

Nigeria - [419 Coalition](#) 2015 News on Nigerian Scam / 419 Operations

17 DEC 2015

From The Star, a Malaysian newspaper and news media company, sent in by Ultrascan AGI. Most of the article is not about 419 AFF per se, but it suggests involvement in it, and also references a 419 modus operandi towards the end. So we thought it should be put up:

Police bust Nigerian scam syndicate

KUALA LUMPUR: Wangsa Maju police took down a Nigerian syndicate that intercepted RM1.8mil from a Saudi Arabian businessman who was buying cranes from a South Korean company.

The syndicate that consisted of 10 people is believed to have been operating from within Malaysia for as long as five years and may have targeted other high-value business transactions among foreigners.

"Their method of hijacking a deal was simple, yet hard to detect," said Wangsa Maju OCPD Supt Mohd Roy Suhaimi Sarif, who said the syndicate would create an e-mail account similar to their victim's business partner to intercept their online discussions.

"In this case, they made an e-mail account that was the same as the South Korean company, but they only had the .kr missing at the back of the address. The Saudi Arabian didn't even know he was talking to the syndicate. He didn't suspect anything."

The syndicate hijacked the e-mail thread in September and began arranging for the victim, an oil and gas chief executive officer, to purchase assets to the tune of RM1.8mil.

They then paid a Malaysian woman RM1,000 to register two shell companies with the Securities Commission and to open three bank accounts in the name of the companies. The Saudi Arabian businessman was then directed to wire the sum into these three accounts.

"The businessman only realised he had been tricked when the real South Korean company contacted him to ask why he had not responded to their e-mail. He came here to lodge a police report with us on Dec 9," Supt Mohd Roy said.

The police traced the Malaysian woman who opened the bank accounts and arrested her and a Nigerian man at a bank branch in Sentul on Dec 15.

The police then raided condominiums in Cyberjaya and Sri Putramas, where they arrested nine other foreigners, effectively crippling the international syndicate.

The syndicate members included seven Nigerian men, two Nigerian women and a Filipino woman. The Malaysian woman was freed and would be a witness in the court case, the police said.

"They are aged 30 to 35. They have been here between five and seven years, and may have been running several other scams at the same time," he said.

In another case, Supt Mohd Roy also issued a warning about gangs that prey on mostly expatriates with the promise of better gold and foreign currency exchange rates.

Since October, five people have lost a total of RM2mil to these gangs. They usually use Malaysian women to convince victims of the "special officer" on social media.

He said victims would be offered a special exchange rate for foreign currency or gold, and were asked to withdraw a huge sum of money before meeting the Malaysian women in a public area.

Then the gang members would rob the victim before escaping in rented cars.

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

<http://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2015/12/17/police-bust-nigerian-scam-syndicate-ring-sets-up-email-account-similar-to-victims-and-hijacks-busine/>

17 DEC 2015

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

EFCC Arraigns Businessman for N9.5m Oil Fraud

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, on Thursday, December 17, 2015 arraigned one Oghenemi Michael Morowei, Managing Director, Standard Allied Universal Concept, before Justice Valentine Ashi of the High Court of the FCT, sitting in Apo, Abuja on a nine-count charge bordering on obtaining money by false pretence.

The suspect is being prosecuted for allegedly conspiring with other members of an oil syndicate to sell a consignment of crude oil from the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, NNPC, to Bascom Energy Limited.

One of the counts reads: "That you, Oghenemi Michael Morowei(a.k.a. Fubara Dan Jumbo, Boma Harry, Peterson Harry and Elder Dan Jumbo) trading under the name and style of Standard Allied Universal Concepts, George Olotu(at large), Bowoto Sunny Ola(at large) and Engr. Abiye Jumbo (at large) between 7th March, 2014 and 19th March, 2014 at Abuja within the jurisdiction of the High Court of the Federal Capital Territory did with intent to defraud obtain the sum of N8,000,000(Eight Million Naira only) from Bascom Energy Limited under the false pretence that same was payment for crude oil product which pretence you knew to be false."

Another count reads: "That you, Oghenemi Michael Morowei(a.k.a. Fubara Dan Jumbo, Boma Harry, Peterson Harry and Elder Dan Jumbo) trading under the name and style of Standard Allied Universal Concepts, George Olotu (at large), Bowoto Sunny Ola(at large) and Engr. Abiye Jumbo(at large) on the 11th of February, 2014 at Abuja within the jurisdiction of the High Court of the Federal Capital Territory did with intent to defraud obtain the sum of N1,500,000(One Million Five Hundred Thousand Naira) from one Bascom Energy Limited under the false pretence that same was payment for crude oil product which pretence you knew to be false."

The accused person pleaded not guilty to all the charges when they were read to him.

Following his plea, the defence counsel, Alex Akunebu, moved the application for bail on behalf of his client and assured the court that he (the accused person) would not jump bail.

However, prosecution counsel, Cosmos Ugwo, urged the court to refuse the application.

Justice Ashi however granted the accused person bail in the sum of N50m with two sureties in like sum.

The sureties, who must be resident within the jurisdiction of the court, must produce certified evidence of ownership of landed property and must always produce the accused person in court in subsequent proceedings, failing which they would be liable to pay the sum of N250m each.

The case has been adjourned to February 25, 2016 for commencement of trial.

Here is the URL of the press release, which includes a photo, for as long as it is good:

<https://efccnigeria.org/efcc/index.php/news/1603-efcc-arraigns-businessman-for-n9-5m-oil-fraud>

15 DEC 2015

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

Two Docked for Internet Fraud

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, on Tuesday December 15, 2015, arraigned Aigbe Joseph (alias Anthony Styler Malan) and Dennis Igbino (aka David Clark, Engr. Phil Anderson, Engr. Tim Hilton, Engr. Williams Clark) before Justice A. M Liman of the Federal High Court, sitting in Benin, Edo State on separate count charges bordering on Internet fraud and obtaining money by false pretence.

Joseph and Dennis were arrested in Benin City, Edo State following intelligence report on their involvement in internet scams. Laptop computers and phones were recovered from their homes during a search by EFCC operatives.

In his confessional statement, Joseph said he had been involved in several internet fraud and collected the sum of (\$50,000) Fifty Thousand United State Dollars from one Destiny, an America citizen. He stated further that he used part of the money to buy a Toyota Camry car, and also rented an apartment.

Dennis, the second defendant, revealed that he chats with foreign women on social media platforms (facebook/yahoo mail) while posing as a white Civil Engineer resident in London.

Joseph and Dennis pleaded not guilty to the two and four counts of

fraud preferred against them, respectively.

