



accommodate new forms of crimes. Among its growing operations units include:

Advance Fee Fraud unit, Bank Fraud unit, Counter Terrorism and General Investigation/Pension unit, Economic Governance unit, Extractive Industries Fraud unit, Intelligence and Special Operations unit, Land and Property Fraud unit, Capital Market/Insurance unit, Cyber Crime unit, Foreign Exchange Malpractices unit and Procurement Fraud unit.

Depending on the allegations in the petition, the case file is handled by the appropriate unit.

Investigation begins

The EFCC is empowered by Section 7 of the Act to carry out investigation into any financial crime. As soon as the case file is handed over to the relevant unit, those accused of committing the alleged offence, are invited for interrogation by way of a formal invitation. The interrogation exercise is carried out in line with best international practices, to ensure fairness to the accused.

The agency has well-equipped interrogation rooms designed to international standards. The interrogation

process follows best practices, which involve reading the cautionary words to the interviewee. No torture or pressure is used in the process. It is the same process applied to everyone called for interrogation – rich or poor. At the point of interrogation, a dossier on the invited person has already been collated based on investigations. However, if the invitation to the suspect is not honoured, the agency would be compelled to declare the person wanted. In some instances, operatives might carry out an arrest – each situation is attended to, based on its peculiarity. If there is a need to arrest the suspect, it is done with a duly approved warrant. Based on the outcome of the interrogation process, the suspect may be detained in the agency's detention facility. An administrative bail may thereafter be granted. As soon as the conditions for bail are met, the suspect would be released. However, if the conditions are not met, the suspect is kept in EFCC custody, backed by a remand warrant. Suffice to say that many counsel of suspects always appeal to the court to allow their clients to remain in EFCC custody, pending the fulfillment of the bail conditions granted them by the Court.

Legal unit

As soon as investigations establish a prima facie case against the suspect, the case file is passed on to the legal and prosecution department of the EFCC, where the relevant charges are drawn up. Charges are subsequently filed in court and the suspects arraigned. At this point, the ball is in the court of the judiciary.

Media unit

The EFCC is empowered by Section 6 of the Act, to carry out and sustain rigorous public and enlightenment campaigns against economic and financial crimes within and outside Nigeria, which includes the corruption prevention effort of "naming and shaming" fraudsters. The Media unit of the EFCC carries out this important role, by also giving updates to the public on the prosecution of fraudsters, from their arraignment to their conviction.

Forensic Laboratory

In the course of investigation, there might be a need to analyse handwritings, signatures and the likes to establish the level of culpability of a suspect in a case. This aspect of the investigative process is executed by the forensic laboratory of the EFCC, which is equipped to world standards, with professional personnel. ■

2063 Corruption Challenge

The EFCC utilises the African Union Day of Anti-Corruption to urge African countries to brace for the challenges of achieving a corruption-free continent

The 5th African Union Day of Anti-Corruption with the theme: “Regional Economic Communities: Critical Actors in the Implementation of the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption”, can be rightly said to have been marked on a low key, yet, it did not deter from the importance attached to it.

The Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, Abdulrasheed Bawa, who spoke at the virtual meeting used the platform to sound the alarm that the African Vision (Agenda 2063) will be a mirage if corruption is not decisively dealt with on the African continent.

According to him, corruption presents a major threat militating against the actualization of the “Africa of good governance, democracy, and respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law... which is the vision of African Agenda 2063”.

Bawa, who was represented by the EFCC’s Director of Intelligence, Abubakar Saád, observed that corruption was a threat to the dream of a united and prosperous Africa.

“It has drastically increased the prevalence of poverty and inequality on our continent. Our continent continues to suffer from rampant debilitating capital flight and illicit financial flows, accompanied by a consistent decline in the standard of living and quality of life of our people,” he said.

He, however, remarked that the adoption of the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (AUCPCC), signed in Maputo, Mozambique, on 11th July, 2003 and its coming into force in 2006, has brought about remarkable progress in the fight against corruption. “It has also provided a fulcrum for Regional Economic Communities to

synergize anti-corruption efforts undertaken by National Anti-Corruption Authorities (NACAs) and measure the impact of prescribed interventions”.

Speaking on the topic: “Effective Implementation of the AUCPCC by RECs and NACs in Combating Corruption and Achieving African Agenda 2063”, Hajia Hadiza Gamawa, Chief of Staff (CoS) to Bawa says corruption undermines accountability and transparency in the management of public affairs as well as socio-economic development of the continent.

She recommended that Regional Economic Communities domesticate and institutionalize AUCPCC Implementation review process to serve as a veritable yardstick for the objective evaluation of the implementation of the AUCPCC.

