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LOSES HOUSES, CARS**

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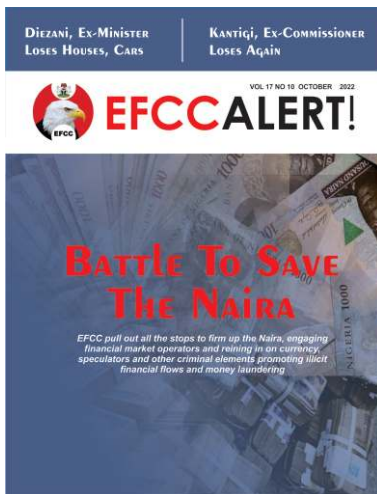
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# EFCC ALERT!

## BATTLE TO SAVE THE NAIRA

*EFCC pull out all the stops to firm up the Naira, engaging financial market operators and reining in on currency, speculators and other criminal elements promoting illicit financial flows and money laundering*



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# BATTLE TO SAVE THE NAIRA

*EFCC pull out all the stops to firm up the Naira, engaging financial market operators and reining in on currency, speculators and other criminal elements promoting illicit financial flows and money laundering*

It was a strategic meeting that was long in the works. Indeed, it was not the first time that the Executive Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, Abdulrasheed Bawa, would meet with compliance officers of banks, but that engagement of Tuesday, November 1, 2022 at the Lagos Zonal Command of the EFCC, was perhaps of utmost importance considering the recent decision of the Central Bank of Nigeria, CBN, to redesign the 200, 500 and 1,000 naira notes as replacement for the notes currently in circulation.

The CBN governor, Godwin Emefiele, had on October 26, 2022 announced the decision of the apex bank, which is to begin circulation of the new notes by December 15, 2022 with a January 31, 2023 deadline to phase out the old notes.

The decision of the apex bank has caused many who had "stocked" their bedrooms with cash, to start looking for ways to literally get rid of the soon-to-be expired naira notes, including engaging bureaux de change operators.

According to Bawa, the EFCC has a mandate to tackle foreign exchange malpractices, money laundering activities and other fraudulent financial activities, in the country, and the members of the Association of Chief Compliance Officers of Banks in Nigeria, ACCOBIN, as well as registered Bureaux de Change operators were critical partners to achieve this mandate.

"In view of the recent move by the Central Bank of Nigeria, CBN, to redesign and re-issue higher denominations of the Nigerian Currency, the Naira, there is a need for us to be proactive and be circumspect of the

***"It is important for you to understand what this policy is all about, considering the fact that a lot of activities will happen, particularly as the 2023 general elections approach."***





***"We believe that more needs to be done to deter citizens from getting involved in financial crimes and discouraging the theft of public resources," he said. "We believe that some of these crimes could be prevented if the members of the public have the right information."***

actions of the criminals who will use the financial institutions to launder illicit funds and commit other nefarious activities," he said. "It is important for you to understand what this policy is all about, considering the fact that a lot of activities will happen, particularly as the 2023 general elections approach."

Nigeria's financial institutions, Bawa noted, have an important role to play by partnering with the EFCC to rid the country of financial and economic crimes.

He therefore charged the compliance officers and BDC operators in particular, to work with the EFCC by providing necessary information on the activities of fraudsters, and "to be wary of activities of criminals who might want to use the financial institutions to hoard monies for the purpose of vote-buying".

"We want to work with you to get more information on how to deal with these issues," he said, referring to issues such as illicit deposits and movement of money through deposit money banks. Describing officials in the financial institutions as "very critical in the fight against economic and financial crimes", he stressed that "at the end of it, money leaves the bank and money goes in, either for deposit or withdrawal".

He further charged the bank officials on their roles in combating cybercrime, especially as it relates to the issue of KYC - Know Your Customer.

"The issue of KYC must go beyond citing utility bills and receipts of customers, as this needs to be taken further to forestall cybercrime," he said, and called on them to "develop vetting mechanisms with a view to addressing insider abuse by



staff".

#### **Eyes on BDCs, Govs, PEPs**

As the EFCC continues its war against economic and financial crimes, particularly money laundering, the anti-

graft agency has remained unrelenting in its bid to sanitize the operations of bureaux de change, BDC operators, even in the wake of rush by many who have stashed naira notes in their houses to beat the CBN's deadline, by engaging BDCs to buy dollar bills in





exchange for their soon-to-expire naira notes. Operatives of the Commission raided BFC office in major cities of Lagos, Abuja and Kano made arrests.