One of the counts reads, "that you Aigbe A. Joseph, sometime between 2014 and 2015 in Benin City, Edo State within the jurisdiction of this Honorable court did with intent to defraud attempt to obtain the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars from Savita Shamsunder as Anthony Styler Malan, that the money is for your tax clearance for a construction job in France, facts which you knew or ought to know are false and thereby committed an offence contrary to Section 1 (1) (b) and read together with Section 9 (2) both of the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Fraud Related Offences Act, 2006 and Punishable under Section 1 (3) of the same Act:".

Justice Liman, granted the defendants bail in the sum of N1million each and one surety in like sum. Surety must have also have landed property within the jurisdiction of the honorable court.

The matter has adjourned to February 17 and 18, 2016 for the commencement of trial.

Here is the URL of the press release, which includes a photo, for as long as it is good:
<https://efccnigeria.org/efcc/index.php/news/1601-two-docked-for-internet-fraud>

20 NOV 2015
From the Nigerian Economic and Financial Crime
Commission (EFCC) website:

\$4m Fraud: Suspect's Arraignment Moved to November 30

The arraignment of suspected fraudster, Idowu Olarenwaju, alias Capt Anthony Abel Saramoh, has been adjourned to November 30, 2015. Olarenwaju and his accomplice, Joe Onwudimowei, were to be arraigned before a Federal High Court sitting in Port Harcourt, Rivers State today but could not take their plea as their counsel A.Adedipe pleaded for time to study the twenty-two count information brought against the accused persons by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC.

Though prosecution counsel, Gabriel Edozor prayed the court to allow the accused person take their plea, contending that they may not be present to take their plea if allowed to go without sureties, Justice U.N Agomoh adjourned the matter to 30th November, 2015 for arraignment.

Olarenwaju was arrested by operatives of the EFCC for defrauding an American Citizen of the sum of Four Million dollar (\$4,000,000) through his company, Total Intership Nigeria Limited.

The heist was earned through a phony crude oil contracts with the victim, wiring the said amount into the account of Total Intership Nigeria Limited ostensibly for the supply of crude oil. The bubble burst after the victim was left clutching the air, in an exasperating wait that ended with a petition to the EFCC.

Onwudimowei, who operates the account of Total Intership Nigeria Limited with Guaranty Trust Bank (GTB) where the proceeds of the said fake contract was deposited, was arrested on 18th June, 2015 and upon interrogation, fingered Idowu Olanrewaju and one Otunba Yemi Osho as the people he handed over all monies that passed through the account.

On the 19th of June, 2015, the duo of Idowu Olanrewaju and Yemi Osho were arrested following a dawn raid on their homes by operatives of the EFCC.

According to Onwudimowei, Olanrewaju sometime in 2010, instructed him to withdraw the sum of Three Million, Five Hundred Thousand Naira (N3, 500,000.00) for Chief Yemi Osho. Osho, he claimed, in turn handed over the money to two people sent to him by Olarenwaju.

This singular involvement of Osho was what made Olanrewaju confess to the fraud as he had initially denied knowing Onwudimowei. When Olanrewaju was confronted with the testimony of Osho, sources at the EFCC disclosed that he was speechless and began to plead for mercy.

Here is the URL of the press release, which includes photos, for as long as it is good:
<https://efccnigeria.org/efcc/index.php/news/1560-4m-fraud-suspects-arraignment-moved-to-november-30>

419 Coalition comment: A promising ending for Director Lamorde's tenure and a good start for that of Director Magu.

However, we'd like to know where the stolen \$4 million and/or assets purchased with it are, and how soon significant amounts of monies will be recovered and repatriated to the victim.

While arresting, convicting, and incarcerating 419ers is good, stripping them of their assets, liquidating them, and repatriating monies to their

victims is also a requirement of effective counter-419 operations. It is necessary to convince current and potential 419ers that Crime Does Not Pay.

15 NOV 2015

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

Internet Fraudster Bags Two Years Jail Term

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC on November 15, 2015 secured the conviction of an internet fraudster, Egbeniyi Oluwafemi (a.k.a Raymond Morrison, Mavis Mar and Markus Fred), who was sentenced to two years imprisonment by Justice A.M Liman of the Federal High Court, Benin, Edo State.

The convict who was first arraigned on February 5, 2013 for offences bordering on internet scam and obtaining money by false pretense to the tune of 200 Euros from one Rita, a German citizen, was pronounced guilty on counts 1 and 3 of the 3-count charge and sentenced to one year imprisonment each on both counts.

Oluwafemi was arrested on January 18, 2013 by officers of the 4 Brigade/ Sector 1, OP PULO SHIELD, Nigeria Army, and handed over to the EFCC on January 23, 2013 for further investigation and prosecution.

One of the counts reads, "that you, Egbeniyi Oluwafemi (alias Raymond Morrison, Mavis Mar and Markus Fred) on or about the 10th of June 2012 in Benin City, Edo State within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court did conspire to commit felony to wit: Obtaining Money by False Pretense and thereby committed an offence contrary to Section 8(a) of the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Fraud Related Offences Act, 2006 and punishable under Section 1(3) of the same Act".

Here is the URL of the press release for as long as it is good:

<https://efccnigeria.org/efcc/index.php/news/1602-internet-fraudster-bags-two-years-jail-term>

12 NOV 2015

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

EFCC Arraigns Man for 1500USD Fraud

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, on November 12, 2015 arraigned one Emmanuel Eromosele (alias Bryan Perry) before Justice P.I. Ajoku of the Federal High Court sitting in Benin on a 3-Count charge bordering on fraud to the tune of One Thousand, Five Hundred United States Dollars (1500 USD).

Eromosele allegedly defrauded one James Sindelar in the United Kingdom through Western Union Money Transfer of the said sum while answering the name Bryan Perry and parading himself as a barrister, waiting to be conferred with a Senior Advocate of Nigeria, SAN.

The accused person, allegedly sent fraudulent messages to inbox folder of the victim, "I Need Your Help" and to other unsuspecting foreign nationals seeking help and promising unfulfilled agreement for personal benefits before the law caught up with him.

Count one reads:

"That you Emmanuel Eromosele and others at large on or before the 20th of July 2015 in Benin City, Edo State within the Jurisdiction of this Honourable Court, with intent did conspired to commit felony to wit: Obtain Money by False Pretence and Thereby committed an Offence contrary to Section 8 (a) of the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Related Offences Act, 2006 and punishable under Section 1(3) of the same Act".