The CoS also recommended the full implementation of the African Union Advisory Board on Corruption (AUABC) Strategic Plan which contains a comprehensively outlined implementation plan with measurement and evaluation and results indicators.

The measure, she said, will ensure member countries synchronize the Anti-corruption activities of their National



Anticorruption Authorities (NACAs) and ensure that NACAs operate as a cohesive entity within their sub-region (RECs) and within the African Union. “We therefore urge RECs and the ACAs to recommit to the implementation of the AUCPCC now more than ever as we seek to build: “...An Africa of good governance, democracy, and respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law; as African Agenda 2063 is unachievable without combating corruption.

Other speakers at the virtual event include Adedayo A. Kayode, Director, Asset Tracing, Recovery and Management, ICPC, who spoke on the topic: “The Role of Stakeholders in Combating IFFS for Effective Implementation of African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement” and Auwal Ibrahim Musa Rafsanjani, Executive Director CISLAC, who spoke on: ‘Encouraging a Culture of Corporate Transparency, Accountability and Integrity in Multinational Corporation’ ■



Allegiance to AUDA-NEPAD

The EFCC will continue to support the work of the African Union Development Agency- New Partnership for Africa's Development, AUDA-NEPAD.

Bawa made the declaration while engaging with visiting members of the Country Review Mission on the validation of Nigeria's Self-Assessment Report.

The EFCC boss underlined the importance of peer review on the continent's governance and transformation process.

"There is a difference between fighting corruption and fighting corrupt people, we believe that you can only measure good governance by reviewing one's work through self-assessment and comparing with others," he said.

He expressed the willingness of the Commission to work together with the team in determining the possible ways things could be done better.

In his opening remarks, the APRM National Governing Council Team Lead, Dr. Louis Mandama reviewed the trajectory and progress of the Country Self-Assessment Report on the ongoing Africa Union's Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) 2nd review

"There is a difference between fighting corruption and fighting corrupt people, we believe that you can only measure good governance by reviewing one's work through self-assessment and comparing with others,"

process as it relates to Nigeria.

According to Mandama, the review process which started over a year ago with the conduct of town hall meetings, broad sensitization, virtual meetings, and questionnaire administration covered areas relating to democracy, political governance, economic governance, management, corporate governance and social economic development.

He added that the dialogue with the Commission will provide self-

assessment inputs on the key areas listed, which will be forwarded to the government for review and necessary action.

On his part, Abdoulie Janneh, Lead of the Review Panel, explained that the aim of the dialogue was to identify challenges and indices that could be discussed with a view to adding value to the assessment and ultimately improve the state of governance in the continent.

"You are a very critical institution in this country and one of its kind in the continent, so we recognize the challenge that not only Nigeria is facing but other parts of the continent which is the management of national resources," he said.

He emphasized the importance of collaboration among institutions that share a common passion of improving governance in the continent.

The Country Review Mission comprises eleven delegates drawn from countries cutting across the regions of the African Continent. ■



Atuche's Tearful End

After 10 years of trial the EFCC, finally secures conviction of another former bank managing director for a N25.7billion fraud

With teary eyes, a sobered and humbled demeanour, Francis Atuche, a once highly revered former Managing Director of the defunct BankPHB Plc, (now Keystone Bank) on June 16, 2021 stood in the dock to address a packed courtroom, as he awaited his sentencing by Justice Lateefat Okunnu of the Lagos State High Court, Ikeja. Atuche was arraigned in June 2011 alongside his wife, Elizabeth, and Ugo Anyanwu, then Chief Financial Officer of the bank on 27 counts of conspiracy and stealing charge proffered against them by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC.

"I plead for mercy, leniency, your kindness, and I plead that out of your kindness and generosity, you will not allow me to go to jail."

Justice Okunnu had found him and Anyanwu "guilty" as charged and exonerated his wife. At the end of the ruling that lasted about 11 hours, the trial judge turned over to the two convicts to

give them an opportunity to address the court before their sentence was pronounced.

"All the time I was the MD of Bank PHB, I gave my all to the bank," Atuche began. "Never at any material time did it occur to me that I would set up a scheme to defraud the bank.

"I plead for mercy, leniency, your kindness, and I plead that out of your kindness and generosity, you will not allow me to go to jail."

Casting his mind back to the twists and turns that he made the Court to go through, making

Turning Points in trial

The EFCC had, in 2011, arraigned Atuche, his wife and Anyanwu, for conspiracy and stealing to the tune of N25.7bn. They pleaded "not guilty" to the charges preferred against them, thereby leading to their full trial.

About three years into their trial, Atuche and his co-defendants approached the Court of Appeal, Lagos Division, challenging their trial by the lower court for lack of jurisdiction.