According to Bawa, the raid on BDC operators will continue, as part of the EFCC's strategy to protect the financial system against the activities of money launderers and currency speculators

He said: "The BDCs are very important in the sense that a lot of people that have the cash, and will want to convert them to USD or other foreign currencies, that is why they are very important.

"And based on the known gullibility of the BDC operators, they are willing to accept this cash from the owners of these monies and they are willing to part with

the foreign currencies that they have. So that is why they are very important and very critical to us in this project .

The EFCC is also increasing its monitoring activities, particularly with respect to the financial activities of state governors and other politically exposed persons, PEPs. Intelligence gathering has been revved up, and will be acted upon.

According to Bawa: "The law is very clear regarding cash transactions. Anybody that is to consummate any cash transaction as an individual, if it is not through a financial institution must not be above N5million and if it is above that it is criminal for you to engage in such transaction. And for corporate entities it is N10million."

### Kogi Cash Heist

The EFCC on October 30, 2022 arrested Ismaila Yusuf Atumeyi, the Kogi State House of Assembly candidate of the New Nigeria Peoples Party, NNPP, with N326 million and \$140,500 cash following an extensive investigation that spanned months to unravel.

Atumeyi who is seeking to represent Ankpa 11 Constituency was arrested on Sunday, October 30, 2022 alongside Joshua Dominic, an alleged serial fraudster, in a sting operation at Macedonia Street, Queens Estate, Karsana, Gwarinpa, Abuja. Abdulmalik Salau Femi, a former bank employee, was also arrested in connection with his role in the alleged fraud, particularly for being a mole in the bank that provided insider information which helped the other suspects to hack into its system and defraud



it of about N1.4 billion. He was picked up on November 1, 2022 at Radisson Blu Hotel in Lagos. A search on his home in Morgan Estate, Ojodu, Lagos by operatives yielded the recovery of \$470,000 cash.

The syndicate allegedly moved N887 million into the account of Fav Oil and Gas limited, from where the monies were paid to several Bureau de Change operators and some auto dealers for exchange into United States Dollars and purchase of high-end cars.

Dominic, who has severally been arrested for fraud, allegedly helped Atumeyi perfect the hacking plan through Abdumalik. Dominic, a self-styled investment expert and managing director of Brisk Capital Limited was arrested in May 2021 by the Special Fraud Unit of the Nigeria Police for alleged N2 billion investment scam. He allegedly defrauded over 500 persons in a phony investment scheme.

Two Range Rover Luxury SUVs were also recovered from the two suspects arrested in Abuja.

They will soon have their day in court.

#### **Naira Rebound**

The announcement of the Naira redesign by the Central Bank of Nigeria precipitated a run in the value of the Nigeria currency as speculators flooded the parallel market in a desperate bid to exchange stockpiles of Naira to USD. The currency took a tumble until it exchanged for as low as N910/Dollar. After the slump, the Naira has lately enjoyed a rally, gaining over 30 percent against the dollar to exchange for N710 in the first week of November, 2022. Pundits have ascribed this rally to the enforcement activities of the EFCC which carried out simultaneous raids of BDC's in the major commercial cities of Lagos, Abuja and Kano. The raids were a major push back against currency speculators, currency hoarding and other criminal

***“The new law criminalizes the operation of numbered accounts and also mandates financial institutions to ascertain the beneficial owners of accounts before opening such accounts,”***



elements involved in money laundering. This offered the Naira a much desired respite.

#### **Tasking the Media**

The EFCC's war against illegal financial flows and money laundering, is one that is encompassing and all-inclusive. As such, the EFCC also rallied members of the media at a one-day workshop on Financial Crimes Reporting organised by the EFCC for financial journalists, which held at the Lagos Command of the EFCC on Tuesday, October 25, 2022.

Addressing the media practitioners virtually, Bawa charged them to be familiar with the new Money Laundering (Prevention and Prohibition) Act 2022, which was passed into law on May 12, 2022 by President Muhammadu Buhari.

He also emphasized the need for the media to continuously educate the citizenry on the new Money Laundering Act.