Another count reads:

"That you Emmanuel Eromosele Akhalu (alias Bryan Perry) and others now at large on or about the 20th of July 2015 in Benin City, Edo State within the Jurisdiction of this Honourable Court, did obtained the sum of 1500 U.S Dollars from James Sindelar 'm' in the United Kingdom through Western Union Money Transfer under the false pretence that you are a Barrister soon to be conferred Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN), a pretext you knew to be false and thereby committed an offence contrary to section 1 (1) (a) of the Advance Fee Fraud and other Fraud Related Offences Act 2006 and punishable under section 1 (3) of the same Act".

In view of his plea, counsel to EFCC, Ramiah Ikhanaede asked the court to fix a date for trial to commence and urged the court to remand the accused in prison custody.

However, the defense counsel, Charity Mguobarueghian prayed the court to admit the accused person to bail adding that, the alleged offence is bail able.

Justice Ajoku adjourned to January 27, 2016 for the hearing of bail application and ordered the accused person to be remanded in prison custody.

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

<https://efccnigeria.org/efcc/index.php/news/1551-efcc-arraigns-man-for-1500usd-fraud>

10 NOV 2015

From Elombah.com an excellent online Nigerian news and commentary site:

Meet the new EFCC Chairman, the man Ibrahim Magu

Ibrahim Magu, an assistant commissioner of police, was one of the early recruits into the anti-graft agency by its pioneer chairman Malam Nuhu Ribadu.

His most recent assignment was as member of the committee set up by the Buhari administration to probe the procurement of arms in the Armed Forces from 2007 to date.

Because of his perceived incorruptible posture, he was made the head of the sensitive Economic Governance Unit (EGU), which handles investigations of senior public officials.

As head of the EGU, some of the investigations he spearheaded included the alleged involvement of Senate President Bukola Saraki in the collapse of Societe Generale Bank of Nigeria.

He also played a role in the investigation and eventual jailing of former managing director, the Bank of the North, Shettima Mohammed Bulama, said to be his own brother-in-law

His other role involved James Ibori, former Governor of Delta State, who is serving jail term in United Kingdom for money laundering.

He also played a role in the investigation and eventual jailing of former managing director of the Bank of the North, Shettima Mohammed Bulama, said to be his own brother-in-law.

After Ribadu was removed in controversial circumstance by former President Umaru Musa Yar'adua, Magu was also targeted for redeployment.

Farida Waziri, who took over in 2008, was said to be uncomfortable with his presence over issues surrounding loyalty.

Magu's troubles peaked when he was accused of illegally keeping case files of top politicians being investigated by the commission in August 2008.

His house in Abuja was searched and his property, including a laptop computer with sensitive files, was carted away by officials of the EFCC at the behest of Mrs. Waziri.

Redeployed to the police after days of detention with nothing incriminating found against him, Magu was later suspended from the force, without salaries for several months.

But Magu was brought back to EFCC by Lamorde after he was confirmed as substantive EFCC boss in 2012.

Here is the URL of the article, which also includes a photo of Ibrahim Magu, for as long as it is good:

<http://elombah.com/index.php/reports/2350-meet-the-new-efcc-chairman-the-man-ibrahim-magu>

419 Coalition Note: 419 Coalition would like to thank Mr. Lamorde, the outgoing Director of the EFCC for his many years of service. He worked with us on several cases, including the famous Ghasemi case, and we appreciated his assistance in those, and other, matters.

We would also appreciate it if the incoming Director, Mr. Magu, redoubles EFCC counter-419 efforts, especially in the area of recovery and repatriation of 419ed funds to the victims of the crime.

22 OCT 2015

From 680 NEWS, a Toronto, Canada radio station, sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

Toronto widow out \$600K in romance scam, police charge

A 63-year-old Toronto widow was involved in a "romance scam" in 2014 where she was allegedly defrauded of \$609,000, police said on Thursday.

Toronto police said their investigation centres around the woman, who believed she was in a relationship with someone she met on a dating website.

"She was informed there was an emergency in some form and assistance was needed," said Toronto Detective Constable Mike Kelly. "In general there is some form of difficulty in being together ... a form of crisis."

She was encouraged to pass along money on a false pretence, police allege.

The woman met the man face-to-face, gave him money in the form of cash and also wired money to him from March to June 2014.

Police said she was in a vulnerable state and that most people targeted are lonely.

"[The] woman was involved with a fictional character who doesn't exist," said police.

The man identified himself under the alias of Martin Acker or Martins Acker Jr., and claimed to be a representative of the United Nations. He had had a forged UN identification that dated as far back as 2011. Akohomen Ighedoise, 41, forged United Nations identification. Police believe there may be other victims.

Police said that the woman went to police with the assistance of her family.

"The net effect of this was economically devastating to her," Kelly said. "We visited her shortly in the wintertime at her home and the heat was barely on, she was wearing mittens and a hat inside her home."

Kelly said that when someone asks to "send money but keep it real quiet," that it should be a sign that something is wrong.

"These situations ... they are occurring in the city on a regular occurrence," he said.

Toronto investigators are working with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and United States Postal Inspection Service on this investigation.

Kelly said there is not one specific plotline, but that the point is always the same: to get the victim to pass them money. And it can be done through a romance scam or lottery scam.

Police have linked the accused to a group called the Neo Black movement and believe others are involved.

The Neo Black movement, also known as The Black Axe, have intimidated and exerted influence on Nigerian people within the Greater Toronto Area.

"This is a very secretive organization," said Detective Constable Tim Tortter.

He added that the group is involved in a wide breadth of crimes including street-level violence and fraud, and that "beating" and "weapons" were used for intimidation in Toronto.

Akohomen Ighedoise, 41, of Toronto has been charged with laundering the proceeds of crime, fraud over \$5,000 and participating in a criminal organization. Police said he is a member of the Neo-Black Movement and he was known as the bookkeeper.

Ikechukwu Amadi, 34, of Mississauga and Lineo Molefe, 31 of Toronto were arrested and charged in relation to the romance scam with laundering the proceeds of crime and fraud over \$5,000.

The FBI indicted six people involved in wire fraud and money laundering conspiracy, of those six was Ighedoise and Amadi.

Detective Sgt. Ian Nichol said these offences are committed over the internet and because of this, borders are meaningless to law enforcements.

Police are asking people to stay in close contact with loved ones, especially if they are lonely or vulnerable.

Anyone with information is being asked to contact police.