The Appellate Court, in a judgment delivered

in September 2016, had stopped the lower court from going ahead with the trial.

Though the Appeal Court refused the defendants' prayer to quash the charges against them, it ordered Justice Okunnu to hands-off the trial and further directed

the Chief Judge of Lagos State to re-assign the case to another judge.

Dissatisfied by the ruling, the EFCC approached the Supreme Court to set aside the decision of the appellate court and order continuation of trial in the matter.



During the hearing at the apex court, counsel for the prosecution, Kemi Pinheiro, SAN, stated that the case had gone far at the lower court, adding that the appellate court's decision had prolonged the speedy conclusion of the trial.

In a unanimous decision, a panel of the apex court, overturned the decision of the appellate court. Justice Ejembi Eko, who prepared and read the lead judgment of the apex court, held that the September 23, 2016 order of the Court of Appeal directing the Chief Judge of Lagos State to re-assign the case to another judge ran out of sync with justice.

The apex court panel further held that the appellate court failed to give any reasons for disqualifying Justice Okunnu.

Dissatisfied by the ruling, the EFCC approached the Supreme Court to set aside the decision of the appellate court and order continuation of trial in the matter.

The Supreme Court, therefore, directed that the case be returned to Justice Okunnu for continuation of trial of the defendants.

Delivering judgment in the case, on June 16, Justice Okunnu held that the EFCC successfully proved its case against the defendants beyond reasonable doubt. ■



the trial last as long as a decade, Anyanwu on his part, tendered an unreserved apology.

"I am sorry if I was appearing cocky in the witness box during my examination-in-chief," he said. "I have two kids who are barely teenagers. They look up to their father, and I wonder what kind of impact this will have on them."

"Please temper justice with mercy."

Paul Nneoma and Silva Ogwemoh, SAN, counsel for Atuche and Anyanwu, respectively, also pleaded for fines to be imposed on their clients, instead of jail term.

But the prosecution, led by Kemi Pinheiro, SAN, would have none of it, as he urged the Court to impose a stiff penalty and order

restitution.

He argued that the State had spent so much resources to prosecute the 10-year-old case.

He said: "We were taken to the Court of Appeal, the Supreme Court several times by the defendants.

"During the trial, they were rude and cocky. That is not remorse, the third defendant (Anyanwu) decided to hold onto his loyalty to his boss (Atuche) against his loyalty to the State."

For the convicts, however, it was too little, too late. And once again, the saying that the wheel of justice may turn slowly, yet it grinds fine, once again held true.

Afterwards, Justice Okunnu held that though the pleas of the defendants were acknowledged, there must be consequences for bad behaviour. Atuche was thereafter sentenced to six years in prison, while Anyanwu bagged four years in prison.

"I hereby make an order of restitution against the first and third defendants to refund the sums stated in counts one to 11, 14 and 24," Justice Okunnu added.

Atuche and Anyanwu, join the growing list of former bank managers convicted for diverting depositors' funds to personal use, including Okey Nwosu, a former MD of FinBank, who was convicted on January 5, 2021 for defrauding the bank of N19.2billion. ■

Cunning Abel

A businessman bags jail term for N4million fraud



He pleaded "guilty" to the separate charges preferred against him by the EFCC.

Advance Fee Fraud and Other Related Offences Act, 2006 having fraudulently obtained N4,065,000 from his victim.

He was arraigned on July 14, 2021 by the EFCC on two separate one count charges.

One of the counts reads: "That you, Alen Abel, sometimes in May 2020 at Maiduguri within the Jurisdiction of this Honourable Court with intent to defraud did obtained 25kg of Spaghetti at N2,900 (Two Thousand, Nine Hundred Naira) only per carton and Twenty bags of rice at N16,000

(Sixteen Thousand Naira) only per bag worth N3,165,000.00 (Three Million, One Hundred and Sixty-five Thousand Naira) from Sontanimen Orison Nyigngo under the pretence of executing a contract of supply of food items, purportedly awarded by Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management And Social Development (Federal Government School Feeding Programme), under the Special Intervention Programme (SIP), which you knew to be false".

He pleaded "guilty" to the separate charges preferred against him by the EFCC.

Justice Fadawu convicted him and sentenced him to eight and seven years imprisonment on the respective charges to run consecutively.

He was also ordered to refund the money to his victim, failure of which he will serve five years on the two separate charges.

The saying that many days may be for the thief, but one day is for the owner of the farm, has held true in the case of Alen Abel, a serial fraudster, recently convicted for a N4million fraud.

