

Nigeria - [419 Coalition](#) 2014 News on Nigerian Scam / 419 Operations

18 DEC 2014

From FinCEN via ACAMS moneylaundering.com and .NEXt Web Security. The bolded sections were made so by 419 Coalition, and were not bolded in the original article:

FinCEN Levies Unprecedented \$1 Million Fine Against Former MoneyGram Exec

By Kira Zalan and Colby Adams

The United States Thursday fined a former chief compliance officer for MoneyGram \$1 million for his alleged role in compliance violations that led to the company's 2012 deferred prosecution agreement.

In a written assessment of the fine, the U.S. Treasury Department's Financial Crimes Enforcement (FinCEN) said Thomas E. Haider knowingly ignored signs of a longstanding telemarketing scheme that tricked thousands of Americans into wiring millions of dollars to locations in Canada on the premises that they had won the lottery, secured loans or been hired as secret shoppers.

Haider, a 16-year veteran at MoneyGram before leaving in 2008, resisted concerns raised by other executives and mid-level staffers about the potential complicity of individual agents who were later convicted for profiting from the scheme, FinCEN said. MoneyGram paid \$100 million in November 2012 for failing to identify the fraud.

The bureau, which levied the unprecedented fine in conjunction with the U.S. Southern District of New York, also directed Haider to cease working in the financial industry. Haider now serves as the executive vice president for Austin, TX-based Cornerstone Credit Union League, according to his LinkedIn profile.

"FinCEN's action today marks the first time, to our knowledge, that the government has filed suit to hold an individual compliance officer personally responsible for alleged anti-money laundering compliance failures of his employer," said the law firm Blank Rome, which represents Haider, in a statement.

Unprecedented, but expected

The "enormous penalty" against a compliance officer will complicate efforts by financial institutions to fill top anti-money laundering positions, according to Ralph Sharpe, an attorney at Venable LLP who previously worked in the U.S. Office of the Comptroller of the Currency.

"This action appears to lay total responsibility for compliance failures at the feet of the compliance officer," said Sharpe. "The problem is, a lot of compliance officers don't have final decision making authority. They can flag problems, recommend changes [and] report to the board, but can't unilaterally take action," he said.

Under the Bank Secrecy Act, compliance officers responsible for regulatory violations are liable for fines as high as \$25,000 per day that the problems exist. The government can also levy civil monetary penalties as large as \$100,000 for each instance an individual fails to file a suspicious activity report.

The expected fine, first reported by Reuters in April, was not without warning.

In March 2013, U.S. Undersecretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence David Cohen told members of the Senate Banking Committee that FinCEN was actively seeking to penalize individual bankers who violated the Bank Secrecy Act.

Earlier this year, the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority fined a former Brown Brothers Harriman compliance officer \$25,000 for failing to prevent AML violations, a penalty that spurred some industry professionals to seek assurances of indemnification from their employers and inquire about personal insurance.

In April, ACAMS moneylaundering.com reported that FinCEN is preparing an unrelated fine against a second individual.

Egregious violations

In making their case, FinCEN and the Southern District of New York alleged that Haider consistently refused to respond to red flags or hold agents accountable for suspicious behavior.

Despite receiving spreadsheets generated by the MSB's fraud database and purportedly showing high numbers of consumer fraud reports from the company's Canadian operations, Haider failed to discipline agents involved and ignored or rejected two written policies that would have punished outlets with potential fraud problems, FinCEN said.

Four MoneyGram outlets suspected of facilitating fraud were owned or operated by James Ugoh, a Nigerian tribal chief living in Toronto at the time of the fraud. Ugoh is currently serving a 12-year sentence in the United States for his role in the telemarketing fraud.

Despite the fact that law enforcement officials subpoenaed data on Ugoh's outlets, Haider did not file a SAR on the companies or Ugoh.

When questioned by investigators looking into complicity from MoneyGram employees, Haider initially refused to testify or cooperate, according to an individual with knowledge of the matter.

The person, who believes that Haider received a substantial severance package as part of his resignation in 2008, said that the former compliance chief had characterized internal investigations and consumer fraud complaints as "lacking evidence."

A spokesperson for MoneyGram said that the company could not comment on the matter except to say that it has amended its management, organizational structure and programs since Haider's departure.

In addition to its 2012 settlement, MoneyGram paid the U.S. Federal Trade Commission \$18 million in October 2009 to resolve related charges.

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good:

<http://www.moneylaundering.com/OurProducts/Pages/NewsHighlight.aspx>

5 DEC 2014

From the Bolton News, UK, sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

Fraudster 'used royal marine's Facebook photos to con women out of 100,000 Pounds on dating website Match.com'

by Joanne Rowe, Reporter

A FRAUDSTER allegedly duped four women on Match.com out of a total of almost 100,000 Pounds using a fake profile and photos stolen from a royal marine's Facebook page.

Adewale Adewole denies full responsibility for the con, however, claiming instead it was a lodger who masterminded the crime.

Adewole told Manchester Crown Court he allowed a man he named as Samson Ajayi to use his and his wife's bank accounts to receive cash and his address, then at The Polygon, Eccles, to be used for the delivery of goods.

Adewole, aged 31, of Carrfield Avenue, Little Hulton, has already admitted four charges of fraud and a trial of issue is now being held to establish how deeply he was involved in the crimes.

Louise Brandon, prosecuting, told the Honorary Recorder of Manchester David Stockdale QC that the women were conned by Adewole between 2011 and 2012 when they got in touch with a man they thought was called Timmy Francis on the Match.com dating website.

But Miss Brandon told the court no such person existed and Nigerian born Adewole had taken photographs from the Facebook site of a royal marine, using them to create a fake dating website profile.

Francis was alleged to be a captain in the army whose mother ran an orphanage called Hope House in Nigeria.

He told another victim he used to work for the RAF and also claimed to be a property developer.

"Over time they (the victims) were led to believe they were in a relationship with him," said Miss Brandon.

"Not one of the women met Timmy Francis."

However, Adewole is said to have started asking them to lend him money, claiming he was on a trip to the orphanage in Africa and in urgent need of cash, which he would pay back.

He provided fake documents purporting to show he would be able to do this once he could access his own funds.

"Each woman transferred significant sums," said Miss Brandon.

In total Adewole is said to have obtained 98,140 Pounds in cash, goods bought with the women's credit and store cards and raids on their bank accounts.

Money was spent on goods such as iPhones, iPads, designer clothes, electrical goods and even a bathroom suite.

The women eventually became suspicious and went to police.

After Adewole was arrested police found a sim card in his wallet which used the number purporting to be the orphanage in Nigeria, phones with the women's telephone numbers on them and 4,500 Pounds in cash under a bed.

Adewole, a married father, told the court that he had allowed a man named Samson to use his accounts and address because he was owed rent by him and was in financial difficulties.

However, he said that Samson, who he knew when they were at university together in Nigeria, has now disappeared.

"I had absolutely no idea what it was being done," said Adewole, who the court heard came to the UK in 2009 in order to study but has yet to start a course.

Miss Brandon stressed to Adewole that the prosecution believe he was responsible for creating the fake Timmy Francis profiles and conning the women.

"This was a huge operation and you might have had some help, but you were the one controlling it," she told him.

The case continues.

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good:

http://www.theboltonnews.co.uk/news/11647845.Fraudster_used_royal_marine_s_Facebook_photos_to_con_women_out_of_100_000_on_dating_website_Match

18 NOV 2014

From Saharareporters.com, sent in by Ultrasca AGI:

by Wilson Uwujaren- EFCC Nigeria

It has become necessary to alert the general public about the activities of fraudsters who have been impersonating officials of the Commission and extorting money from members of the public under various guises.

Despite arrests and successful prosecution of some of them by the Commission, the syndicates have continued to mushroom and changing tactics as soon as their latest modus operandi are exposed.

There have been of recent, a worrying upsurge in the number of fake invitation letters purported to have been issued by the EFCC, which the criminals are busy sending to unsuspecting members of the public, alleging high financial crimes against them.

Pliable recipients of some of these letters have lost millions of naira to these gangsters in their desperation to forestall arrest and possible prosecution for unstated crimes.

Despite repeated warnings by the Commission, that no genuine EFCC invitation will request the recipient to call any private GSM number or any telephone line for that matter and that EFCC will not invite anybody to a meeting at any place other than the known offices of the Commission, many are still falling victims of the scam.

The new dimension to the criminal exploits of the syndicates, is to send text messages to would-be victims, alleging that they have pending cases before the EFCC and offering proposals for a soft landing. This new gimmick is targeted at politicians, especially those who are aspiring to hold offices in the next dispensation.

The Commission wishes to state as follows:

EFCC invitation letters do not bear personal telephone numbers. They are usually signed by duly authorised officers and invitees are clearly instructed to report to a specified officer at the Commission's office;

No EFCC invitation will require the invitee to report at any building or location outside the known offices of the Commission;

EFCC invitation cannot be traded off under any circumstance;

The Commission does not demand or accept payment, either to commence or discontinue an investigation;

EFCC does not invite persons under investigation via text messages;

Any person who receives an invitation letter should confirm the authenticity of such an invitation from the Commission through the following email or telephone numbers: info@efccnigeria.org, 09-9044752 or 09-9044753;

No authentic EFCC invitation letter will request anybody to contact an official by telephone. Rather, you are asked to report at EFCC office to be interviewed by a designated officer.

The known offices of the Commission are:
5, Fomella Street, Off Adetokunbo Ademola Crescent, Wuse 2, Abuja;
15A Awolowo Road, Ikoyi, Lagos;
6A Olumeni Street, Off Forces Avenue, Old GRA, Port Harcourt;
4 EFCC Road, GRA Gombe; 2 Hajj Camp Road;
Kano and Plot 106 Federal Government College Road, Independence Layout, Enugu.

A few weeks ago, the Commission arrested one Olubunmo Olalekan who had been churning out fake invitation letters and messages to prominent citizens and heads of organisations alleging fraud against them from his Akure base.

Now, his accomplice, Mohammed Yunusa Tope, a 30-year-old, who hails from Auchi, Edo State, has been arrested by the Commission. He was picked up in a sting operation at a new generation bank in Kano as he attempted to withdraw the N2million he demanded from the head of a federal government agency.

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good:
<http://saharareporters.com/2014/11/18/efcc-issues-advisory-fake-invitation-letters>

17 NOV 2014
From NWI.com (NWI Times) Indiana sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

LaPorte County couple loses \$100,000 in Nigerian scam

Stan Maddux, Times Correspondent

LAPORTE | A visit to a dating website resulted in a LaPorte County man and his wife being scammed out of about \$100,000.

LaPorte County police on Monday said documentation provided by the woman showed more than \$20,000 of the funds were wired by her 40-year-old husband to Nigeria.

Many such scams originate out of Nigeria, but local law enforcement may be able to do little unless they receive help from outside authorities, said LaPorte County Police Chief of Detectives Pat Cicero.

"We're going to try and help him out as much as we can but there are some jurisdictional issues," said Cicero.

The Kingsbury-area woman reported Sunday night her husband about a year ago started having contact with a woman on a dating website.

The woman at some point asked him for money so he could secure an inheritance and she would pay him back once he collected.

The scam was discovered two weeks ago by his wife when she noticed suspicious charges on her credit card and learned about her husband's activity on the dating website, police said.

Her husband had also given the woman from the dating website, who went by the name "Miss Sanders," his driver's license number along with personal information like his Social Security Number and credit card information.

Several lines of credit were also opened for him to secure cash advances to forward to the woman, who claimed to be from Mississippi, police said.

Police said the victim's wife was gathering other documentation to show where the remainder of the funds were transferred.

So far, police said investigators learned three men in Nigeria picked up the money that was wired and have possible names of the suspects.

Cicero said the same scam is being pulled nationwide but he did not know the extent law enforcement in Nigeria might be willing to cooperate with police agencies in this country to try and stop it.

"This is an issue that's been ongoing for a very long time. The United States government is aware of it. We'll do what we can," said Cicero.

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good:
http://www.nwintimes.com/news/local/laporte/laporte-county-couple-loses-in-nigerian-scam/article_8760bafd-ec37-5577-b68e-df2867c6aee6.html

14 NOV 2014

From the Punch, a Nigerian newspaper, sent
in by Ultrascan AGI:

Court jails undergraduate for scamming white lover

Ramon Oladimeji

A Lagos State High Court sitting in Ikeja on Thursday jailed a 26-year-old undergraduate of Cairo University, Egypt, Rilwan Adedigba, for 30 months over cybercrime.