Here is the URL of the article, which contains a photo and a video clip, for as long as it is good:

<http://www.680news.com/2015/10/22/toronto-widow-falls-prey-to-romance-scam-gives-away-600k-allege-police/>

Here are additional URLs covering this story,
courtesy of Ultrascan AGI:

<http://www.thestar.com/news/crime/2015/10/22/police-fbi-reveal-details-of-65b-money-laundering.html>

<http://www.torontosun.com/2015/10/22/toronto-romance-scam-linked-to-global-fraud-case>

<http://globalnews.ca/news/2292177/toronto-police-to-provide-update-on-5-billion-money-laundering-case/>

<http://toronto.ctvnews.ca/toronto-romance-scam-linked-to-5-billion-fbi-fraud-investigation-1.2622093>

<http://www.insidetoronto.com/news-story/5973750-toronto-police-charge-three-men-in-connection-with-defrauding-woman-in-romance-scam/>

<http://www.mississauga.com/news-story/5973365-video-mississauga-man-among-three-charged-in-money-laundering-romance-scam-and-5-billion-wire-fr/>

<http://www.citynews.ca/2015/10/22/three-arrested-in-fraud-scheme-with-ties-to-violent-nigerian-group-police/>

16 OCT 2015

From the Nigerian Economic and Financial Crimes
Commission website:

\$330,000 Scam: Court Resumes Trial of Maurice Ibekwe's Accomplice

Justice Oluwatoyin Ipaye of the Lagos High Court, sitting in Ikeja, has begun proceedings into the trial of Chief Augunos Okoro, an accomplice of late Morris Ibekwe, implicated in a \$330,000(Three Hundred And Thirty Thousand United States Dollars) and DM75,000 (Seventy Five Thousand Deutschmark) scam.

Okoro, owner of Yolk Hotel in Ire-Akari Estate, Isolo, Lagos, allegedly connived with late Ibekwe to defraud a German, Mr Klaus Munch, in 1992. Pretending to be an official of the Central Bank of Nigeria, Federal Ministry of Finance, Transport and Aviation, he lured Munch into a fictitious contract of supply of hard and software equipment for a phony Abuja International Airport.

Okoro put the value of the contract at \$300 million and demanded for a percentage of the contract amounting to \$330,000, which was paid by Munch. Trial of the case commenced in 2003 before Justice J.O Oyewole of the Lagos High Court, but suffered several adjournments till the recent elevation of justice Oyewole to the Court of Appeal. The case was thereafter reassigned to Justice Ipaye who has now resumed sitting over it.

At the resumed trial of the matter on Thursday, October 15, prosecution counsel, Adeniyi Adebisi told the court that he was ready with his witnesses but Justice Ipaye adjourned proceedings to November 24 and 26, 2015.

Okoro is facing a 38- count charge bordering on conspiracy, obtaining money by false presence; forgery and uttering.

Here is the URL of the press release, which includes a photo,
for as long as it is good:

<https://efccnigeria.org/efcc/index.php/news/1511-330-000-scam-court-resumes-trial-of-maurice-ibekwe-s-accomplice>

14 OCT 2015

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

EFCC Arraigns Impostor for N10m Scam

A suspected fraudster and member of a syndicate, Edward Abiodun, was on Wednesday, October 14, 2015 arraigned by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, before Justice Beatrice Iliya of Gombe State High Court, Gombe, Gombe on a two-count charge bordering on conspiracy, impersonation and obtaining money by false pretense.

The accused person and his accomplices, Murtala Bello and Esther Momoh(who are now at large), had allegedly claimed to be staff members of the EFCC, Abuja office, in order to dupe one Umar Bello.

The complainant alleged that Bello had, on March 13, 2015, phoned him, assuring him that the syndicate could 'kill' the purported petition written against him, if he could pay the sum of N10 million(Ten Million Naira).

Consequently, Bello was said to have sent the phone number of Momoh who claimed to be a Principal Detective Superintendent, PDS, with EFCC to the victim for further discussion on how the money could be paid to them.

The complainant also alleged that the suspects offered to collect N300,000(Three Hundred Thousand Naira) from him when he could not raise the initial N10million (Ten Million Naira).

He further said that one 'Laolu Adegbite', who claimed to be the officer handling his purported case, sent an SMS to him on March 19, 2015, summoning him to appear before the Commission on March 23, 2015.

According to him, owing to the persistent threat by members of the syndicate, he paid the sum of N50,000(Fifty Thousand Naira) into Abiodun's Diamond bank account number: 0044213102, which was sent to him by Momoh on March 25, 2015.

Worried by the persistent threat from the syndicate over the balance of N250,000(Two Hundred and Fifty Thousand Naira), the victim petitioned the EFCC, which swung into action and eventually arrested the accused person.

Count two of the charge reads: "That you, Edward Abiodun and Murtala Bello, Esther Momoh, (now at large) sometimes in March, 2015 at Gombe, Gombe State which is within jurisdiction of this Honorable Court with the intent to defraud did fraudulently obtained the sum of Fifty Thousand Naira (N50000.00) only from one Umar Bello through your Diamond bank Account number 0044213102 which sum you collected under a false pretence. The said sum is to be used to facilitate his investigation at Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Abuja and you never did, thereby you committed an offence contrary to section 1(1) and (b) and punishable under section 1(3) of the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Related Offences Act, 2006."

The accused person pleaded not guilty when the charge was read to him.

In view of his plea, the prosecution counsel, Zarami Muhammad, asked for a trial date and prayed the court to remand the accused person in prison custody.

The defense counsel, Micheal Ofoma, did not oppose the prayer for a trial date by the prosecution counsel.

After listening to both counsel, Justice Iliya adjourned the matter to October 26, 2015 for hearing of bail application and ordered that the accused person be remanded in prison custody.

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

<https://efccnigeria.org/efcc/index.php/news/1510-efcc-arraigns-impostor-for-n10m-scam>

12 OCT 2015

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

EFCC to Arraign Suspected Fraudster for \$267,000 Scam

A suspected internet fraudster, Akintunde Vincent Abiodun, has been quizzed by operatives of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, for allegedly defrauding a New Zealand woman the sum of \$267,000 (Two Hundred and Sixty Seven Thousand New Zealand Dollars Only).

Akintunde, a 37-year-old HND holder from Federal Polytechnic Auchi, Edo State, is said to have defrauded the victim of the said amount by claiming to be Christopher Williams from United Kingdom.

According to the complainant, she met Akintunde in a dating site on the internet and allegedly fell in love with him. She said Akintunde started collecting money from her after he claimed to be in possession of gemstone worth \$18,050,000 (Eighteen Million and Fifty Thousand Dollars), which he purportedly inherited from his father.

She further said, Akintunde hoodwinked her into believing that he was coming to New Zealand to settle down with her.

She alleged that the money she sent to the suspect were received in Malaysia and Nigeria by persons bearing Norisha, Jalan Klan, and Mohammed Haizam Bin Fauzin. All of them claimed to be friends of Akintunde.