Justice Umaru Fadawu of the Borno State High Court sitting in Maiduguri, on July 16, 2021 found him guilty of contravening Section 1 (1) (a) of the

Bitter Lesson

'Whistle Blowers' bag three months for giving false information

Lawal Umar, 45-year-old property agent; Alexander Danjuma, 43-year-old mechanic, and Theophilus Omambala, 47-year-old engineer have learnt a rather bitter lesson, that giving false information is a grave offence.

The defendants allegedly gave false "whistle blowing" information to operatives of the EFCC that monies were stashed in the residence of one Audu Innocent Ogbe located at Lugbe, a suburb of Abuja, which when followed up, turned out to be false.



They had pleaded "not guilty" to the allegation, but later changed their plea to guilty.

Justice O.A. Musa of the Federal

Capital Territory High Court, Bwari, Abuja sentenced them to three month imprisonment with the option of N50,000 (Fifty Thousand Naira) fine each.

Okhipo Wonder

Man bags jail term for \$4801 fraud

Okhipo David found himself on the wrong side of the law, when he presented himself as a staff of a new generation bank, using the scheme to defraud his victim.

David who was arrested on Monday, 15 March, 2021 and brought before Justice Darius Khobo of Kaduna State High Court.

Investigation revealed that the suspect used four other accounts for the illegal withdrawals and transfer of \$4801.42 from the account of his victim. He also conspired with his room-mate to use his account to receive money

from the victim's account.

Justice Khobo found him guilty as charged, and sentenced him to four months imprisonment on the one-count charge filed against him.

Investigation revealed that the suspect used four other accounts for the illegal withdrawals and transfer of \$4801.42 from the account of his victim.



Greedy Garba

Woman convicted for job scam

What would make a 33-year-old woman to be posing as a military officer to defraud unsuspecting individuals with promises of helping them enlist in the armed forces? No doubt, it is nothing but greed.

Sadly, that greed has now landed Hauwa Nasiru Garba in troubled waters. Luck ran out on her, when the EFCC received a petition from one Muhammed Idris alleging that the convict induced him to pay the sum of N67,000.00 into her account with the promise that she would



Sadly, that greed has now landed Hauwa Nasiru Garba in troubled waters.

help secure employment for him with the Nigerian Army or Air Force, a promise she failed to keep. And all efforts by the complainant to recover his money were futile.

Justice M.T.M Aliyu of the Kaduna State High Court, Kaduna convicted Garba for offences bordering on impersonation, following her guilty plea bargain.

She was ordered to pay a fine of N150,000.00 and to refund the N67,000.00 to the victim.

Painful Love

Court jails man six months for \$15,000 romance scam

The Lagos Zonal Command of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, on Wednesday, July 14, 2021, secured the conviction and sentencing of one Ayeni Emmanuel to six months imprisonment before Justice Sherifat Solebo of the Special Offences Court sitting in Ikeja, Lagos.

The charge reads: "Ayeni Emmanuel, between January 2019 and December 2020, in Lagos, within the Ikeja Judicial Division of this Honourable Court, by means of fraudulent trick, obtained the sum of \$15,000 Australian Dollars from Tuciata Leifi, a citizen of Queensland, Australia, whom you



met on POF dating site, wherein you represented yourself to be one Dina Gomez, a US Military officer

on peace-keeping mission in Iraq, which representation you knew was false."

He pleaded "guilty" to the charge.

Justice Solebo, thereafter, found him guilty as charged and sentenced him to six months in prison. He was also ordered to refund the \$15,000 Austrian Dollars to his victim. The items recovered from him were also ordered forfeited to the Federal Government.

"Upon release, he should enter a bond with the Commission to be of good behaviour," Justice Solebo further held.

Crooked Businessman

A seller of "Cameroonian wonder soap" bags jail term for fraud

The Gombe Zonal Command of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, on July 12, 2021 secured the conviction of one Mohammed Abubakar Manama, a self-styled international businessman.

Abubakar, sometimes in December 2017, was said to have dishonestly induced one Alhaji Yahaya Dankoli to deliver to him some groceries and provisions from his shop worth N16million in exchange for an "all-purpose" Cameroonian Soap, a purported wonder soap capable of curing all types of ailments.

After he had collected the goods

from the petitioner, he failed to deliver the said wonderful soap. He would also not take his calls, refund the goods nor its monetary equivalent, prompting the petition.

When he was eventually arrested and arraigned before Justice Fatima Musa of the Gombe State High Court, Gombe for theft and conversion, he pleaded "guilty" to the one-count.

Consequently, the trial judge convicted and sentenced him to one year imprisonment. He was however given an option of N100,000 as fine, and ordered to refund the N110,000 to his victim.





Big or small, rich or poor; Nobody is above the law.
Say **NO** to corruption.