Adedigba's conviction came after he had confessed to defrauding an American lady, Zen Cariboso, of \$1,100.

Justice Kudirat Jose, who gave the judgement, further made an order for the convict to make restitution to the victim by refunding the stolen \$1,100.

Adedigba was also to forfeit to the Federal Government a car he had acquired with the proceeds of the illegal venture.

The convict was brought before the court on five counts bordering on cyber fraud.

Upon his re-arraignment, he had pleaded guilty to all the counts and entered a plea bargain with the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission.

Reviewing the facts of the case in court, the EFCC counsel, Mrs. Olubunmi Bosede, said Adedigba committed the offences on January 30 in Lagos.

Bosede said the convict had lied to the white lady that he was one Murphy Paul, a white American living in Nigeria, who was in love with her.

She said Adedigba used the love scam to obtain the stolen sum from the American.

According to her, Adedigba, by his act, violated sections 390 and 318 of the Criminal Law of Lagos State of Nigeria 2011.

Justice Jose consequently pronounced the sentence. The judge said the sentence would run concurrently beginning from June 8, when the convict was arrested.

Justice Jose further ordered that Adedigba must sign an undertaken with the EFCC that he would be of good behaviour upon his release from prison

Here is the URL of the article for as long
as it is good:

<http://www.punchng.com/news/court-jails-undergraduate-for-scamming-white-lover/>

31 OCT 2014

From SpyGhana.com sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

Nigerian fraudster jailed 18 years

The Tarkwa Circuit Court, has sentenced Kelvin Ayanka, a 20 year-old Nigerian, to 18 years imprisonment in hard hard labour for defrauding by false pretences.

Kelvin pleaded not guilty, but the court found him guilty at the end of proceedings.

Police Chief Inspector Oscar Amponsah had earlier told the court presided by Mr. Justice Obeng Asante that the complainant is a student who lived at Cyanide, a suburb of Tarkwa, with his parents and Kelvin, a trader, resided at Kasoa near Accra.

Chief inspector Amponsah said on April 29, the complainant received a text message on her mobile phone indicating that she has won 10,000 Ghana cedis from MTN mobile money promotion.

Chief Inspector Amponsah said the text message asked her to send MTN recharge cards worth 1,000 Ghana cedis to two MTN mobile phone numbers before a code will be given to her for the withdrawal of the promotion money.

He said the complainant called the mobile phone number that was used to send the text message and she realized that it

was the convict who claimed to be one Mr. Kofi Owusu, the manager of MTN promotion in Accra.

Chief Inspector Amponsah said the complainant then sent the MTN recharged cards to the two MTN numbers which were mobile numbers of Kelvin.

He said after Kelvin had received the recharged cards, he demanded to have sex with the complainant before releasing the code to her.

Chief Inspector Amponsah said when the complainant realized that she has been defrauded, she made a report to the Tarkwa Police..

He said at about 0730 hours on October 3, the complainant called Kelvin on phone and explained to him that because of her busy schedule, it would not be possible for her to travel to Accra, and pleaded with him to rather visit her in Tarkwa.

Chief Inspector Amponsah said when Kelvin arrived at the Tarkwa main lorry station, he called the complainant on phone and described the attire he was wearing to her for easy identification.

He said the Police and the complainant's father who were around the lorry station monitoring the convict, arrested him, and took him to the police station.

Chief Inspector Amponsah said at the police station, the convict gave his name as Kelvin Ayanka, and denied being Kofi Owusu, the manager of MTN Promotion.

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good:

<http://www.spyghana.com/nigerian-fraudster-jailed-18-years/>

27 OCT 2014

The FBI has just published an excellent alert on, and description of, Purchase Order 419, which was brought to our attention by Ultrascan AGI.

The article is long, including graphics, and is too long to be put up here in the News. Accordingly, here is a link at which the article may be read in its entirety for as long as the URL is good:

[FBI Article on Purchase Order 419](#)

24 OCT 2014

From the Nigerian online newspaper, Daily Post, on one of the several Fred Ajudua cases, sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

Bamaiyi's \$8.4m allegation: Accomplice seeks separate trial

By Sylvester Ugwuanyi

Justice Oluwatoyin Ipaye of the Lagos High Court, Ikeja, has granted the prayer sought by a former Court Registrar, Oluronke Rosulu, who is standing trial alongside Fred Ajudua in the \$8.4m scam, to be separated from the charge.

Rosulu was charged along with Ajudua, for allegedly assisting him defraud General Ishaya Bamaiyi (rtd.) of the sum of \$8.4million. They were arraigned on a 14-count charge which centered on conspiracy to obtain money by false pretences.

Rosulu, through her counsel, Bamidele Ogundele, filed an application seeking to separate the charges against her from those of Ajudua, at the resumption of the trial on Thursday. Ogundele told the court that, he filed the application to seek accelerated trial for his client who had been suspended by the Lagos State Judicial Service Commission and would want the matter determined before her retirement in 2015.

Both the counsel to Ajudua, Olalekan Ojo and counsel to the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, Seidu Atteh opposed the application of the second defendant. Ojo told the court that the Court of Appeal, Lagos has reserved ruling on the appeal Ajudua placed before it, which sought an order of the court to quash the charges preferred against him.

However, Justice Ipaye granted the application of the second defendant

on the ground that she has a right to separate hearing and that she had made case for accelerated hearing.

"Considering the time taken for the eventual arraignment of the first defendant and his various pending applications before the court and Lagos Court of Appeal, it would amount to injustice not to grant the second defendant a separate trial", he said.

He ordered the prosecution counsel to prepare a new charge against her and adjourned the matter to November 27, 2014.

Ajudua was accused of defrauding a former Chief of Army Staff, Lieutenant General Ishaya Bamaïyi (retd), of \$8.4 million between November 2004 and June 2005, while both were in prison custody in Lagos.

In the amended charges, Mrs Oluronke Rosulu, a court registrar with Justice Olubunmi Oyewole of the Lagos High Court, as he then was, is accused of helping Ajudua to swindle the retired Army Chief.

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good:
<http://dailypost.ng/2014/10/24/bamaiyis-8-4m-allegation-accomplice-seeks-separate-trial/>

This story was widely covered by the Nigerian media and the EFCC itself. Here are some of the URLs:
<http://allafrica.com/stories/201410241136.html>
<http://allafrica.com/stories/201410240630.html>
<https://efccnigeria.org/efcc/index.php/news/1034-8-4m-scam-ajudua-s-accomplice-seeks-separate-trial>

17 OCT 2014
From BBC News (BBCNews.com) UK:

Match.com dating fraud: Four men jailed

Four men have been jailed for conning 12 women out of nearly 250,000 Pounds as part of an "elaborate" dating website scam.

Women using match.com were told the fictional James Richards needed money to release 100m Pounds inheritance.

One victim handed over 174,000 Pounds to the "attractive middle-aged man".

Emmanuel Oko was given concurrent sentences of eight and four years. Peter Monty Emu was jailed for three and a half years, Adewunmi Nusi for 18 months and Chukwuka Ugwu for 46 weeks.

The trial at Winchester Crown Court heard the scammers created fake profiles, usually with the name James Richards.

Posing as "charming" and "attentive", they gained the trust of the women before asking them to hand over large sums of money.

Once the relationships developed, the conmen started asking for cash they said was needed to release a 100m Pounds inheritance in India.

One victim, Deborah Cole, told the court she felt "drawn in".

She said: "James was very clever. He never directly asked for the money, but he put you in the position where you wanted to help. You felt drawn in."

One woman, Suzanne Hardman, handed over 174,000 Pounds.

A victim became suspicious when she received the same email twice.

The court heard she wrote back to the sender, saying: "I wonder how many hearts you have broken".

In victim impact statements heard by the court, one woman said: "I no longer trust any adults, male or female. I just don't believe anything."

Another said: "At first I hated myself. It has changed me as a person.

"I feel I will live the rest of my days alone as I will never trust anyone again."

The women were first asked for a 700 Pounds legal fee by a fake solicitor, but then the sums requested rose to 100,000 Pounds.

Sentencing the four men, Judge Susan Evans QC said: "This was a highly sophisticated conspiracy to defraud. It preyed on the trusting, the lonely and the emotionally vulnerable.

"The hurt and distress you caused them was enormous."

A match.com spokesman said: "The result today is a positive one. Sadly, there is a tiny minority of people who set out to exploit others, and while this is not confined to dating sites or even the internet, those who do should be convicted for their crimes as they were today.

"Our member's safety is of the utmost importance to us and the dating industry as a whole and we fully support the stand the Online Dating Association is taking on the issue."

Det Sgt Lee Macarthur, of Hampshire Police, said: "This case centres around a web of lies constructed by these devious people who had the sole intention of exploiting emotionally vulnerable women for financial gain."

The Crown Prosecution Service said it would apply for the "ill-gotten" money to be confiscated.

Oko, 30, of Waverley Grove, Southsea, Hampshire, was sentenced for conspiracy to defraud and money laundering after pleading guilty to the charges.

Emu, 28, of Portsmouth and Nusi, 37, of Hermitage, Berkshire, were convicted of money laundering. Ugwu, 29, previously pleaded guilty to the same charge.

Abbey Boston, 28, of Titchfield, Hampshire, was cleared of conspiracy to defraud and money laundering.

Eberechi Ekpo, 26, of Portsmouth was acquitted under directions of the judge on 29 August.

Here is the URL of the article, which includes photos of the 419ers, for as long as it is good:
<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-29659084>

9 OCT 2014

From the Nigerian Economic Crimes Commission (EFCC):

Two Jailed for Fraud

Justice Kudirat Jose of the Lagos State High Court, Ikeja on Thursday, October 9, 2014, convicted and sentenced the duo of Sunday John Ntephe and Olomосу Kola to one year imprisonment each for conspiracy and obtaining money by false pretence.

The two convicts were arraigned on September 30, 2014 by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC on a 2-count charge that bordered on advance fee fraud and obtaining money under false pretence.

The convicts allegedly obtained the sum of N125,000 from one Adetiba Oluwafemi in a money making scam popularly called wash wash.

While taking their pleas, they pleaded guilty on all charges preferred against them.

Justice Jose subsequently sentenced them to one year imprisonment each. He ordered the first and second defendants to pay the sum of N80, 000 (Eighty Thousand Naira) and N40, 000 (Forty Thousand Naira) respectively, to the victim as restitution.

The sentences are to run concurrently.

One of the counts reads: "Sunday John Ntephe between October and November 2013 at Lagos within the Ikeja Judicial Division with intent to defraud obtained the sum of N125, 000,000 (One Hundred and Twenty Five Thousand Naira) under false pretence from one Adetiba Oluwafemi that you are capable of producing currency by washing and dipping in a chemical substance which pretence you knew was false".

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good:
<https://efccnigeria.org/efcc/index.php/news/1014-two-jailed-for-fraud>

3 OCT 2014

From the Bangkok Post, sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

Nigerian scam suspect caught

Police have arrested a Nigerian man allegedly involved in international scams for deceiving a Thai woman into parting with hundreds of thousands of baht.

Onyekachi Nathaniel Amadi, 37, was arrested in Samut Prakan on Friday. He is believed to be a member of one of many "419 scam" gangs, said Pol Capt Chaithat Boonkham, acting chief of the Crime Suppression Division.

Nigerian or 419 scams are a type of fraud in which the victim is promised a significant sum if he makes a small up-front payment to the scammers. If a victim makes the payment, the fraudster either invents a series of further fees for the victim, or simply disappears.

The number "419" refers to the section of the Nigerian Criminal Code dealing with fraud. Many 419 scams originate as e-mail spam but some operators use more sophisticated means to lure people online.

Police who arrested Mr Amadi also seized a notebook computer, three mobile phones and an employee card of a private company under the name John Freddy.

He was charged with fraud for impersonating another person, and with importing into a computer system false information that could cause damage to others.

The police said that on Aug 18 Mr Amadi, posing as Terre Sheldon, a British national working as a UN surgeon, met Waranya Walaisri, 44, on a matchmaking website.