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

Here is the URL of the new release, which includes a photo, for as long as it is good:

<https://efccnigeria.org/efcc/index.php/news/1499-efcc-to-arraign-suspected-fraudster-for-267-000-scam>

8 OCT 2015

From the Premium Times, a Nigerian newspaper:

U.S. indicts 9 Nigerians Over Online Romance Fraud

by Adebayo Hassan

A United States federal grand jury in the district of Maryland has indicted nine Nigerians over allegations that they conspired to defraud elderly victims of millions of dollars.

The Nigerians are accused of engaging in fraudulent online romantic relationships and risk 20 years in jail, a statement by the U.S. Department of Justice said.

According to the statement, the accused are Gbenga Ogundele, Mukhtar Haruna, Victor Oloyede, Olusegun Ogunseye, Babatunde Popoola, Adeyinka Awolaja, Mojisola Popoola, Olusola Ola, Victor Oloyede and Olufemi Williams.

Except Mr. Haruna who is based in Lagos, Nigeria, others live in the US are all aged over 40, apart from Mr. William who is 26.

While the statement said only Mr. Haruna was yet to be arrested, it confirmed the arrests of the remaining alleged internet fraudsters on September 30, same day they appeared before a federal court in Greenbelt and Illinois.

Their indictment, announced by United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein and Special Agent in Charge Kevin Perkins of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, has 10-count charges of crimes, allegedly committed between January 2011 and May 18, 2015.

They were accused of searching "online dating websites to initiate romantic relationships with elderly male and female individuals."

"They phoned, emailed, texted and used internet chat messenger services to form romantic relationships with the victims, who lived in Maryland and around the country," the Department of Justice said.

The indictment further alleged that the accused used a number of false stories and promises to convince the victims to provide money to the conspirators, including fake hospital bills, plane trips to visit the victims, problems with overseas businesses and foreign taxes.

The conspirators allegedly opened bank accounts in order to receive millions of dollars from the victims.

The indictment also alleged numerous deposits from several victims into bank accounts controlled by the defendants, or checks received from the victims, ranging in individual amounts from \$1,720 to \$30,000.

"All of the defendants face a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison for conspiring to commit wire fraud, and for conspiring to commit money laundering," the Justice Department said.

Additionally, it said that, "all of the defendants except for Mojisola Popoola face a mandatory minimum sentence of two years in prison to be served consecutive to any other sentence for aggravated identity theft, arising from the alleged use of a victim's name, bank account number or driver's license in furtherance of the fraud scheme."

"An indictment is not a finding of guilt. An individual charged by indictment is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty at some later criminal proceedings."

The indictment and arraignment of Nigerians, the Justice Department said, "is part of the efforts undertaken in connection with the President's Financial Fraud Enforcement Task Force".

With more than 20 federal agencies, 94 U.S. attorneys' offices, and state and local partners, the task force was established to "wage an aggressive, coordinated and proactive effort to investigate and prosecute financial crimes".

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

<http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/191241-u-s-indicts-9-nigerians-over-online-romance-fraud.html>

29 SEP 2015

We happened to catch a new episode of the Dr. Phil Show (a US talk/help show) today, that concerned Romance 419 at a high level, which was quite good. It was titled "My Mom is Worth Millions - is her Husband a Catch or "Catfish?"" An online search

should turn up info on the show, and it will likely also be available on services like Hulu, Netflix, etc.

23 SEP 2015

From the Nigerian government Economic and Financial Crime Commission site (EFCC):

EFCC Arraigns Man for N4.5m Love Scam

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, on September 21, 2015 arraigned one Amadi Jude before Justice Emmanuel Obile of the Federal High Court Calabar, Cross River State on a 12-count charge bordering on obtaining money by false pretence.

Amadi who goes by different pseudo names – Richard Smith, Mike Anderson, Richard Darwin, Jackson Miller, and Morgan Abela, is alleged to have collected N4,544,000 from a Swedish national, and promised to marry her.

Count one reads: "That you, Amadi Jude Junior (alias Richard Smith, Mike Anderson, Richard Darwin, Jackson Miller, Morgan Abela) 'm', John Ikechukwu Efulghi (at large), and Farouk (at large), between May 2014 and January 2015 in Calabar, Cross River State, within the jurisdiction of this honourable court did conspire among yourselves to commit felony with it: obtaining money by false pretence and thereby committed an offence contrary to section 8 (a) of the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Fraud Related Offences Act, 2006 and punishable under section 1 (3) of the same act."

The accused person pleaded not guilty to all the charges.

Justice Obile, adjourned till October 12, 2015 and ordered the accused person be remanded in prison custody.

Here is the URL of the news release, which contains a photo, for as long as it is good:
<https://efccnigeria.org/efcc/index.php/news/1486-efcc-arraigns-man-for-n4-5m-love-scam>

14 SEP 2015

From BellaNaija.com, a Nigerian oriented website.

While this is not a strictly 419 new item, we feel that this will affect the 419ers as well as the grafters, embezzlers, etc. Therefore we decided that the article should be posted here, as anything that makes things more difficult for the 419ers is fine by 419 Coalition, of course. Here is the article:

BellaNaija can confirm that banks around the world have commenced closing accounts held by Nigerians.

If you may recall, in May 2015, news filtered through social media that accounts of Nigerians in the UAE specifically in Dubai had been closed.

At the time, no official reason was given, however sources at the Dubai Financial Services Authority (DFSA) disclosed that this was as a result of Dubai's efforts to curb money laundering.

A growing Nigerians with accounts in the United Kingdom, United States and Canada have reported their accounts being closed without any clear explanation from the banks. Many have received letters stating that the banks have decided to close their accounts as they reserve the right to do so based on bank/client agreements. Letter packages have included cheques amounting to the closing balance and/or instructions on how to retrieve their cash.

While there is no clear and official reason for this exercise, sources have revealed that this is as a result of ongoing anti-money laundering discussions between the Nigeria's Buhari-led government and their international counterparts.

In addition, countries around the world are clamping down on banks which aid money laundering by imposing huge fines and penalties. Therefore, the banks are working overtime to "clean up their acts". In June 2015, it was revealed that HSBC paid over \$43million in Geneva to settle a money laundering case.

Please note that based on information received so far, while no clear pattern for account closing selection has been revealed; Affected parties have excluded those who have a clear and defined source of the funds in the account. For example, work permit holders with salaries remitted into their accounts or current students with fees and reasonable pocket money paid into their accounts have not been affected so far.