“We believe that more needs to be done to deter citizens from getting involved in financial crimes and discouraging the theft of public resources,” he said. “We believe that some of these crimes could be prevented if the members of the public have the right information.”

According to him, the EFCC was intensifying its public enlightenment engagements with plans in top gear to launch the EFCC Radio.

Restating the resolve of the EFCC to



tackle financial crimes in the country's electoral process, Bawa noted that the recent arraignment of persons arrested for inducing voters during the Osun governorship election should send a message to those bent on corrupting the electoral process that the consequences would be dire.

Harping on the views of Bawa, the Lagos Zonal Commander of EFCC, Ahmed Ghali, who also addressed the journalists, used the opportunity to emphasize on the important role that members of the Fourth Estate of the Realm had to play in the society. He also enlightened them on the contents of the Money Laundering (Prevention and Prohibition) Act 2022 as well as the roles of the Special Control Unit against Money Laundering, SCUML in checking the activities of money launderers.

“The new law criminalizes the operation of numbered accounts and also mandates financial institutions to ascertain the beneficial owners of accounts before opening such accounts,” he said. “There is a more robust requirement for due diligence and reporting obligation by financial institutions and non-financial business and professions to the Special Control Unit Against Money Laundering, SCUML.”



## DIEZANI, EX-MINISTER LOSES HOUSES, CARS



**J**ustice Mobolaji Olajuwon of the Federal High Court, Abuja on October 24, 2022, ordered the final forfeiture of two Abuja properties and two luxury cars belonging to a former minister of petroleum resources, Diezani Alison-Madueke, to the Federal Government.

The two properties located at Plot 1854 Mohammed Mahashir Street, and No. 6, Aso Drive, in the highbrow Asokoro and Maitama Districts of Abuja are valued at \$2,674,418USD and N380,000,000 respectively.

The luxury cars are a black BMW saloon with Chassis No B8CV54V66629 and

registered number, RBC155 DH and a black Jaguar saloon car with Chassis No SAJAA.20 GRDMv43376, valued at N36,000,000

The judge gave the order forfeiting the assets to the Federal Government of Nigeria while ruling on the application by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission,

EFCC in Suit No. 1122/2021 and Suit No 1123/2021, asking for the final forfeiture of the assets.

The Commission had on November 29, 202 secured the interim forfeiture on the assets in a ruling on separate motion ex-parte filed on September 27, 2021 which prayed the court to order the interim forfeiture of the assets on the grounds of reasonable suspicion that they were proceeds of unlawful activities.

In granting the interim forfeiture Order, Justice Olajuwon had ordered the EFCC to publish a notice in a national newspaper, inviting anyone with interest

in the assets to show cause why they should not be finally forfeited to the Federal Government of Nigeria. The court consequently adjourned till January 22, 2022 for report.

In compliance with the Order of Court, the Forfeiture Order was published in Thisday Newspaper of Wednesday April 6, 2022.

In the absence of any contestation of the Interim Order, the Court ordered the final forfeiture of the properties to the Federal Government.



## KANTIĞI, EX-COMMISSIONER LOSES AGAIN

**A** three-man panel of Judges of the Court of Appeal, Abuja, led by Justice Bature Isah Gafai, has dismissed an appeal filed by Baba Chado Kantigi claiming ownership of House No. 10, Kinshasa Street, Wuse Zone 6, Abuja.

The appeal was dismissed on Monday, October 31, 2022.

Kantigi filed the appeal to claim ownership of the property linked to Alhaji Liman Kantigi, a former Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs in Niger state while Mu'azu Babangida Aliyu was governor.

The EFCC, had, sometime in 2017, confiscated some properties linked to Kantigi based on intelligence linking him with money laundering and fraudulent acquisition of assets. Another landed property linked to Kantigi was House

Block 5, Flat 3, Divo Street, Foreign Affairs Quarters, Abuja.

Delivering the lead judgment on Monday, Justice Gafai dismissed the appeal and directed that the property be permanently forfeited to the Federal Government.

Other parties who forfeited properties to the government in a different appeal before the court are: Janet Ojeneti Enemosah: Block 4, Flat 3, Divo Street, Foreign Affairs Quarters, Abuja, Mrs. Rakiya Baba: Block 5, Flat 3, Divo Street, Foreign Affairs Quarters, Abuja and Olalekan Olakehinde : Mercedes Van January 2014 model, Toyota Land Cruiser bullet proof jeep, 2013 model, Toyota Tundra pickup edition, 2014 model , Volkswagen Passat 2013 model and Mini Cooper Countryman, 2013 model.