After a month of chatting and getting to know each other, Mr Amadi told Ms Waranya that he would fly to Thailand to see her on Sept 16. He sent her photos of his plane ticket and reservation for a hotel room in Pattaya to convince her.

Police said Mr Amadi later told the woman that he needed to ship some medical equipment to Thailand and asked her to advance money to clear the shipment through Customs.

After that, other scammers, both male and female, contacted Ms Waranya. One claimed to be a forwarding official in the Philippines who demanded US\$2,800 (92,000 baht) from her to clear the equipment from Philippine Customs.

After she transferred the money, another caller claimed the packages had been seized at a Philippine airport after a scan showed there was money inside.

The scammer claimed it was an attempt to smuggle money out of the Philippines and asked her to pay a fine of \$25,000 since her name was listed as the recipient.

After the Thai woman wired more money for the fine, she was sent a photo of what was claimed to be a receipt from Philippine Customs. It was probably a forgery also.

Later, police said, Mr Amadi told the woman that the shipment would be taxed US\$80,000 (2.64 million baht) and asked her to advance the amount to him.

Ms Waranya said she did not have such a large amount but Mr Amadi insisted until she agreed to transfer 1.2 million baht to a Bangkok Bank account owned by a Thai citizen.

Mr Amadi kept trying to ask Ms Waranya to advance more money for various reasons but she filed a complaint with the police, who arrested him on Friday.

Mr Amadi told police that he had not deceived Ms Waranya as his role was only to withdraw cash from ATMs.

But police say they believe he was the person who had chatted with Ms Waranya while he was in Malaysia, based on an IP address used at the time.

Earlier, police arrested Ahamefula Chibuikwe Kali, 33, a Nigerian whom they believe was in the same gang.

Since evidence and witnesses were not enough to prosecute him at the time, they charged Mr Kali with overstaying his visa.

Here is the URL of the article, which includes a pic,

for as long as it is good:
<http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/crime/435752/nigerian-scam-suspect-arrested>

26 SEP 2014

From the Nigerian Economic and Financial
Crimes Commission (EFCC):

EFCC Arraign Two for \$91,000 Internet Fraud

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, on Friday, September 26, 2014 arraigned Dandeson Ebosele Ibhonitie, 26, (a.k.a Dandy James, Connor Mead and Barrister Louis Harpoch and Ohiwerei Charity, 31, before Justice E. F. Ikponmwen of Edo State High Court, Benin-City on a 3- count charge bordering on conspiracy and obtaining money by false pretence.

Ibhonitie and Charity allegedly belong to the group of fraudsters using the internet to defraud unsuspecting victims.

Ibhonitie allegedly defrauded one Mrs. Weidman Andrea Sabrie, a German, of the sum of \$ 91,000 (Ninety-One Thousand United States Dollars) by pretending to be an American working in Nigeria for a road construction company.

To access the proceeds of the fraud, Ibhonitie allegedly opened a domiciliary account in the name of one Mr. Steven. He entered into an agreement with Charity, the account officer that opened the account for him, on how the proceeds from the crime will be shared. By the arrangement, Charity was to keep 3 percent of every inflow to herself while 7 percent will go to Ibhonitie. The remaining 90 percent, by the arrangement, went to Steven. However, investigations showed that Ibhonitie was the same as Steven.

When the charges were read to them, they pleaded not guilty.

One of the counts read:

"Dandeson Ebosele Ibhonitie (a.k.a Dandy James, Connor Mead, Barrister Louis Harpoch, Brett Francis Steven (still at large) and Ohiwerei Charity on or about the 2nd day of April, 2014 at Benin within the Benin judicial division, with intent to defraud obtained the sum of USD 45,000.00(Forty Five Thousand United State Dollars) from Mrs. Weidman Andrea Sabrie, a German national through Skye Bank of Nigeria Limited Account No: 2520346555 in the name of Dandy James by falsely pretending to her that the said sum of money represented legal fee for Barrister Louis Harpoch for your defense which pretence you knew to be false".

In view of their pleas, prosecuting counsel, Ayokunle Fayanju, prayed the court for a trial date. He also opposed the bail applications of the defendants.

Justice Ikponmwen adjourned the matter till September, 30, 2014 for hearing of bail applications and ordered that the defendants be remanded in prison custody.

Here is the URL of the announcement, which includes pictures, for as long as it is good:
<https://efccnigeria.org/efcc/index.php/news/1006-efcc-arraign-two-for-91-000-internet-fraud>

16 SEP 2014

SaharaReporters.com published this EFCC press release, sent in to us by Ultrascan AGI:

EFCC Arrests Two Suspects For \$7.9m Scam

Two suspected fraudsters who allegedly defrauded a foreign investor of the sum of \$7.9 million have been arrested by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC.

The fraudsters: Mr. Victor Uadiale and Captain Nnaji Everest, were arrested separately in connection to the scam. Uadiale, the principal suspect, is the arrow head of an international syndicate versed in defrauding international businessmen seeking investment opportunities in Nigeria.

He allegedly invited the investor, a businessman from the Middle East, to invest in the flourishing oil sector in Nigeria. Using a pseudo name: Victor Emeka, he made the investor to visit Nigeria and received him at the Nnamdi Azikwe International Airport, Abuja and thereafter flew

him in a helicopter to a destination where he reportedly met a certain Mr. Grant, a member of the syndicate, who assured him of the credibility of the business arrangement.

Convinced that Uadiale was real and the business promising, the investor started paying money in foreign currency into Uadiale's offshore accounts where they are laundered into various bank accounts around the globe. A sum of \$1,292,000 was traced to a Barclay's Bank (United Kingdom) account of Captain Nnaji Everest, a member of Uadiale's syndicate.

The sum of N1,599,602.58; N1,241,039.00; 894.79 Pound Sterling and \$275.30 were traced to Uadiale's accounts with one of the new generation banks in Nigeria and another 391.93 Pound Sterling to another local bank.

In the course of investigation, Uadiale denied meeting or transacting any business with the foreign investor. He was however nailed by a business associate of the investor who identified him as the fraudster that duped the investor and led operatives of the EFCC to the private residence of Uadiale in Festac Town, Lagos.

Both Uadiale and Everest will soon be charged to court.

Wilson Uwujaren
Head, Media & Publicity
EFCC

Here is the URL of the article, which includes photo, for as long as it is good:
<http://saharareporters.com/2014/09/16/efcc-arrests-two-suspects-79m-scam>

13 SEP 2014

From the Digital Journal (Canada), sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

Retired Austrian journalist missing after Nigerian money scam

By Anne Sewell

Vienna - Peter Pirker, a retired Austrian journalist went missing at the end of May this year and is presumed dead.

Police think he may have committed suicide after being hit hard by a Nigerian scam. Relatives think he may be trying to track down the cash.

Peter Pirker is the former head of the ORF regional news studio in Carinthia, Austria. The retired journalist was apparently reported missing on May 22.

According to police there are no clues to his current whereabouts and he has not been seen since that date.

Police have now released a statement to say they believe that Pirker may be dead.

Spokesman for the police, Roman Hahslinger says that the police believe Pirker may have committed suicide after losing all his money in 2013.

Pirker apparently fell for a Nigerian black money scam, otherwise known as the "wash wash" scam, where criminals persuade gullible victims to give them money for chemicals, supposedly to be used to wash money that has been painted black to avoid customs detection. In actual fact, the notes are black, bank-note sized pieces of paper and not the real thing.

They show potential victims a trunk full of the notes and convince them that should they buy the chemicals, they will then get a share of the booty.

In Pirker's case, he apparently flew to Paris last year to watch a demonstration of the so-called "money cleaning machine," was convinced by the con and then sold his home in Carinthia to be able to send a large amount of money to the criminals in Nigeria. He reportedly also sold his mother's apartment in Caritas-Franziskusheim in Klagenfurt - Luise Isabella Pirker had apparently passed away at the age of 94 in mid-January. A cottage on Lake Ossiach was also apparently sold to raise money for the Nigerian scam.

By the time Pirker disappeared from Vienna, on the day before his 70th birthday, he had been declared bankrupt.

His relatives theorize that Pirker may have left to travel to Nigeria to try and track down what had happened to all his money.

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good:

<http://www.digitaljournal.com/news/world/retired-austrian-journalist-missing-after-nigerian-money-scam/article/403044#ixzz3DQe5T3Bf>

This story was also covered by The Local (Austrian News in English),

here is that URL for as long as it is good:

<http://www.thelocal.at/20140912/missing-journalist-fell-for-nigerian-scam>

4 SEP 2014

From the Nigerian EFCC, sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

Suspected Fraudster Arrested for 200,000 Euro Love Scam

For swindling a 75 year old woman of 200,000 Euros in a romance scam, a 31-year-old confidence trickster, Adio Opeyemi Michael, an indigene of Owu Local Government Area of Ogun state, has been arrested by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission EFCC. The victim, a certain Jeanet De Jonge, is a Dutch national.

Adio allegedly met the victim on the 'Net log' dating site and pretended to be a 41-year-old American citizen, working as a chef in a Nigerian restaurant and needs a wife. The profile attracted Jeanet and, in no time, began sending him money through Western Union and Money Gram.

"She was sending me money monthly, ranging from \$800 to \$900 from June 2012, through Western Union Money transfer and Money Gram to the extent that Western Union blocked her from sending money to me in Nigeria. So she requested that I should go to London to enable her send me money there. I contacted a friend of mine in London called Osas Odiah, so that he can receive the money and send to me here in Nigeria. She first sent 2000 Euros to my friend's account in London, and later to my Keystone bank account, which was actually a Forex Trade account. We started using this account when we discovered that my friend was not remitting all the money sent by Jeanet to me," the suspect revealed.

Investigations further revealed that the suspect collected the various sums under the pretext that he was going to use the money to perfect his travel plans and obtain the required documents that would enable him travel to Holland to join or visit Jeanet. But his inability or refusal to honour the invitation from Jeanet prompted the petition to EFCC.

The suspect will be arraigned in court as soon as investigation is concluded.

Wilson Uwujaren, EFCC
Head, Media & Publicity

Here is the URL of the press release (including photo) for as long as it is good:

<https://efccnigeria.org/efcc/index.php/news/988-suspected-fraudster-arrested-for-200-000-love-scam>

Saharareporters also covered this story, here is the URL:

<http://saharareporters.com/2014/09/04/efcc-suspected-fraudster-cheats-75-year-old-woman-%E2%82%AC200000>

3 SEP 2014

From WDEL 1150 AM News Talk Radio, Delaware, sent in by a friend of 419 Coalition:

Dover police issue phone scam alert

By Kelli Steele

Dover police are issuing a warning about recent phone scams that several citizens have reported.

Police say often times, the calls are from overseas, primarily Africa, despite the caller using a local or United States phone number. Because the callers are overseas, there's little that can be done for victims who send money to the people running the scams.

Police say scams include: a jury duty/warrant scam, a puppy scam, the IRS scam, the Craigslist/backpage scam, the house for rent scam, and the arrested on vacation scam. [419 Coalition note: given the advance-fee nature and African involvement mentioned in the article, these are all 419 crimes, of course.]

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good:

<http://www.wdel.com/story.php?id=62249>

30 AUG 2014

From Elombah.com (UK), an online Nigerian news and media

site:

Major Fraud Scams in the United States Involve Nigerians

By A. Jagun

According to US Secret Service, one-quarter of the major fraud scams it investigates now involve Nigerians. The frauds take on many forms, including dubious business deals with advance fees, insurance scams, health care fraud, credit card fraud, bank fraud, and identity theft.

The most notorious of Nigerian scams is the advance-fee fraud scheme known as the "419" scheme, named after a statute in the Nigerian criminal code.

This fraud typically begins with an unsolicited letter or e-mail. Responses from prospective victims typically lead to the request for an advance fee in order to facilitate the transfer of money to the United States for which the victim receives a percentage.

Other types of Nigerian fraud involve access-device fraud, usually linked to several other Federal criminal violations, identity fraud and credit card fraud, and bank fraud.

The NCI was launched in compliance with the 1995 Presidential Decision Directive 42, which aimed at countering international organized crime. It directed agencies to cooperate with one another and foreign governments in order to combat international organized crime more effectively. The NCI has been instrumental in developing an interagency working group for the purpose of sharing information and developing policy, the Anti-Drug Network computer system for collecting and tracking data that relate to Nigerian crime; and the Interagency Nigerian Organized Crime Task Forces, which are located in cities where Nigerian crime is more prevalent.