However, Nigerians who transfer money from their Nigerian accounts to foreign accounts, students with unexplained large balances and Nigerians who made cash deposits into their accounts abroad have been affected so far.

BN will keep you updated on developments. If you have a foreign account, we encourage you to check the status as soon as possible and continue to monitor your accounts as this is an ongoing exercise.

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

<http://www.bellanaija.com/2015/09/14/exclusive-banks-around-the-world-begin-closing-nigerians-accounts/>

3 SEP 2015

From the Vanguard, a Nigerian newspaper:

How Nigerian conmen lived large in London

Two London-based Nigerian conmen, Godwin Nwaofor and Frank Onyechonam involved in defrauding mainly American pensioners, informing them they had won the Australian Lottery, through bogus letters, have met their Waterloo.

Daily Mail reports that Nwaofor who had cheated pensioners out of £5m life savings had a 'suckers list' of target victims to send his bogus letters to. The letters were sent by a 'lottery agent' targeting mainly American pensioners, informing them they had won a life-changing prize and demanding 'activation fees' to release their cash.

He received around UK pounds 1 million from the scam and blew the money on luxury cars, gold jewellery and expensive champagne at top nightclubs in London.

However, Nwaofor helped Onyechonam, who was nicknamed 'Fizzy' for his love of vintage champagne and jailed for eight years last year, after he was exposed as the chief player in the scam.

Judge Richard Hone QC however, today, had little sympathy for Nwaofor, who broke down in tears at Central Criminal Court as he was jailed for seven years.

The Judge said the evidence in the case, at Central Criminal Court, against Nwaofor was 'overwhelming' and showed him to be a proven liar.

"You have a tendency to be dishonest in your dealings with landlords, agencies, the police, HMRC, and car hire firms. You also moved addresses regularly to ensure your whereabouts remained a mystery," he said.

Nwaofor moved to the UK in January 2006 from Nigeria and soon married a German citizen. He has two children with her, aged six and six-months-old. Nwaofor lived in Camberell Green, South London.

One victim, a 76-year-old woman, who believed she had won \$1.85m, tried to track down Nwaofor after the FBI told her she had fallen victim to a scam.

She flew to the UK and went to the address she had for Nwaofor, but found that he had already moved on to another address.

Nwaofor, found guilty of conspiracy to defraud, converting criminal property, and acquisition of criminal property, will serve half his sentence in prison and the remaining part on licence. He will also now face confiscation proceeds.

Onyechonam's opulence

However, Police identified 406 victims from two notebooks found at Onyechonam's Canary Wharf penthouse, in London when he was arrested.

They seized Louis Vuitton shoes, Gucci handbags, a collection of expensive watches and dozens of designer shoes, as well as 5,000 pictures of Onyechonam flaunting his wealth at exclusive upmarket venues including the Guvnor Bar in Docklands, east London.

Onyechonam, of Canning Town, east London, was found guilty of conspiracy to defraud between January 2005 and December 2012.

There was also evidence of extensive communication with Lagos resident, Ese Orogun, nicknamed the 'chairman', who is thought to be the global mastermind of the fraud.

Orogun reportedly lives in a private gated community, and is a 'celebrity' in the Nigerian capital and drives multiple supercars, including a Maserati and a Porsche.

Detectives fear the scale of the fraud could even mushroom to UK Pounds 30 million if all the details discovered in notebooks and emails can be traced to victims.

Here is the URL of the article, which includes several photos, for as long as it is good:
<http://www.vanguardngr.com/2015/09/how-nigerian-conmen-lived-large-in-london/>

2 SEP 2015
From the Nigerian Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) website:

EFCC Returns 10,540 Euros to Polish Victim of Love Scam

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, has recovered and returned the sum of 10,540 Euros to a Polish victim of Internet love scam. The victim, simply identified as Jamina, was allegedly duped 40,000 Euros by the suspect, Gabriel Oseremen Xavi who operates a fake Facebook account with the name, Collins Page.

The suspect was traced to Benin City, Edo State, where he was arrested by EFCC operatives following a petition by the victim.

Speaking on Wednesday, September 2, 2015 at the Belgium Embassy, Abuja during the presentation of the sum of 10,540 Euro recovered from the suspected Internet fraudster, Ibrahim Lamorde, Chairman of EFCC, charged Western diplomats to sensitize their citizens against Internet love scam.

Lamorde, who also urged them to focus more on lonely elderly people who have been found to be easy prey, added that "All the assets acquired by the suspect from the proceeds of the crime will be disposed off at the conclusion of trial, and the money returned to the victim."

The high point of the occasion was the presentation of the money to the Belgian Ambassador, Mr. Stephane De Loecker and his Polish counterpart, Mr. Andrzej Dycha, by Lamorde.

Expressing his gratitude, De Loecker, thanked the Nigerian government as well as the EFCC for what he described as 'its commitment to curbing Internet scams'. He remarked that it was his first time of witnessing the restitution of a victim of scam by any law enforcement agency and urged the EFCC not to rest on her oars.

The envoy assured that the Belgian government would carry out rigorous campaigns to sensitize its citizens on the dangers of love scam.

In his remarks, Dycha, who also expressed his gratitude, extended invitation to the EFCC to be part of the meeting of association of EU Consuls to further "advise and sensitize them on Internet scam."

The presentation was witnessed by the Deputy Head of Mission, Belgian Consulate, Veronique Bernad; Polish Consul, Jakub Budohoski, and EFCC officials.

Here is the URL of the press release. for as long as it is good:
<https://efccnigeria.org/efcc/index.php/news/1468-efcc-returns-10-540-euros-to-polish-victim-of-love-scam>

419 Coalition comment: This is the kind of news that we love to report. However, we wonder where the remaining 30,000 Euros are, and when they will be recovered and repatriated to the victim. If EFCC wants to make a believer out of us in terms of its effectiveness in recovery and repatriation of 419ed monies, a good first step would be to recover and repatriate the roughly \$2 million in restitution ordered by the Court in the famous, decade old, Odiawa case. That will get our attention - and that of the counter-419 community as a whole - for sure.

1 SEP 2015
From the Times of India:

3 Nigerians among six held in Hyderabad for cheating 2 men

HYDERABAD: Central Crime Station (CCS) sleuths have arrested six persons, including three Nigerians, who duped two city-based businessmen to the tune of Rs 3.6 lakh by luring them with an offer to invest \$ 1 lakh in hotel business in the city.

Police have arrested Samadan Laxman Mali, 21, Rahul Dilip Kharde, 25, from Dombivli, Thane, Mahesh Damodar Rajput, 36, of Thane East, three Nigerians from Mumbai, Onuoha Nnanna Francis, 34, Valentine O Anumaka, 28, and Eze Victor, 35.