## WANTED OGUNBAMBO, JAILED IN US

**S**eun Ogunbambo, an oil marketer who was in August 2013 declared wanted by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, for his connection with a case of conspiracy, forgery and obtaining the sum of N977 million in oil subsidy has bagged 18 months imprisonment in the United States, US, for offences bordering on aggravated theft and use of false information, which he cunningly wanted to use to renew his US passport.

Ogunbambo, Managing Director, Fargo Petroleum and Gas Limited, was declared wanted by the EFCC alongside Habila Theck, General Manager, Operations of the company,



**Oluwaseun Ogunbambo**

following investigations by the EFCC into the oil subsidy fraud.

As the EFCC upon conclusion of investigations, charged him in court, he

fled the country, and had to be declared wanted by the anti-graft agency.

Nemesis, however, has caught up with him in the US, as Justice Alvin Hellerstein found him guilty of the offence levelled against him in the US. The Diplomatic Security Service, DSS, had on November 27, 2019 issued a warrant of arrest for him following his indictment for the offence. He was accused of falsifying documents in order to renew his US passport, by using different names including Sean Bambo Benson, Sean Roberto Zacchaeus and Darron Roberto Zacchaeus between June 2016 and January 2018.

## Hushpuppi Hushed, TO SPEND 11 YEARS IN JAIL



**R**amon Abbas, also known by the name Hushpuppi, has bagged 11-year jail term in the United States, for his involvement in an extensive fraud scheme that has robbed victims of their money in the US, Qatar, the United Kingdom, UK, and across the world.

Hushpuppi, known for his alleged role in Business Email Compromise, BEC

scam, and money laundering, had been on the radar of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, before he was in June 2020 picked up in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates and extradited to the US where he was charged with fraud and money laundering.

In July 2021, he pleaded "guilty" to conspiracy to engage in money laundering, and admitted to conspiring with multiple persons within and



outside the US to launder the illicit proceeds of his fraudulent online activities. Following his guilty plea, Justice Otis Wright on November 3, 2022 sentenced him to 11 years in prison, which is to start counting from the day of his incarceration. Thus, having spent two years in prison already, Hushpuppi will spend nine more years to complete his jail-term.



## COMMENDATION AS BAWA PRESENTS N41.1bn Budget Proposal to Senate



**T**he Executive Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, Abdulrasheed Bawa on October 27, 2022, presented an estimate of N41,120,071,521.75 as the 2023 budget for the anti-graft agency. The budget, he said, comprised the sum of N36,834,903,804.75, N3,835,460,631.00 and N530,707,086.00 as Personnel cost, Overhead and Capital

vote component, respectively.

Noting that the 2023 estimate was slightly lower than the 2022 budget of N43,696,381,562.46 he disclosed that only 53 per cent of the appropriation had been released as at August 31, 2022, with the budget performance put at 83.35 per cent of the total money released to the Commission.

Highlighting the Commission's performance in 2022, Bawa disclosed that the EFCC recorded a total of 2,847 convictions as at October 21, 2022. The figure, he said, was higher than the 2,220 convictions recorded by the Commission in 2021.

Chairman of the Committee, Senator Suleiman Abdul Kwari lauded the reforms implemented by Bawa. He said he was pleasantly surprised to discover the existence of a Petitions Vetting Committee which examines every petition to determine their relevance to the mandate of the EFCC. He explained



that one of his constituents who had petitioned the Commission recently got a reply from the committee, explaining why his petition could not be treated. This, to him, demonstrated sensitivity and commitment to service.

The same proposal has also been presented before the house of Representatives committee on Financial Crimes

## EFCC Works in BEST INTEREST of NIGERIANS -EKPUNGU



**S**ecretary of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, Dr. George Ekpungu has called on youths across the country to see the Commission as a government agency working in the best interests of Nigerians, to rid the nation of all forms of economic and financial crimes.

He made the call on October 12, 2022 at the Corporate Headquarters of the EFCC,

Abuja while receiving a delegation from the Legislative Mentorship Initiative that came on a study tour. According to him, the EFCC is on a path of redemption and every Nigerian should collaborate with it to deliver on its mandate.