The U.S. Secret Service was designated in 1998 by the U.S. Attorney General as the lead investigative agency for Nigerian crime. A number of Nigerian criminal cases have been successfully prosecuted in the Southern District of Texas as a result of aggressive investigation by the Houston Area Fraud Task Force.

Summary descriptions are provided for the following cases: United States v. Okonkwo (a "419" scheme); United States v. Okiti (a "419" scheme); and United States v. Nwachukwu (a Nigerian in the United States involved in bank fraud and money laundering). The concluding section of this article discusses some of the challenges in prosecuting Nigerian fraud cases.

The general advice offered by this article is that greater success against Nigerian fraud will require continued interagency collaboration, public education, and greater international cooperation.

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good:

<http://elombah.com/index.php/reports/25310-major-fraud-scams-in-the-united-states-involve-nigerians>

419 Coalition Note: Although this article is recent, the primary report on which it is based is not - it is from the NCJRS in 2001.

Established in 1972, the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) is a federally funded resource offering justice and drug-related information to support research, policy, and program development worldwide.

The URL of the relevant report is:

<https://www.ncjrs.gov/App/Publications/abstract.aspx?ID=204674>

25 AUG 2014

From the US Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta Retail Payments Risk Forum (Blog) "Portals and Rails" - sent in to 419 Coalition by Ultrascan AGI:

Forty Years and Still Scamming

By David Lott, a payments risk expert in the Retail Payments Risk Forum at the Atlanta Fed

I suspect that a lot of us have received a letter or an e-mail supposedly from another country's government official or banker informing us that there were some unexpected riches coming our way. We could become millionaires, these strangers tell us, by claiming a prize from a lottery that we don't remember entering. Or they say we just might become millionaires by helping them transfer money out of their country, since they can't because of some sort of bureaucracy or regulation. Before tossing these letters or e-mails into the trash, did you ever linger for just a moment wondering if these riches could actually be coming to you?

A large number of people, particularly in the United States, think the scam is legitimate and are willing to invest up to tens of thousands of dollars to claim their share of the pot of gold. Sadly, they find not only that there

is no gold, but also that there isn't even a pot. This type of fraud is classified as an advance fee fraud because the scam involves the victim having to send money in advance, to cover fees or taxes, before they can receive their share of the bounty. The advance fee fraud is one type of 419 Nigerian fraud, so called because early versions originated in Nigeria, where criminal code 419 describes the fraud. 419 fraud began in the 1970s with lettersâ€”often with counterfeit postage marksâ€”that targeted small business owners, requesting their help in handling new oil wealth.

Over the next three decades, the solicitations grew at such a tremendous pace that in 2002, the Department of Justice got a court order to allow postal employees to open every letter from Nigeria that was handled through the United States Postal Service's mail facility at John F. Kennedy Airport. They found that more than 70 percent of these letters contained some sort of fraudulent scheme solicitation.

As law enforcement's focus on Nigeria intensified, the 419 groups moved to other countries. These groups reportedly have major operations in at least 150 countries and the involvement of more than 800,000 people. Ultrascan Advanced Global Investigations (UAGI), an Amsterdam-based association focused on disrupting the operations of criminal networks, stated in a preliminary 2013 report that U.S. victims lost \$2.3 billion in 2013â€”more than in any other country.

As with other types of criminal activity, the techniques that advance fee criminals use have become more sophisticated, evolving alongside technological advances. They've moved their method of solicitation from mail to faxes and then to e-mails. And now, instead of just sending mass mailings or e-mails, many of the criminals are tailoring e-mail messages, lacing them with personalized information obtained from social networks and professional and dating websites. For lottery-themed advance fee schemes, the UAGI estimates that 3 percent of the targets respond and make at least one advance payment.

Even more interesting, the report refutes some common misconceptions about the victims usually being lower income or with less education and desperate for some sort of financial windfall. In fact, a number of high-income professionals are taken in by some of the more sophisticated schemes involving high-dollar ventures including real estate development and medical equipment. The report also notes that, for victims losing more than \$200,000, 85 percent of them had recently experienced some sort of life-changing family trauma such as a death, divorce, or major illness.

Education by financial institutions remains the most valuable tool to defend against these schemes. These institutions should use in-house media and other methods, such as public service announcements, to alert consumers to these scams, particularly those that appear in the FI's service areas. I know of some institutions that train their frontline staff to watch for such unusual transactions, particularly by the elderly, as a supplement to their anti-money-laundering education. Financial institutions and consumers should report advance fee fraud attempts immediately to the local Secret Service or FBI office for investigation.

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good:
<http://portalsandrails.frbatlanta.org/2014/08/forty-years-and-still-scamming.html>

22 AUG 2014
From the Nigerian Economic and Financial Crimes Commission
(EFCC website:

EFCC Arrests Impersonator of Okonjo-Iweala's Secretary

A suspected fraudster that impersonated Barrister Wilson Amarachi, Secretary to Minister of Finance and Co-ordinating Minister of the Economy, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, has been arrested by operatives of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC.

John Nze Madu was arrested at Diamond Bank, Ojodu branch, Lagos, where he went to make withdrawals with an ATM card.

Investigation showed that Madu defrauded Wu Qingzhu, a Chinese national, of the sum of Five Thousand, Three Hundred and Eighty American Dollars (\$5380) when he allegedly posed as Barrister Wilson Amarachi and deceived the Chinese into believing that he had outstanding payments to collect for contracts executed for the Nigerian government.

This he achieved by presenting the Chinese with fake documents from ranking Nigerian officials. He allegedly used different email addresses, two documents purportedly from Daily Sun Newspaper, an official gazette purportedly signed by the President Goodluck Jonathan and Senate President, David Mark and an international passport data page purportedly belonging to Bar Amarachi.

Madu contacted Qingzhu through an online message, informing him that he was expected to open a non-residence account in Nigeria and make payment of \$300 (Three Hundred United States Dollars).

Qingzhu complied and made two other payments: \$1430 (One Thousand Four Hundred and Thirty United States Dollars) and \$3650 (Three Thousand Six Hundred and Fifty United States Dollars), through Western Union.

Madu was arrested at the bank premises where he went to withdraw proceeds of his fraudulent activities.

He would be charged to court after investigations are concluded.

Here is the URL of the report, which includes a photo of Madu, for as long as it is good:
<https://efccnigeria.org/efcc/index.php/news/983-efcc-arrests-impersonator-of-okonjo-iweala-s-secretary>

29 JUL 2014

From the Wall Street Journal, sent it by Ultrascan AGI.
It covers the arrest of 84 419ers and support staff in Spain. Unfortunately you can only see the beginning of the article here, as the WSJ wants to be paid for you to see the rest.

Here is the URL of the article for as long it is good:
<http://online.wsj.com/articles/spanish-police-arrest-84-in-probe-of-nigerian-scam-1406623760>

Of course, these arrests were also covered in the Spanish media. Here is an article (in Spanish) from El Periodico (elperiodico.com) covering the arrests:

Un detenido en Sabadell acusado de pertenecer a una red que blanqueo 11,5 millones de euros

La policia espanola arresta a 84 personas en toda Espana por estafa a traves de las 'cartas nigerianas'

Jueves, 31 de julio del 2014 - 19.11 h

La policia espanola detiene un vecino de Sabadell acusado de pertenecer a una red especializada en estafas que blanqueo 11,5 millones de euros procedentes de las 'cartas nigerianas', aunque el volumen de dinero en efectivo movido por la organizacion podrÃa superar los 20,6 millones, segun fuentes policiales.

En total, el numero de detenidos asciende a 84 personas en todo el Estado. La red desmantelada gestionaba varios locutorios o entidades de pago, a traves de las cuales recibia dinero enviado por ciudadanos extranjeros vÃctimas de esta estafa para despues remitirlos a Nigeria. El volumen global de los fondos desde estas entidades de pago supera los 120 millones de euros.

La organizacion estaba compuesta principalmente por ciudadanos de origen nigeriano, casi el 80% de los arrestados son naturales de ese pais, mientras que las vÃctimas eran ciudadanos extranjeros, en su mayorÃa de Estados Unidos, Canada y Alemania. Hasta el momento, se han registrado un total de 4.593 vÃctimas que han denunciado el fraude, aunque no se descarta que esta cifra sea superior.

La investigacion se inicio en octubre de 2012, despues de detectar la presencia de una organizacion que se dedicaba al blanqueo de capitales procedentes de estafa que actuaba en toda Espana. En concreto, se centro en locutorios, desde donde presuntamente se recibian y se enviaba el dinero.

En total se han registrado 203 establecimientos de este tipo entre enero de 2011 diciembre de 2012. Ademas del detenido en Sabadell, la policia ha arrestado 18 personas en Valencia, tres en Alicante, dos en Castellon y 34 en Madrid, entre otras.

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good:
<http://www.elperiodico.com/es/noticias/sabadell/detenido-sabadell-acusado-pertenecer-una-red-que-blanqueo-115-millones-euros-3421367>

19 JUL 2014

From the Hindustan Times, New Delhi, India, sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

Indians top e-scam suckers list, lose \$870mn

by Pramit Pal Chaudhuri

Indians were defrauded of \$870 million last year by e-mail scams, or so-called Nigerian "419 scams", says a global report on the financial crime.

Best known for their anonymous e-mails promising pie-in-the-sky fortunes in return for an immediate down payment, 419 scamming has exploded in India in recent years, says the report by Dutch financial intelligence organisation Ultrascan AGI. The scams are named after a section of the penal code of Nigeria, where they originated about 25 years ago.

"India is among the top five growing markets for Nigerian advance fee frauds (AFF or the technical name for 419 scamming)," Frank Engelsman, director of Ultrascan AGI, told HT in an e-mail.

India's losses to such e-mail scams have jumped in the past few years. Ultrascan, which has experts in 69 countries, pegs Indian losses in 2006 at \$32 million. It estimates that nearly 4,700 scammers are active and residing in India, about a 20-fold increase from 2006.

India is not only home to an increasing number of victims but has also become a base for scammers targeting other countries. As much as 80 per cent of the money scammers earn in India is shared with rings outside the country.

Such fraud is also becoming a source of revenue for terror groups. The Nigerian al-Qaeda affiliate Boko Haram is known to have tapped the 419 system for funds.

Engelsman says Kolkata has emerged as a key 419 fraud centre. "We stumbled upon information concerning money-laundering links with extremists in Kashmir and Bangladesh," he says.

The 419 scammers work the entire gamut of financial fraud including fake auctions, imaginary lotteries and fictitious service firms.

A staggering 78% of all counterfeit cheques caught by police globally are produced by 419 rings. India is among three of the largest counterfeit cheque-producing centres in the world.

Indians mainly fall victim to low-end scams offering fake visas, job offers and lotteries, says Engelsman. The commonest fakes visas offered are for Canada, Australia, Saudi Arabia and Britain.

Few of the Nigerian kingpins are ever caught and arrested. "Poor Indians are recruited to do 419 advance fee fraud front work, like opening bank accounts, registering companies with chambers of commerce, and receiving money transfers," says Engelsman. They are also the ones who normally picked up by the police.

Over the years, Ultrascam has carried out thousands of studies of 419 victims. It has found that the group most likely to succumb to a 419 scam, especially in the West, is highly-educated professionals, particularly doctors.

They also found that people who have suffered an emotional trauma like the death of a child or a divorce are unusually susceptible to such fraud.

Ultrascam expects advance fee fraud to continue to grow in places like India and China because scammers have adopted a "moving East" strategy thanks to Asia's fast rates of economic growth.