On August 28, one Raju Jembiya, 24, a businessman from Parsigutta, lodged a complaint with the CCS sleuths alleging that he and his friend C Sadashiva were duped by one Terry Joseph of Nigeria along

with his associates to the tune of Rs 3.6 lakh.

"Terry Joseph, who by posing as a restaurant owner in Nigeria, befriended Sadashiva six months ago over Facebook and then expressed his willingness to invest Rs 1 lakh US dollars in restaurant business in India. When Sadashiva agreed to join the business venture of Terry, the latter responded saying that he had sent a box to India with 1 lakh US dollars and told Sadashiva to collect it in June, 2015," CCS joint commissioner T Prabhakar Rao said.

Later, one Daniel called Sadashiva introducing himself as the custodian of the cash parcel in Mumbai and asked him to deposit Rs 1.6 lakh as customs clearance charges in various bank accounts given by him. After making the payment, Sadashiva went to Mumbai to receive the box and, on the directions of Terry, he met one agent Mahesh Damodar Rajput, who collected Rs 2 lakh cash from him to hand over the box and then switched off his phone. Subsequently, the victims lodged a complaint with police and a special team of the CCS went to Thane by tracking beneficiary bank account details and cell phone details of the culprits.

With the help of the Thane police, the CCS team arrested the six accused from various places in Mumbai on Tuesday and brought them to the city on a PT warrant on Monday. The arrested were remanded in judicial custody, but the main accused Terry was yet to be nabbed.

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good
<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/3-Nigerians-among-six-held-in-Hyderabad-for-cheating-2-men/articleshow/48752538.cms>

15 AUG 2015

From the Washington Post blog section, sent in by Ultrascan AGI,
and with some comments by 419 Coalition following the article:

Wow! This Nigerian prince would like to wire you 75 million dollars!!

By Timothy S. Rich

You've received these e-mails. Someone (Nigerian, British, South African, Libyan) wants to wire you an absurd sum of money. The writer, who is almost illiterate, urges you to please get in touch immediately.

The security world knows this as the advanced fee fraud (AFF) e-mail scam. It goes by many names but may be most commonly known as the Nigerian or 419 scam; the number refers to an item in Nigeria's penal code. E-mails of this type offer riches that are purportedly parked in foreign banks, if you will just help the author get that money out of his or her country. If you reply, the scammer will demand various fees; the scam ends only when you are unwilling to pay any more.

Hard though it may be to believe, as much as \$10 billion is lost annually to this scam. Over the past four years, I have researched the phenomenon and uncovered six things that few people know about it.

1. The scam predates the Internet.

Although similar scams appear as early as the 16th century, the modern AFF scam has its roots in the late 1970s and early 1980s when its perpetrators utilized physical mail. Nigerian scammers used stolen or counterfeit letterhead to target mainly American and British businesses.

2. This isn't small-time crime. It's big business.

The e-mails may suggest small-time scammers, but Nigeria's Interpol believes that those who write them are more likely to be professionals working as part of an organized hierarchy, not unlike other forms of organized crime. Many scam networks are organized along ethnic or linguistic lines, especially in Nigeria. That makes it easier to coordinate efforts and harder to operate these scams solo.

Furthermore, while the basic contours of the e-mails seldom change, evidence suggests that scammers are increasingly testing variations to identify which receive a higher response rate. For example, appeals to religion and references to recent religious conversions are often deliberately included.

3. The e-mails may be intentionally unbelievable.

These e-mails become profitable at an incredibly low response rate: Most estimates suggest that the scam needs a response rate of less than one-tenth of 1 percent to be profitable.

You have probably read the offers and wondered who could possibly fall for the stories they peddle. The scammers themselves likely know this, too. Cormac Herley of Microsoft Research suggests that these are not blanket appeals. Rather, they are attempts to quickly identify the gullible. Similarly, the poorly constructed English narrative attempts to encourage pity and a sense of adventure.

The large monetary offers are also a way to target the naïve. I collected more than a half-million AFF e-mails from www.419scam.org, a site dedicated to online-scam prevention. Through content analysis software, I found that nearly two-thirds (64.2 percent) made offers in the millions and 1.8 percent in the billions.

4. It's not just in Nigeria.

Although the scam is primarily associated with Nigeria, perpetrators have been found throughout West Africa, Hong Kong and Western Europe. Early letters were almost exclusively in English, but increasingly scammers have been sending e-mails in Spanish, Portuguese and French, among other languages.

Nor do most of the e-mails claim to be from Nigeria. After analyzing more than a half-million of them, I found that only 12.6 percent mentioned Nigeria. Another 43.6 percent mentioned other African countries, and 36.2 percent mentioned European countries. Even if most AFF scams originate in West Africa, which is debatable, scammers appear to be diversifying their stated country of origin.

5. The scam intentionally uses trust language.

The scam e-mails commonly appeal to both trust and greed, which separates them from spam that tries to lure the unwary through a misleading Web design. The AFF email narrative, rather, works to build a sense of a mutual relationship, including references to trusting the recipient and suggesting that the sender is taking a significant risk.

In my analysis, a clear majority of e-mails (60.9 percent) included references to trust, using such words as "trust," "trusting," "confide." Interestingly, the higher the monetary offer, the more trust language is used. "Trust" words were in 68.1 percent of those e-mails that mentioned thousands of dollars; trust language appeared in fully 85.3 percent of the billion-dollar offers. Meanwhile, 60.6 percent of e-mails with lower or no monetary offers did not include a single reference to trust.

6. Variation in the e-mails influences perceptions.

I designed an experimental Web survey to identify whether variations in the text of scam e-mails influenced perceptions. Within this survey, American respondents were randomly assigned one of four scam letter templates that differed in one of two ways: the monetary offer of the scammer (\$3 million vs. \$30 million) and the use of trust language (no references vs. eight references to trust).

Using trust language did not increase the number of respondents who said they believed the author could be trusted. However, those who received trust-laden e-mails were slightly more likely to say that they would respond to such an offer and that they saw no harm in responding to such an e-mail.

Using trust language also meant that those who read the e-mails were less likely to remember how much money was offered, as I found using statistical models. In other words, trust language seemed to distract the recipients from paying attention to the monetary offer.

Overall, scammers may be better off with generic blanket appeals without the trust language and attempting to nab only the most gullible.

How can we prevent those gullible people from sending money and bank account information to strangers? Public education does not appear to be a useful approach. Here's what will probably be more fruitful: using content analysis software to construct better spam filters, filters that pay less attention not just to what country the e-mail came from and instead focus on the many references to trust.