"Let the public not see the EFCC as 'We' and 'Them' or 'They' and 'We'. It is we because without us doing what we are doing, society will not be a better place for all of us", he said. He further

called on youths to shun all forms of indiscipline, greed and get-rich syndrome stressing that they are the roots of economic and financial crimes. He pointed out that every religion abhors corrupt practices.

Also speaking, Head of Economic Governance, Assistant Commander of the EFCC, ACE Sulaiman Muktar Bello warned Nigerians on the danger of Business Email Compromises, BECs, urging them to always follow-up with

phone calls on all business dealings online, as relying only on emails could expose them to fraud.

Speaking on the same vein, Head of Servicom Unit, Assistant Commander of the EFCC, ACE Mary Cole and Head, Creative Engagement Unit, Deputy Commander of the EFCC, DCE Nwanyinma Okeanu charged youths to be the change they desire to see in the society.



## Fake EFCC Operative in EFCC Net for €45,000 Belgian Fraud

**O**peratives of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, have arrested Ume Ifechukwu Clinton, 29, for impersonation, computer-related fraud, obtaining by false pretence and money laundering.

Clinton was arrested on October 18, 2022 at No 46 Atoke Gbadebo Street, Isheri, Lagos, by operatives of the EFCC, following a news story published by an online portal: foundation for investigative journalism narrating how Clinton defrauded Axelle Mahieu, an educator working as a caregiver in Brussels, Belgium.

The victim was surfing through her Facebook page in November 2021, when she saw that someone had sent

her a message. The message was from Ume Ifechukwu Clinton, who introduced himself as “a friend of a friend”.

As they continued chatting in the following days, Clinton told Mahieu that he was an official of the EFCC, with a fake Identity Card and Nigerian Passport as proofs.

After several months of video calls and gaining Mathieu's trust, Clinton allegedly proposed a cryptocurrency business to her, assuring her of huge profit and secured capital.

After convincing the Belgian, Clinton ended up defrauding her of €45,000.

He will soon be arraigned in court.



## SERVICOM Commends EFCC on Service Delivery



**N**ational Coordinator of Service Compact, SERVICOM, Nnenna Akajemeli has commended the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, on its effective service delivery.

Akajemeli gave the commendation recently at the Corporate Headquarters of the EFCC, Abuja, to mark the 2022 Customer Service Day Symposium and Launch of EFCC Service Charter. According to her, the leadership of the EFCC has shown greater commitment to exemplary service delivery to all its stakeholders.

“I’m celebrating the frontline officers of the EFCC for clarity of thoughts, ensuring the work of eagle eye around economic and

crimes is done optimally; the openness they bring into the work, liveliness, creativity in driving customer service delivery, reliability, insight and devotion to work, and above all, team spirit. The level of commitment even from the leadership is awesome”, she said.

The Servicom boss commended the Executive Chairman of the EFCC, Abdulrasheed Bawa, on his bold initiatives aimed at improving the environment of law enforcement in the fight against economic and financial crimes.

Responding, the Commission's Secretary, Dr. George Ekpungu said the

event provided an opportunity to look back and reflect on the state of customer service delivery to all the stakeholders of the Commission.

He described the theme of the event: “Celebrate Service”, as a call to action by placing emphasis on dutiful service to humanity. “This event, therefore, allows me to recognize and appreciate the gallant officers of the commission for their dedication to the fight against economic and financial crimes”, he said.

He also identified areas where the EFCC has been offering excellent service delivery to its stakeholders. Some of these include; the launch of EFCC's Strategic Plan 2021-2025, on September 29, 2021, the EFCC Connect: a weekly public engagement program running on the Commission's social media platforms, launch of the Eagle Eye Application and the EFCC radio which would be operational soon.

The Customer Service Week was attended by dignitaries, including the Director General, Bureau of Public Service Reforms, Dr. Arabi Ibrahim Dasuki and representatives of the National Youth Service Corps, NYSC, Nigeria Police Force, Nigeria Customs Service, Nigeria Immigration Service, Federal Road Safety Corps, FRSC, the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, NSCDC, among others.