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good:

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/indians-top-e-scam-suckers-list-lose-870mn/article1-1242108.aspx>

There are many other recent articles concerning 419 in the Indian media as well, here are the URL's of some of them:

<http://www.bgr.in/news/indians-lose-870-million-to-nigerias-419-scams-in-2013-alone/>

<http://www.medianama.com/2014/07/223-nigerian-scam-india/>

<http://trak.in/tags/business/2014/07/21/nigerian-scammers-defraud-indians-870m-2013/>

<http://firstbiz.firstpost.com/data/guess-what-nigerian-email-scammers-looted-rs-5240-cr-from-gullible-indians-in-2013-91413.html>

<http://www.geektime.com/2014/07/21/millions-of-victims-lost-12-7b-last-year-falling-for-nigerian-scams/>

<http://www.avashya.com/articles/share/306113/>

<http://www.avashya.com/articles/share/306082/>

<http://www.moneylife.in/article/cyber-frauds-cost-india-870-million-in-2013/38165.html>

<http://www.moneylife.in/article/why-scam-mails-in-the-name-of-rbi-are-fooling-so-many-people/38145.html>

<http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-as-economy-tanked-more-indians-fell-for-scam-sweepstakes-2004079>

<http://www.nextbigwhat.com/nigerian-scammers-india-data-297/>

<http://qz.com/237788/cyber-attacks-on-companies-on-the-rise-while-ordinary-indians-fall-for-the-nigerian-scam/>

[http://ibnlive.in.com/news/marketed-an-email-as-spam-from-an-american-who-named-you-an-heir-in-his-will-india-has-lost-rs-5420-crore-to-nigerian-email-scams/487](http://ibnlive.in.com/news/india/marketed-an-email-as-spam-from-an-american-who-named-you-an-heir-in-his-will-india-has-lost-rs-5420-crore-to-nigerian-email-scams/487)

<http://www.dailypioneer.com/nation/greed-funding-scams-online.html>

<http://epaperbeta.timesofindia.com/Article.aspx?eid=31815&articlexml=Smart-People-Get-Scammed-More-23072014010025#>

<http://paper.hindustantimes.com/epaper/showarticle.aspx?issue=8735201407260000000001001&page=1&article=70a203eb-ca96-4db2-b1a6-2b56812d0d23&key=D>

18 JUL 2014

From the Nigerian Government Economic and Financial Crimes Commission(EFCC) website:

\$8.39m Fraud: Ajudua loses Appeal Against Trial

Alleged serial fraudster, Fred Ajudua today lost his bid to stop his trial by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission over allegations of defrauding a former Chief of Army Staff, Lt. General Ishaya Bamaïyi of about \$8.39million between November 2004 and June 2005.

The Lagos Division of the Court of Appeal today dismissed Ajudua's application challenging the competence of the charge and the jurisdiction of the Lagos High Court.

Ajudua, who was arraigned before Justice Atinuke Ipaye of the Lagos High Court on a 14-count charge that borders on obtaining by false pretence, had filed notice of preliminary objection in which he stated that the proof of evidence did not disclose any case against him. Justice Ipaye dismissed the Objection.

Dissatisfied, Ajudua subsequently appealed against the decision of the trial court.

At the hearing of the appeal he filed against the ruling of the Lagos State High Court dismissing his application asking the court to decline jurisdiction to entertain the charge, Ajudua contended that the lower court erred in law when it held that he could be tried under the repealed Advance Fee Fraud and Other Related Offences Act, 1995.

Ajudua's counsel, Olalekan Ojo, submitted in the Appellant's Brief of Argument and Appellant's Reply Brief of Argument dated May 13 and June 11 respectively, that at the time Bamaïyi petitioned the EFCC over the alleged offence in 2006, the law upon which the 14-count charge was framed was no longer in existence.

Maintaining that the proof of evidence did not support the charge, Ojo said: "The information as constituted at the lower court is procedurally and substantively incompetent."

But in a unanimous ruling today, July 18, 2014 the Court of Appeal affirmed the decision of the trial court that the charge was competent.

Ajudua is alleged to have fraudulently collected a total sum of \$8.39million Eight Million, Three Hundred and Ninety Thousand United States Dollars) from General Bamaïyi(rtd)) in instalments, by falsely claiming that the payments represented the professional fees charged by Chief Afe Babatola, SAN, to handle Bamaïyi's case in court and to facilitate his release from prison.

The accused is also standing trial, alongside Charles Ovie, before Justice Kudirat Jose of the Lagos High Court, Ikeja for allegedly defrauding two Dutch businessmen of \$1.69m.

Further hearing in this case was on June 6, 2014 suspended till September 24, 2014, pending the outcome of today's ruling by the Court of Appeal

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good.
<https://efccnigeria.org/efcc/index.php/news/963-8-39m-fraud-ajudua-loses-appeal-against-trial>

3 JUL 2014

From the London Evening Standard, sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

Champagne fraudster nicknamed Fizzy jailed for conning pensioners

by Paul Cheston

A fraudster nicknamed Fizzy for his love of champagne who conned £30 million from up to 400 victims was jailed for eight years at the Old Bailey.

For seven years Frank Onyechonam, 38, ran the UK operation of a global scam which was orchestrated from his native Nigeria.

He extracted anything from £2,000 to £600,000 from the life savings of vulnerable pensioners to fund his millionaire's lifestyle by persuading them to send him money to release "winnings" from a bogus lottery.

He loved to be photographed surrounded by cash and champagne bubbly in West End nightclubs, drove Porsches and Maseratis and filled his Thames-side flat with Gucci, Armani and Louis Vuitton.

Onyechonam was convicted of conspiracy to defraud.

Lawrencia Emenyonu, 38, and Bernard Armah, 51, both of Wood Green, were found guilty of money laundering and jailed for 18 months and eight months respectively.

The lavish lifestyle of Fizzy

Sentencing Judge Rebecca Poulet QC described Onyechonam as having "arrogance that's unbelievable" and the victims suffering "great hardship."

"The evidence against you was so strong it is almost preposterous

at times that you should suggest it was not your responsibility," she said.

"Yours was the leading role in the fraud. It was a very well thought out operation, sophisticated in its planning and execution ."

"It persisted with you at the helm for eight years. You targeted individuals because they were elderly and likely to agree and be tricked by these scams."

"The harm you caused was not only high in terms of the financial losses to your victims but in the dreadful impact you had on their lives and in terms of their mental capacity and relationships with their families."

Their simple plan - known as an advance fee fraud - involved Onyeachonam sending emails announcing that each victim had won millions of pounds on a non-existent Australian lottery and requesting a charge to release their winnings.

The court heard that investigators had traced 14 victims - mainly from the US but including one from Britain - who were defrauded of a total of around £900,000.

But detectives believe the true figure is considerably higher.

Although Onyeachonam was the key figure in the UK, a co-conspirator abroad was arrested with the details of more than 100,000 potential victims.

Onyeachonam started the scam soon after arriving in the UK in 2005 and continued - even on bail after his arrest in 2011 - to 2012.

He was finally trapped in a three-year operation by the National Crime Agency assisted by the US authorities.

Steve Brown, senior officer in the NCA's cyber-crime unit, said Onyeachonam's victims were selected from a database known as a "suckers list" of susceptible targets which he had marked with rankings such as "cripple" or "elderly" or just "poor".

"Victims were sent an email from an alias used by Onyeachonam saying they had won an Australian lottery," he said.

"They would be directed to ring him and he would say 'if you send me money I will then release your lottery funds!'"

"Once they've got their claws into someone they won't stop. As long as they keep sending them money they will keep going until there's nothing left."

Here is the URL of the article, with pictures, as far as long as it is good:

<http://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/champagne-fraudster-nicknamed-fizzy-jailed-for-conning-pensioners-9582610.html>

This story was widely covered in the UK media, including the Daily Mail:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/pa/article-2679523/CONMAN-JAILED-FOR-LOTTERY-SCAM.html>

and

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2679755/Nigerian-conman-called-Fizzy-loved-champagne-scammed-pensioners-life-savings-fake-lottery-fund-lavish-party-li>

The story was also reportedly widely covered in the Nigerian media.

1 JUL 2014

From the US Government FinCEN, sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

SARs Help Identify Accounts and Additional Nigerian 419 Scams Associated with \$32 Million Coal Mine and "Divine Gold" Ponzi Scheme

Federal law enforcement and regulatory agencies conducted a securities fraud investigation where defrauded investors lost at least \$32 million. Investors believed they were investing in coal mines and a huge and highly secretive gold transaction. Three individuals were convicted of running the scheme and sentenced to lengthy prison terms.

The lead Federal investigator credited Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs) with providing additional bank account numbers previously unknown and with revealing the existence of additional Nigerian 419 scams perpetrated by the defendants against some of their more than 500 investors.

The 33-count indictment filed listed the three defendants for their alleged violation of federal securities fraud, mail fraud, wire fraud, aiding and abetting, witness tampering, money laundering, and contempt statutes.

Two defendants were officers of an entity that actually owned two coal mines. The defendants mailed materials to and held phone conference calls with investors who were falsely led to believe the mines were profitable or shortly would be; that the entity had \$1 million worth of coal in reserve; and that the entity had an experienced mine manager running its operations.

In fact, the two mines the entity did own were only registered to operate for a short period of time and never turned a profit. The referenced "expert" mine manager began serving a prison sentence during the time he was purported

to be managing the mines. Additionally, the entity did not own any coal reserves.

Investors were led to believe their investments were paying for new mining equipment, which investors were assured would increase coal output and mining profits.

Many of the same investors were also encouraged to invest in what was pitched as a highly secretive 20,000 ton gold deal purported to involve a prince moving the gold from various countries in the Middle East and Europe. One defendant was represented to investors to have many international contacts as the organizer and facilitator of the gold transaction. Investors were led to believe that they were investing to pay for storage and administrative costs associated with the transfer of this illusory gold.

Another defendant, a pastor, often prayed with investors during the conference calls, and assured them that the gold deal was "divinely inspired" and that it was "God's will that the deal come to fruition." Investors were also assured that some of the profits from the gold deal would be invested in humanitarian projects. Both the mine and the gold investments were supposed to return profits of 200 to 300 percent to investors within 60 days.

Contempt counts against the defendants resulted from their failure to obey Federal court orders to cease the sales of securities in the form of loan agreements and promissory notes the defendants concluded with their investors. Defendants went so far as to represent to investors that since the government had put the coal mines into receivership, investors could expect to receive their money back with interest. Additionally, in order to continue the gold scam, the defendants set up a new entity and new bank accounts to receive investor funds.

All told, over \$10 million of investor funds were used by one defendant to fund his music and film-making business. Another \$3.4 million was used to fund coal mining operations, with most of the balance of funds used by defendants to support lavish lifestyles including the purchase of expensive residences and vehicles.

Money transmitters filed 18 SARs reporting significant aggregate transfers totaling in the hundreds of thousands of dollars initiated by the defendants to recipients in Nigeria. Each SAR reports multiple wire transfers sent from different agent locations, most of which appear to be structured to avoid the \$3,000 reporting requirement. Investigators determined that these transfers represented funds raised by defendants from their most gullible investors who fell for a more traditional Nigerian 419 scheme pitched by the defendants at the same time the defendants were running their mining and gold scams.

Here is the URL of the advisory for as long as it is good:
http://www.fincen.gov/law_enforcement/ss/html/July2014_Case8.html

21 MAY 2014

Here is a front page article from the Norwegian Dagbladet which says, as we understand it, that Boko Haram is funded, at least in part, by 419. It is in Norwegian, of course:

Knyttet Boko Haram til svindelen som herjer norske e-postbokser
- Tjener stort på Nigeria-bedrageri, sier terroranalytiker.

Torgeir P. Krokfjord tpk@dagbladet.no

(Dagbladet): Det er i et blogginnlegg av den kjente terroranalytikeren David Nordell at Boko Haram knyttes til 419-svindel, eller såkalte Nigeria-bedragerier. Tallet 419 kommer av paragraf-nummeret i den nigerianske straffeloven som omhandler svindel.

Innlegget ble tvitret av cyberkrimsjef i Europol, Troels Oerting, denne uka. Også andre terroranalytikere har knyttet Boko Haram til internettbedrageri.

I innlegget diskuterer Nordell hvilken effekt det vil ha med sanksjoner mot Boko Haram - gruppa kan underlegges økonomiske tiltak, plasseres på terrorlister og kontoer kan fryses.

Men ingen slike tiltak vil kunne stoppe en av terrorgruppas aller viktigste pengeskilder, mener Nordell - nemlig Nigeria-bedragerier.

Viktige bakmenn

Til tross for gjentatte og klare advarsler fra politiet, tallrike medieoppslag og domfellelser i en rekke land, dukker det fortsatt jevnlig opp kreative e-poster i norske og utenlandske innbokser. Det kan være onkler som har etterlatt seg en stor arv, et forretningseventyr som påstås å gi skyld, avkastning, eller en kjempegevinst i et lotteri du ikke visste at du var med i.

Alt er selvfølgelig bare lureri.

Og pengene kan til en av verdens mest brutale terrorgrupper. Det er klare og utvetydige bevis for at Boko Haram er en av de viktigste

organisatorene av slike bedragerier, hevder analytikeren.

Etter at nigeriansk politi for noen år tilbake satte inn en omfattende offensiv mot bedragerne ble mye av virksomheten flyttet til nabolandet Ghana, og til Nederland og London. Selv om pengene fysisk sendes til andre land, kan de likevel ende opp hos Boko Haram.

Hundrevis drept

En stor andel av pengene som genereres gjennom Nigeria-svindler brukes nå til kjøp av våpen og annet utstyr som brukes til gruppas grufulle anslag, ifølge terroranalytiker David Nordell.

Siden 2009 har Boko Haram drept tusenvis av mennesker. Den mest omtalte hendelsen nylig er bortføringen av de 276 skolejentene 14. april, som har vekket avsky over hele verden - og som, endelig, vil noen si, brakte informasjon om gruppas ekstreme brutalitet ut til et stort publikum.

Seiest i går skal Boko Haram ha stått bak et bombeangrep i byen Jos i Nigeria, der minst 118 mennesker er drept og 56 drept etter at to bomber eksploderte på en travel markeds plass.

Såndag ble fire personer, deriblant ei 12 år gammel jente, drept av en selvmordsbomber i byen Kano nord i Nigeria. Også her mistenkes Boko Haram for å stå bak.

Vanskelig å spore

Biter du på Nigeria-svindelen blir du gjerne bedt om å sende penger via MoneyGram, Forex, Western Union eller lignende tjenester. Der er det svært vanskelig for politiet å følge pengene.

Åkokrim har beskrevet dette slik:

- Pengene blir ofte sendt via Western Union og Forex, gjerne til forskjellige land, og mottaker kan ta dem ut kort tid etter overføringen. Vi har tilfeller hvor personer bosatt i Norge har sendt opptil tre millioner norske kroner i avgifter til et lotteri, men svindlerne viser ofte falsk legitimasjon, noe som gjør det vanskelig å spore opp pengene.

Det er derfor ikke kjent hvor store summer Boko Haram - eller andre terrornettverk - har tjent på Nigeria-svindler. Men ofrene aner aldri hvor pengene deres faktisk ender opp, påpeker Nordell, og slår fast at store summer havner hos Boko Haram i Nigeria.

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good:

http://www.dagbladet.no/2014/05/21/nyheter/boko_haram/utenriks/nigeria/terrorisme/33413106/

We apologize for any errors in how we posted the article, nobody here speaks Norwegian, so we did the best we could :)

18 MAY 2014

From the [American Center for Democracy](#) Terror Finance Blog:

Boko Haram, too, is financed by cyber crime

By David Nordell

The extremist Islamist terror group Boko Haram has become the scourge of Nigeria over the last five or so years, responsible for more than 1,000 deaths. The close to 300 schoolgirls recently kidnapped by the group are still unlocated somewhere in the Nigerian jungle, apparently waiting to be sold as sex slaves. Most recently, Boko Haram is apparently responsible for an attack on a Chinese work site in northern Cameroon that took place on 16th May, killing one and kidnapping 10.

The world is at least making efforts, symbolic or otherwise, to support the Nigerian government in its fight against Boko Haram. British, US and Israeli counter-terrorist units are reported to be helping in the search for the missing schoolgirls; and West African leaders met in Paris on 17th May, together with Western officials, to work out a plan to share intelligence and coordinate military action. Reuters also reported that Nigeria was to ask for Boko Haram to be placed on the UN list of sanctioned terrorist organisations and individuals.

As far as preventing the financing of terrorism is concerned, most of the value of these lists, whether provided by the UN or national governments, is in the Know Your Customer processes carried out at financial institutions, aimed at preventing suspect individuals and entities from opening bank accounts that might then be used to channel money towards terror activities. And the disappointing truth is that these processes are not very effective, not least because the black lists are usually publicly available, not least to the suspects themselves: suspect individuals can easily change their names and obtain new identification papers; suspect corporate entities can often change their identities even more easily; and in any case accounts can be opened and manipulated through front men.

But perhaps more important than the overall weakness of the anti-money laundering/counter-terror financing regime is the fact that it is almost entirely bypassed by the most common form of cyber fraud, generically known as 'Nigerian fraud' or 419 fraud, after the section in the Nigerian criminal code that refers to it. As is well known, most e-mail account users around the world receive occasional (or in my case, almost daily) messages claiming to be from some bank manager, or government official, or orphaned child of some national leader, offering a large sum in exchange for help in laundering a multi-million dollar sum that has been misplaced in corporate accounts, or allocated by the UN, or left for charitable purposes. And once the gullible victim starts corresponding with the fraudster, he or she discovers that there are all sorts of expenses that need to be covered before the big money can be released, almost invariably by making payment through one of the major remittance companies such as MoneyGram. The more imaginative frauds tend to use romance as the hook: a good friend of mine lost many tens of thousands of dollars to someone who started an on-line relationship with her through a dating site and then claimed to need money urgently because he had been imprisoned on false charges in Ghana.

Nigerian frauds are of course not confined to Nigeria. But sources with whom I have spoken say that there is already clear evidence that Boko Haram is now one of the key organised groups behind these frauds, and that a good part of the money that is sent by the fraudsters' victims to Nigeria is actually being used to buy weapons and other supplies for its terror attacks, whether in Nigeria itself or in neighbouring countries.

For the time being there do not appear to be reliable figures for the extent of Boko Haram's involvement in the many thousands of successful 419 frauds, any more than there are reliable figures for the overall extent of these frauds globally: most of the victims are too embarrassed to complain to the police. Similarly, the overall volume of transactions carried out by Western Union, MoneyGram, other smaller remittance companies and now also mobile-phone payments companies is a totally unreliable indicator of how much may end up being taken by Boko Haram, or indeed similar terror groups in countries such as Somalia and the Philippines.

What is clear, however, is that the current KYC regulations that apply to people sending money through the various payments companies are basically irrelevant to this problem of fraud financing terrorism: the victims have no idea where their money is ending up. The same applies to all the many instances of money being stolen from financial institutions and their customers through the better-publicised forms of cyber theft, those that typically use malware infiltrated into customers' computers and mobile phones. The only real solution is to turn the KYC rules on their head and to insist that those receiving remittances, and counterparties to transfers originating from banks and credit card accounts, be identified by means of secure and authenticated electronic ID (since paper-based or even plastic ID documents are so easy to forge and steal).

Is this likely to happen any time soon? Unfortunately not: although the Financial Action Task Force has recognised the risks behind new payment methods such as internet and mobile payments, as well as Internet-related fraud, this recognition has yet to turn into actual regulatory requirements on the one hand, and secure, scalable technological solutions on the other; and there doesn't seem to be much of a sense of urgency. To be fair, cyber crime is by no means the only means of financing terrorist organisations such as Boko Haram; but how many more innocent victims will continue to be murdered, maimed and kidnapped because practical solutions are not yet available?

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good:
http://www.terrorfinance.org/the_terror_finance_blog/2014/05/boko-haram-too-is-financed-by-cyber-crime.html

1 MAY 2014

Here from BusinessDay, a Nigerian newspaper and magazine, is a very thoughtful essay by Tochukwu Ezukanma, portions of which were relevant to West African Advance Fee Fraud (419) matters. Ultrascan AGI sent the article in to 419 Coalition, and we have edited out some sections of it which deal solely with insitutional corruption, graft, embezzlement etc., as such matters are "not our department" so to speak. The URL of the full essay, which is well worth reading in its complete form, is given at the end of the posted material:

Let's stop lying to ourselves

Tochukwu Ezukanma

Nigeria is an extremely corrupt country. With the exception for an eccentric few, the generality of Nigerians are corrupt. Corruption has permeated and pervaded every Nigerian institution and every spectrum of her social life. It has rendered every of her institutions dysfunctional, and it is, in essence, unraveling the social fabric of the society. And consistently, the anti-corruption watchdog, Transparency International, rates Nigeria as one of the most corrupt countries in the world.

Paradoxically, despite the overwhelming proofs of barefaced acts of

corruption in Nigeria, Nigerians, especially the Nigerian government, bristle at being characterized as corrupt. They fulminate and seethe whenever foreign observers talk about corruption in Nigeria. They castigate these observers as though they committed a criminal offense. To be disgracefully corrupt, and yet, expect or demand acclamation for incorruptibility is, among other things, denial. Denial is falsehood, an exceedingly dangerous form of falsehood. In denial, the individual lies, not to others, but to himself which is the most deleterious form of lying.

In 1995, the distinguished American public servant, Colin Powell, talked about official corruption in Nigerian, and that scam (419) is part of the Nigerian national culture. Ironically, Nigerians were incensed by that factual statement. Many Nigerians in the United States of America, in anger, besieged him, demanding an apology.

Lately, also, the Nigerian government was angered by President Robert Mugabe's (of Zimbabwe) depiction of Nigerians as "very corrupt people". The Permanent Secretary of the Nigerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Martin Uhomoibhi, summoned the Zimbabwean Head of Chancery to tell him that Mugabe's comment was "vitriolic and denigrating on Nigeria and Nigerians" and "does not reflect the reality in Nigeria".

Robert Mugabe was totally correct when he called Nigerians a very corrupt people.

To besiege a man who told the truth about your country demanding a recant and an apology is insincere. To demand evidence for facts that are intrusively evident is deception. And to deny a fact that is blindingly clear, even to the most casual observer, is falsehood. We have lied to ourselves for so much and for so long.

Therefore, it is high time we stopped lying to ourselves. We must stop wallowing in our moral squalor and demanding a splendid international image. We can only change our image and foreigners' perception of us by changing our ways. It is time we address the problem of corruption in Nigeria and stop fuming at those that told us the truth about ourselves.

If you look into the mirror and see dirt on your face, sanity dictates that you clean your face and leave the mirror alone. For the mirror in revealing the smear on your face did its work and also did you a favor. To ignore the dirt on your face, as revealed by the mirror, and proceed to break the mirror verges on lunacy. Therefore, we should clean our face, that is, tackle corruption in Nigeria and leave the mirror (the foreign observers) alone.

Tochukwu Ezukanma

Here is the URL of the full article/essay for as long as it is good:
<http://businessdayonline.com/2014/05/lets-stop-lying-to-ourselves>

30 APR 2014

From the Premium Times, a Nigerian newspaper, sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

Police arrest Nigerian for defrauding American lady of N56 million via dating website

Ben Ezeamalu

The police said the suspect confessed to the crime and would be charged to court soon.

The Police Special Fraud Unit, SFU, has arrested a 29-year-old man for allegedly operating an internet fraud syndicate that specializes in defrauding unsuspecting wealthy foreign women who are in dire need of husbands.

Henry Ogu, and his accomplice, Yunusa Okonkwo, 42, were arrested after defrauding a New Jersey lady of US\$350,000 (about N56 million) via an internet dating site.

In a statement on Wednesday, the SFU said that it received an e-mailed petition from a U.S. citizen, whom it did not name, sometime in April 2013. The petitioner alleged that she met Mr. Ogu on a dating site.

According to the petition, the couple started a relationship which lasted for months until the Mr. Ogu allegedly manipulated and made the lady to believe that he was in trouble in Nigeria and needed some financial assistance.

"She further stated that she sent the sum of \$350,000.00 US Dollar to the two account numbers provided by the suspect," the police said in the statement signed by Ngozi Isintume-Agu, Police Public Relations Officer, SFU.

"The account numbers belonged to Fanece Business Services International, owned by Mr. Okonkwo of No. A1 Giwa Road, U/Muazu Kaduna where he was subsequently arrested. His arrest led to the arrest of the principal suspect, Henry Chinedu Ogu."

Mr. Okonkwo, a native of Amuri Nkanu West local council of Enugu State, is a patent medicine dealer who runs a Bureau De Change.

He confessed that he is the account holder of Fanece Business Services International, according to the police, and admitted that he provided his two bank accounts for the transactions.