# NCS COMMENDS EFCC' s Digitalization Strides



**T**he Nigeria Computer Society, NCS, has commended the Executive Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, Abdulrasheed Bawa for digitalizing the operations of the Commission.

President of the Society, Prof. Adesina Simon Sodiya gave the commendation on October 26, 2022, during a visit to the EFCC Headquarters, Jabi, Abuja.

"The comments we have been hearing from our members about the

digitalization of the EFCC by the Bawa-led administration of the Commission is commendable, and that is why we came to congratulate him on this milestone," he said.

Sodiya also sought to partner with the Commission in carrying out sensitization and reorientation programme on cybercrime as well as monitoring the activities of cyber criminals by providing intelligence to the Commission.

Speaking earlier, the Chairman of the EFCC, Abdulrasheed Bawa, who was represented by the Director, Public Affairs, CE Osita Nwajah revealed that the EFCC has embraced the use of technology in all its operations.

He pointed out that the Commission also became the first law enforcement organization to create a crime reporting application called the "Eagle Eye".

"EFCC is the first in Africa to use an investigation application named the 'Eagle Eye'," he said. "The application is making a lot of impacts because it has helped us a lot."

## 197 EFCC DRIVERS ASSUME DUTY



**A**s part of efforts to professionalise all aspects of its operations for efficiency, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, sent 197 drivers on a three-month training programme at the Nigerian Army School of Supply and Transport, Benin-City, Edo State, and on October 28, 2022 they all completed their training.

The Executive Chairman of the EFCC, Abdulrasheed Bawa, who spoke at their passing-out-ceremony at the Muhammadu Buhari Auditorium of the Nigerian Army School of Supply and



Transport, appreciated the Nigerian Army for allowing the anti-graft agency to use its facilities to train the drivers.

"Today you are delivering to us a group of professionally trained and disciplined drivers who will join us in achieving our vision of a Nigeria free of economic and financial crimes," he said.

He noted that the training was meant to address the operational gaps in the Commission and urged the trainees to see their appointment as an opportunity to serve their fatherland and contribute

their quota to the growth of the Commission.

"Everyone is important in the Commission, and so never see yourselves as just drivers but an important part of the system. No agency can function without everyone playing his part. Everyone is important," he said.

Brigadier General UT Otaru, Ag Commandant, Nigeria Army School of Supply and Transport in his remarks, noted that the training has improved the skills and professionalism of the trainees to effectively function in the law enforcement environment.

The training, the first of its kind in the history of the Commission, commenced on July 25, 2022, and featured both theory and practical exercises.

Bawa also recognized three trainees, Omaji Adejo Friday, Ogbu Philemon Chigozie and Adekunle Adewale Gbolahan, who distinguished themselves during the training, emerging 1st, 2nd and 3rd respectively.





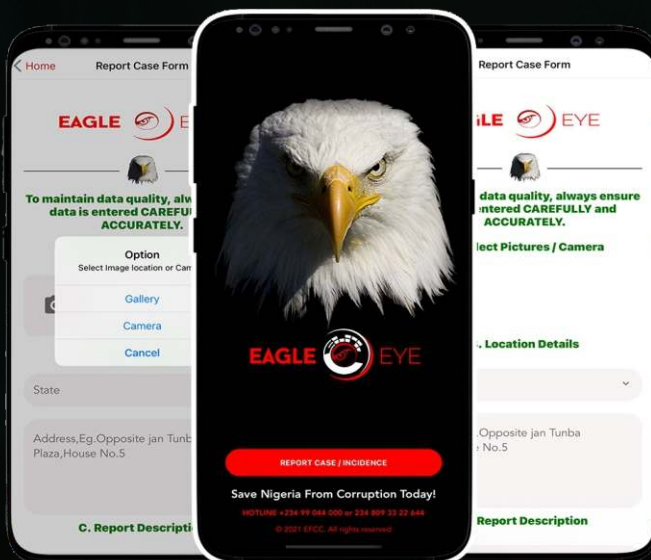
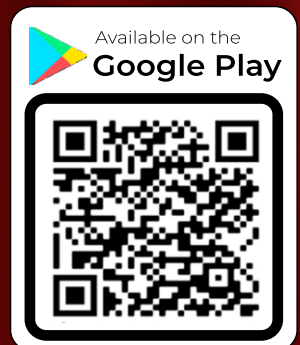
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