"He also stated that the 2nd suspect, Henry, provided him with his account number where he transferred the money after converting it to Naira. The account detail is "with account name Raydeus Synergy Nigeria Limited. He also added that he always deduct his commission of N2.00 per Dollar before paying in the money," said the police.

"Henry Chinedu Ogu, from Amafor - Ishingwa Umuahia, Abia State, claimed to be one of the Directors of a company called Raydeus Synergy Nigeria Limited. He confessed to the alleged crime that he sent the account details of the 1st suspect to the victim who in turn paid the sum of \$295,000.00 Dollars into the account which the 1st suspect Yunusa converted to Naira before paying into his Diamond Bank.

"He corroborated the Complainant's statement that they met on a dating site last year January 2013 and started communicating and exchanging e-mails."

"He also confessed that he deceived the victim into believing that he wanted to marry her but was stranded in Nigeria and needed financial assistance. He further admitted that he had spent all the money, that he used N9million to purchase a heavy duty generating plant which the Police had recovered."

"Also he purchased a plot of land for N800,000.00 along Lagos - Ibadan Expressway. The cash sum of N2million was also recovered from him."

The police said that investigation has continued and the suspect would be charged to court soon.

"The Commissioner of Police, SFU, CP Umar Farouk Idris uses this medium to reassure the public of the Unit's commitment to fight internet fraudsters and advises that such cases should be promptly reported through the Unit e-mail addresses: specialfraudunitlagos@yahoo.com and sfulagos@yahoo.com and info@specialfraudunit.org.ng," the police added.

Here is the URL of the article, which includes a photo of Henry Ogu, for as long as it is good:

<http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/159835-police-arrest-nigerian-defrauding-american-lady-n56-million-via-dating-website.html>

419 Coalition Note: 419 Coalition is always very pleased to report successes by the Nigerian authorities against the 419ers. Of course the more successes there are, the more positive news there will be to report, so kudos to the Nigeria Police Special Fraud Unit for their hard work in bringing these 419ers to justice.

24 APR 2014

From Lebanon based Naharnet (Naharnet.com) sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

Member of Nigerian 'Black Dollar Scam' Gang Arrested in Lebanon

by Naharnet Newsdesk

The Judicial Police has arrested a Nigerian member of a so-called "black dollar scam" gang that has fraudulently obtained money from a number of Lebanese victims.

"Following intensive investigations in the Bir al-Abed area, the Dahieh Judicial Police department managed to arrest on Tuesday night a member of a Nigerian gang operating outside Lebanon," the Internal Security Forces said in a statement issued on Thursday.

The gang hooked "its Lebanese victims through the Internet by persuading them that black papers can be turned into \$100 bills after washing off the black color through the use of a certain chemical substance," the ISF said.

It identified the apprehended man as 40-year-old Nigerian citizen Fred Amah Ede.

According to the statement, he confessed to having arrived in Lebanon in February "along with a man called B. S., with the aim of handing 70-year-old Lebanese citizen H. B. a suitcase containing 'black dollars' in return for \$15,000."

The Nigeria-based gang communicated with the Lebanese man via the Internet, the statement noted.

A box containing \$100-bill-sized green and black papers, various counterfeit currencies and \$4,500 was seized "in the possession of the detained Nigerian man," the ISF said.

"Efforts are underway to arrest the second culprit," it added.

The famous black money scam, sometimes also known as the "black dollar scam" or "wash wash scam", is a scam where con artists attempt to fraudulently obtain money from a victim by persuading him or her that piles of banknote-sized paper in a trunk or a safe are real money which has been dyed black or another color.

The victim is persuaded to pay for chemicals to wash the "money" with a promise that he will share in the proceeds.

Y.R.

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/127892-member-of-nigerian-black-dollar-scram-gang-arrested-in-lebanon>

15 APR 2014

From the Nigerian Tribune, a Nigerian newspaper,
sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

Internet scam: EFCC arrests seven undergraduates in Lagos

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), on Monday, said it arrested seven undergraduates in Lagos for alleged internet fraud.

A statement by its spokesperson, Wilson Uwujaren read:"A surprise dawn raid on two houses in the Lekki area of Lagos on April 6, yielded the arrest of seven suspects, all undergraduates studying various courses in some of the nation's tertiary institutions."

"The undergraduates, who are within the age-range of 21 and 29 years, included Elete Fred Debi, a 500-level student of Physics/Production Technology of the University of Port-Harcourt, Rivers State. Others are: Ese Iriruaga, 300-level student of Geology, Delta State University, Abraka, Delta State; Couson Jimmy, 300-level student of Computer Science, Benson Idahosa, University, Benin-City, Edo State; Anthony Onos, 200-level student of Political Science, Lagos State University, Ojo, Lagos State; Omene Stephen, 200-level student of Computer Science, University of Port-Harcourt, Rivers State; Kome Emmanuel, 200-level student of Petroleum Engineering, University of Port-Harcourt and Shola Muyiwa of the Petroleum Training Institute, Effurun, Delta State."

"They were picked in two houses at Lekki County Homes and Lekki Phase One, both in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State following intelligence report on their alleged involvement in sundry internet scams."

"The suspects have all made useful statements. One of them, Shola Muyiwa, confessed that, he recently collected \$100 from one of his victims, Dora Hunt, based in North Carolina, United States of America."

"Various items were recovered from the suspects such as laptop computers, expensive phones, ipads and exotic cars, including a Range Rover Evogue; Honda Crosstour, Mercedeze Benz C 300 4matic, S 300 Mercedes Benz and Acura ZDX SUV. The suspects will be charged to court as soon as investigation is concluded."

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good:

<http://tribune.com.ng/news/news-headlines/item/3377-internet-scram-efcc-arrests-seven-undergraduates-in-lagos>

15 APR 2014

From the Nigerian EFCC press office via Saharareporters,
sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

EFCC Press Release: EFCC Arraigns Scammer
For Impersonating US Soldier On Afghan Mission

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, on Tuesday April 15, 2014, arraigned one Adagun Moshood Olalekan before Justice O. A Taiwo of the Lagos High Court, Igbosere, on a 17-count charge bordering on obtaining money by false pretence and possession of fraudulent documents. Olalekan pleaded not guilty to the charges.

In view of the plea of the defendant, the prosecuting counsel, Rotimi Oyedepo told the court that the prosecution had its first witness in court and was ready to commence trial. But the defence counsel, L. O. Balogun told the court that the defendant

had already filed an application for bail dated April 14, 2014. But Oyedepo told the court that he was only served in court.

Justice O. A. Taiwo then adjourned the case to May 15 and 16, 2014 for trial and ordered that the defendant be remanded in Ikoyi prison.

Olalekan's arrest followed a complaint by the United States Department of Homeland Security, alleging that the accused had been impersonating one Lieutenant-Colonel Cabin Cayce Webb, an American soldier on special duties in Afghanistan.

Part of the charge against Olalekan reads: "Adagun Moshood Olalekan (a.k.a Lieutenant Colonel Cadin Cayce Webb) on or about 6th day of October, 2013 in Lagos within the Lagos Judicial Division with intent to defraud obtained the sum \$800 (Eight Hundred United States Dollar) by false pretence from Diana Snow by falsely representing to her that you are one Lieutenant Colonel Cadin Cayce Webb which representation you know to be false".

Wilson Uwujaren
Head, Media & Publicity
15th April, 2014

by Taboola

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good:

<http://saharareporters.com/press-release/efcc-press-release-efcc-arraigns-scammer-impersonating-us-soldier-afghan-mission>

9 APR 2014

From Naij.com (Nigerian Online Portal) an interesting article that presents a report from a US security blog, Krebsonsecurity.com, which analyses two clumps of 419er facebook users, one in Nigeria and one in Malaysia,

The [article](#) is very graphics intensive, which we really can't reproduce here in the News section, but we encourage readers to go to naij.com and take a look.

The URL of the article is:

<http://news.naij.com/46971.html>

2 APR 2014

From WAtoday.com, Australia, sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

Perth woman recovers money following dating scam

A woman who lost a six-figure sum in an online dating scam has become the first known West Australian victim of romance fraud to get some of her money back.

The woman, known only as Jenny, has so far received 40 per cent of the amount she sent to an overseas bank account last year during a fake relationship with "Gary", who she met on a well-known dating website.

She recovered those funds after she tried to reverse international transfers made through her bank.

The scammers convinced the 51-year-old woman that "Gary" was in love with her and needed money to cover a business crisis.

"I was simply looking for companionship after my divorce and never thought there would be such cruel con artists looking to capitalise on loneliness," Jenny said.

"I've learned the hard way and paid a high price emotionally through feelings of devastation, but getting such a large proportion of the money back at least means the financial impact is lessened and it's a small win in the war on these scammers."

Jenny began talks with officers from Project Sunbird - a joint anti-fraud initiative between the major fraud squad and Consumer Protection.

Detective Senior Sergeant Dom Blackshaw said work began to ensure the overseas bank account was frozen.

Authorities also worked with the Nigerian Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, which arrested a 26-year-old man.

Jenny then received two separate refunds into her bank account.

Consumer Protection acting commissioner Gary Newcombe said it was a unique case, because there had been more than 150 Project Sunbird victims who contacted WA ScamNet between March 2013 and

February this year, none of whom have recovered any of the funds they lost, totalling \$9,357,979.

Consumer Protection and WA Police are again warning people to be wary of online dating scams with more than \$9 million sent offshore from WA in the past twelve months.

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good:

<http://www.watoday.com.au/wa-news/perth-woman-recovers-money-following-dating-scam-20140402-35y11.html>

31 MAR 2014

From the Nigerian newspaper, the Punch:

\$1.69m fraud: Court dismisses Ajudua's bail application

by Ade Adesomoju

A Lagos High Court, Ikeja has again denied a suspected advance fee fraud kingpin, Mr. Fred Ajudua, bail in an alleged \$1.69m fraud case.

It was Ajudua's fifth bail application since the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission instituted the charges against him in 2003.

Justice Kudirat Jose, before whom the defendant was on February 5, 2014, re-arraigned along with his co-accused, Charles Orie, ruled on Wednesday that the fresh bail application lacked merit.

The court had earlier allowed Orie to continue enjoying the bail earlier granted him by the former trial judge, Justice Olunmi Oyewole.

Ajudua, who was ordered to remain in detention after the re-arraignment, had, through his lawyer, Chief Charles Edosomwan (SAN), filed his fresh bail application on the grounds of "serious" ill health.

Justice Jose in refusing the application on Wednesday, cited Ajudua's antecedents of tampering with evidence and absconding from trial when he was initially granted bail.

Though, the judge in her ruling, admitted that he was truly unhealthy, but held that the medical reports tendered by him did not show his health conditions could not from prison.

The judge said, "These reports show that the applicant (Ajudua) is not a very healthy man and that he needs medical attention."

"However, the reports have not shown that he cannot be treated while still in prison."

The judge said the medical reports issued by the Lagos University Teaching Hospital, showed that Ajudua was suffering from complicated ailments as a result of having a solitary kidney.

She added that the accused failed to convince the court that he would not abscond or interfere with witnesses if the bail was granted.

She said, "He has not shown to the court why he was not able to come to his trial between 2008 and 2013."

"In his counter-affidavit, the applicant did not respond to the claims that he had tampered with evidence. His lack of response means an admission of guilt."

Ajudua and Orie were first arraigned before Justice Oyewole for allegedly defrauding two Dutch businessmen - Mr. Remy Cina and Pierre Vijgen - of about \$1.69m between July 1999 and September 2000.

The matter was re-assigned to Justice Jose and the matter started afresh after Justice Oyewole withdrew from the case. Oyewole was recently elevated to the Court of Appeal.

Ajudua is also on detention in a separate case pending before another Lagos High Court in Ikeja for allegedly defrauding a former Chief of Army Staff, Lt.-Gen. Ishaya Bamaïyi (retd.), about \$5.9m between November 2004 and June 2005.

The matter was adjourned till April 28 for trial.

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good:

<http://www.punchng.com/news/1-69m-fraud-court-dismisses-ajuduas-bail-application/>

4 MAR 2014

Here is a piece from Norwegian national radio (NRK) about Romance 419 (Dating 419) and how some of

the proceeds are used to fund terrorists in Africa like Boko Haram and Al Shabaab. It was sent in by Ultrascan AGI whose CEO, Frank Englesman, was interviewed for the article/broadcast. The article is in Norwegian. Here is the URL for as long as it is good:

<http://www.nrk.no/hordaland/datingsvindel-finansierer-terror-1.11583024>

23 FEB 2014

From The Star, a Malaysian newspaper, sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

Scammers learn "language of love"

by Austin Camoens

KUALA LUMPUR: Syndicates are using well-written letters in order to charm the socks off their victims in what is known as love scams, said Bukit Aman Cyber Crimes and Multimedia division investigator Asst Supt Mohd Syafiq Jiniu Abdullah.

According to ASP Mohd Syafiq, who specialises in parcel scam cases, seizure of syndicate materials have shown that "training modules" were used by the scamsters.

"The books contained the names, occupations and ages of victims whom they were engaging on various social networks."

"We also found handwritten scripts in these books which shows how adept they are at sweet-talking their victims," said ASP Mohd Syafiq in an interview.

He explained that parcel scams originated from the "419 scam" in Nigeria a type of fraud with many variations including the advance-fee fraud and black money scam.

The number 419 refers to an article under the Nigerian Criminal Code dealing with fraud. The scammer selects his target and woos victims for weeks or months.

As a token of their love, the scammer would tell the victim that he or she has sent parcels with expensive items inside, either jewellery or large amounts of cash. However, before the package arrives, a bogus customs officer or courier agent would call the victim saying that the package was detained by Customs, and payment was required for its release.

Some scammers would claim they had arrived in Malaysia to marry the victim, but had been detained by authorities and can only be released if certain fees were paid.

Once the money is paid, the scammer would cease all contact with the victim and disappear.

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good:
<http://www.thestar.com.my/News/Nation/2014/02/23/Scammers-learn-language-of-love/>

14 FEB 2014

From AsiaOne.com and The New Paper (Singapore) sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

S'pore woman loses \$210,000 in 'love parcel scam'

MALAYSIA - She met "Denny Crane" on Facebook last July.

When "Denny", who claimed to be Irish, expressed interest in her, they became online lovers.

What the 60-year-old Singaporean woman did not know was that "Denny" was a Nigerian based in Kuala Lumpur and was part of a "love parcel scam".

China Press reported that some time in August, "Denny" sent the woman an e-mail saying that he was sending a parcel containing A£750,000 (S\$1.5 million) to her home in Johor Baru.

She received an e-mail on the same day from a supposed courier saying that the parcel had already arrived at customs and that she would have to pay transaction and insurance fees for the parcel to claim it.

She was given instructions to deposit RM560,000 (S\$210,000) into 12 bank accounts to pay the fees.

She was so taken by "Denny's" sweet talk and romantic advances that she did not suspect that anything was amiss.

When the last transaction was made and the parcel did not arrive, she realised she had been duped.

She lodged a police report on Jan 21.

Busted

Last week, the Malaysian police tracked down the syndicate that "Denny" was part of. They arrested one woman and five other Nigerian men.

They also seized 21 ATM cards, 14 bank passbooks, 10 mobile phones, one passport and one laptop.

The five Nigerians, aged between 26 and 39, are in Malaysia on student visas.

Their role in the scam was to look for victims online and gain their confidence and trust by feigning interest in them.

It is believed that the woman was the mastermind of the syndicate, which has been around for at least two years.

The woman, a 42-year-old Malaysian, admitted to being involved in previous scams. She does not have a stable job and allegedly organises scams like these to make money, China Press reported.

It was also reported that she was romantically involved with the five Nigerian men who are part of the syndicate and that she has 12 children by different men.

The woman, who also acted as a bank account holder for the syndicate, has admitted to receiving between RM1.5 million and RM2 million in transactions.

The police said that the syndicate made about RM7.8 million from the scam during the past two years.

The Star reported that nine other Malaysians, including six women, who were working for the syndicate were also arrested.

It was reported that they received four to five per cent of the total transactions if they let the syndicate use their accounts to launder money.

Past cases of 'love scams'

JUNE 2013

Sixty foreigners, including 49 Nigerians, who were involved in an elaborate love scam were arrested in Malaysia. Their modus operandi was to court women through social media and promise to send them pricey gifts. Then, they would say the items had been seized by customs and needed money to release them.

SEPTEMBER 2012

Nigerian Akibon Michael Mayokun, 33, was arrested in Malaysia over allegations that he swindled a Singaporean woman after romancing her online.

He claimed trial and was acquitted after the prosecution offered no more evidence.

JULY 2012

Two Singaporean women were jailed six and four months for laundering criminal proceeds.

They had allowed their bank accounts to be used by Nigerians who scammed others of money by claiming they had been detained at Changi Airport and needed money for their release.

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good:
<http://news.asiaone.com/news/crime/spore-woman-loses-210000-love-parcel-scam?page=0%2C0>

5 FEB 2014

From SaharaReporters.com sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

N1.3b Fraud: Ajudua Sent To Kirikiri -PM News, Lagos

By Henry Ojelu

Serial fraud kingpin, Fred Ajudua has been remanded in Kirikiri Prison

for allegedly defrauding former Chief of Army Staff, Lt.-Gen. Ishaya Bamaïyi (retd.), of about \$8.395m (about N1.3 billion).

Justice Oluwatoyin Ipaye ordered on Wednesday that he should be remanded in prisons custody following a fresh 13-count charge of fraud brought against him by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC.

The EFCC in the fresh charges dated 14 October, 2013, alleged that Ajudua, along with others still at large, defrauded Gen. Bamaïyi of \$8.387m between November 2004 and June 2005 while in prison.

Ajudua is the only defendant in the fresh charges as others who allegedly committed the offences along with him are said to be at large.

Other suspects said to be on the run, are Alumile Adedeji (a.k.a Ade Bendel), Mr. Kenneth and Princess Hamabon William.

Ajudua, along with other suspects, were said to have defrauded Bamaïyi at the Kirikiri Maximum Prisons, where he and the other fraud suspects were on remand for various crimes.

EFCC claimed that the suspects had fraudulently collected the money from Bamaïyi instalmentally, falsely claiming that the payments represented the professional fees charged by

Chief Afe Babalola (SAN) to handle Bamaïyi's case in court and to facilitate his release from prison.

The anti-graft agency also alleged that Ajudua and others fraudulently claimed that \$1m out of the total money collected from Bamaïyi was for financial assistance for the treatment of Justice Olunmi Oyewole's father. Justice Oyewole was then presiding over Bamaïyi's case in court.

The suspects were said to have told Bamaïyi that Oyewole's father was admitted at Saint Nicholas Hospital in Lagos and the \$1m was meant to assist the judge in treating his father.

When the charges were read to him today, he pleaded not guilty to the allegations.

His bail application was however not heard as the presiding judge adjourned the matter till 20 February, 2014.

Ajudua is also standing trial in another court for allegedly defrauding two Dutch businessmen, Remy Cina and Pierre Vijgen, of \$1.69m (about N270m). The matter has been on since 2003.

Here is the URL of the article, which also includes a picture of Fred Ajudua, for as long as it is good:
<http://saharareporters.com/news-page/n13b-fraud-ajudua-sent-kirikiri-pm-news-lagos>

4 FEB 2014

From The Herald, a Nigerian newspaper, sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

Ibadan student arrested for \$90,000 romance scam, victim dead

By Metro Editor

According to an Economic and Financial Crimes Commission press statement, an undergraduate of the University of Ibadan, 28-year-old Orowo Jesse Omokoh, has been arrested by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission for allegedly obtaining Ninety Thousand Dollars (\$90,000.) from one Mrs. Jette Jacob, an Australian based in Johannesburg, South Africa, in what is known as a romance scam.

The suspect allegedly met the Aussie on a dating site and struck a sizzling romantic affair that necessitated him moving to Johannesburg in 2013 to link up with his lover.

Omokoh allegedly arrived in Johannesburg, South Africa on February 4, 2013, to meet with Jacob who had been in Johannesburg since November 2012. Five days after Omokoh arrived and took up residence with her, Jacob was found dead in her apartment with some of her valuables missing. After the incident, Omokoh reportedly fled South Africa and returned to Nigeria.

The South African Police which is investigating the mysterious death are suspicious that Omokoh has a hand in the demise of Jacob.

On March 15, 2013, the EFCC received a petition from Richard Stanford of Australian Federal Police, asking for help to track Omokoh, alleging that the Nigerian defrauded Jacob to the tune of \$90,000 in a dating scam.

The Commission swung into action almost immediately but the suspected

fraudster had been elusive until a few days ago when he was nabbed. He has already made useful statements while efforts are on to track his accomplices.

The suspect would be arraigned in court as soon as investigation is completed.

Here is the URL of the article, which includes a pic of Omokoh, for as long as it is good:
<http://www.theheraldng.com/ibadan-student-arrested-90000-romance-scam-victim-dead-photo/>

15 JAN 2014

From the San Francisco Chronicle (sfgate.com),
sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

San Jose woman loses \$500,000 in online dating scam

by Henry K. Lee, San Francisco Chronicle

A San Jose woman was conned out of more than \$500,000 by a Nigerian scammer who wooed her on a dating website while posing as a British citizen stuck at sea on a Scottish oil rig, prosecutors said Wednesday as they sounded a warning about an increase in such online rip-offs.

The 66-year-old victim, whose name wasn't released, was targeted on ChristianMingle.com by a man who called her, texted her and sent her flowers before asking her to loan him money to run a business. The impostor used a bogus picture and created a fake website, where he listed the victim's name as a company official, investigators said.

The woman, who is divorced, gave him money from her retirement account and refinanced her home, most recently wiring \$200,000 to a Turkish bank account at his request late last year, authorities said. But she soon realized she had been conned and called Santa Clara County prosecutors, who contacted the bank, said Deputy District Attorney Cherie Bourlard.

When Wisdom Onokpiti, an associate of the suspect, showed up the next day in hopes of withdrawing the money, the bank notified the Turkish National Police, who arrested him. Onokpiti, a Nigerian national who entered Turkey using a fake passport, is being prosecuted for fraud in Turkey, authorities said.

The purported suitor's name wasn't released. Investigators said that man's Skype account and e-mail addresses were later traced to Nigeria.

Henry K. Lee is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer.
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Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good:
<http://www.sfgate.com/crime/article/San-Jose-woman-loses-500-000-in-online-dating-5146414.php>

Here is the URL of another report in this matter from Gawker.com for as long as it is good:
<http://gawker.com/woman-gives-500-000-to-nigerian-scammer-she-met-on-chr-1502978563>

1 JAN 2014

According to private reports received by 419 Coalition from trusted sources, the EFCC has still not recovered even \$1.00 to repatriate in the famous Odiawa case.

Readers will recall that the Odiawa case of a decade ago was one of the few in which the 419er was convicted in Nigeria and went to prison. Restitution was ordered by the Court at that time. However, the Nigerian Government and the EFCC have been unable to recover and repatriate even \$1.00 to the victim as of January 2014.

Yes, you heard that right, - over \$2 million was stolen by this convicted 419er, and the vaunted EFCC, in a decade, could not even find \$1.00 to recover and repatriate to the victim. Neither 419er money, nor real estate, nor anything of any real value could be found. Nothing....

The main in charge of the EFCC's recovery and repatriation effort in this case was Mr. Olaolu Adegbite, who headed up the Advance Fee Fraud section of the EFCC from 2003 until March 2012, when he was promoted to Director of Operations of the EFCC. We're not too sure exactly what factors led to Mr. Adegbite's promotion, but his performance in the recovery and restitution phase of the Odiawa case certainly could not have been among them, given that there were no tangible results to show for his efforts in that regard....

In fact, EFCC looked so long in its fruitless search for Odiawa's tainted assets that he finished up his jail sentence awhile back and has gone his merry way. Guess he is living on air or something though, since according to the EFCC he has no assets to seize to pay restitution

out of.

Let us hope that 2014 will be the victim's lucky year and that the EFCC will see to it that the court ordered restitution actually gets paid.

You know, even in the unlikely event that Odiawa actually does have no assets to seize, the EFCC claims to have something like \$700 million in unclaimed monies recovered from 419ers sitting in escrow someplace.... at 419 Coalition, we say pay the restitution out of That - after all, it is victims' money, not Nigerian government money. So use it to compensate victims - and those with Court Ordered Restitution should be at the top of the list, our view!

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