Timothy S. Rich is an assistant professor of political science at Western Kentucky University.

Here is the URL of the article, which includes several live links, for as long as it is good:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2015/08/25/this-nigerian-prince-would-like-to-wire-you-75-million-dollars/>

419 Coalition comments: We want to remind readers that 419 Advance Fee Fraud is a Subset of Advance Fee Fraud in General. 419 Advance Fee Fraud is defined as Advance Fee Fraud with a West African connection. This connection can be the origination point of the fraud attempt, or it can be the origination place of the 419er. Thus, an Advance Fee Fraud attempt originating, for example, from Outer Mongolia, would be 419 AFF if the fraudster(s)themselves were of West African origin or were locals operating at the behest of a West African based 419 syndicate.

Also, this article appears to deap primarily with what is classed as Classic 419. As the reader of this site knows very well there are many, many types of 419, such as Lottery 419 and Romance 419 to mention just a couple of them.

Regarding Mr. Hurley's study, which maintains that 419ers deliberately mention Nigeria in their solicitations in order to weed out the wary,

419 Coalition would like to mention that we, and many other experts in the field like Ultrascan AGI, have found that in our experience quite the opposite is the case - ie. most 419ers go to great lengths to NOT mention Nigeria, or Nigerians in their solicitations; and that in general 419ers who Do mention Nigeria or Nigerians tend to do so primarily for logistical reasons required by their local or main office operational requirements.

13 AUG 2015

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

EFCC arrest Nigerian who defrauded American of \$4M, exhibits cars, houses

By Seun Opejobi

A suspected fraudster, Idowu Olarenwaju also known as Captain Anthony Abel Saramoh has been apprehended by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC for allegedly using his company, Total Internship Nigeria Limited to defraud an American Citizen to the tune of \$4million.

This was contained in a statement signed by the Anti-Graft agency, stressing that the suspect lured his victim into paying the money into his company's account with the promise of supplying him crude oil from Nigeria.

According to the statement by the Commission, the American however petitioned the agency following Olarenwaju's silence after the monetary transaction was done.

Investigations carried out by the anti-graft agency led to the arrest of one Joe Onwudimowei on June 18th who was discovered to be an accomplice of the suspect who operates the account of Total Internship Nigeria Limited with Guaranty Trust Bank (GTB) where the money was deposited.

Joe who confessed to be working for Olanrewaju and one Otunba Yemi Osho disclosed that the proceeds from the transaction have been given to both men.

EFCC in the course of its investigation discovered that Olanrewaju has several properties in Port Harcourt, Rivers and a 44room hotel in Ado Ekiti, Ekiti State despite not having any reasonable source of income.

The anti-graft agency further recovered a number of cars including, a 2014 Range Rover, 2013 Honda Crosstour, 2013 Range Evogue and Honda CRV from Olarenwaju.

Olarenwaju, according to the EFCC would be charged to court soon.

Here is the URL of the article, which includes photos, for as long as it is good:

<http://dailypost.ng/2015/08/13/efcc-arrest-nigerian-who-defrauded-american-of-4m-exhibits-cars-houses-photos/>

5 JUL 2015

From Vanguard, a Nigerian newspaper, sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

Five Nigerian students detained in Malaysia over alleged N125.2m Internet Scam

by Favour Nnabugwu with agency report

Five Nigerian students have been arrested and detained in Malaysia over their alleged involvement in an internet fraud amounting to N125.2million (RM2.4 million) in Selangor and Kuala Lumpur.

The five students, aged between 20 and 30, and pursuing Information Technology courses in a leading private college in Kuala Lumpur, were arrested on June 30, 2015 at different areas in that country including Petaling Jaya, Cyberjaya, Damansara and Kuala Lumpur.

Following the arrest of the five students, police also detained the two local women, aged 40 and 55, who are the owners of the accounts used by the syndicate said Penang Commercial Crimes chief ACP Azmi Adam.

ACP Azmi said police also seized five laptops, 20 hand phones, ATM cards, SIM cards and documents believed to have been used to con their victims.

He said police launched 'Ops Merpati' after receiving a report from the owner of an ice producing factory owner in George Town who claimed he had been cheated by the syndicate.

The 62-year-old victim said he had received an e-mail from the syndicate in March, informing him that he was among 50 recipients selected to receive RM15.9 million from the government of the United States.

"The e-mail requested the victim to follow certain procedures to ensure he did not miss the opportunity. Convinced by the contents of the e-mail, the victim carried out 51 transactions involving money, to accounts numbers given by the syndicate before realising it was a scam. He later lodged a police report," he said.

Azmi said initial investigations revealed that the syndicate had conned several victims to a tune of RM2.4 million. Police have also found transactions involving up to RM1 million that were banked in from a neighbouring country.

For some reason there appears to be two URL's given for this article, so here are both for as long as they are good:

as it is good:

<http://www.vanguardngr.com/2015/07/five-nigerian-students-detained-in-malaysia-over-alleged-n125-2m-internet-scam/>
<http://www.vanguardngr.com/2015/07/5-nigerian-students-detained-in-malaysia-over-n125-2-internet-scam/>

419 Coalition thanks ACP Azmi Adam and his team for their efforts, Great Job! The Coordinator of 419 Coalition lived in KL for several years as a young man and takes it personally when 419ers operate out of Malaysia.... as they routinely do..... so, as the Nigerian saying goes - "More grease to ACP Azmi's elbow" :)

1 JUL 2015

From Metro Watch Online, a Nigerian news website,
sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

EFCC Arraigns 2 for \$64,000 Romance Scam

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), on Wednesday July 1, 2015, arraigned the duo of Osaze Akhigbe and Ndekwu Jindu before Justice Lawal Akapo of the Lagos State High Court, Ikeja on an 11-count charge bordering on conspiracy to obtain goods and money by false pretence.

The defendants, Akhigbe and Jindu were arrested by the EFCC sometime in 2013 based on a petition from one Jolanta K, an American.

Jolanta alleged that she met Jindu, who introduced himself as a self-employed Caucasian pharmacist, online in June 2012. Impressed by his profile she "fell in love" with him, and both agreed to get married.

She further alleged that in the course of the relationship, the defendant at different times hoodwinked her into parting with over Sixty Four Thousand United States Dollars (\$64,000 USD).

Count 2 of the charge reads; "That you, Osaze Akhigbe on or about the 6th of September 2012 at Lagos within the Ikeja Judicial Division with the intent to defraud obtained a total sum of \$1,900 (One Thousand Nine Hundred United States Dollars) from one Jolanta K. through Western Union money transfer under the false pretence that the money represent payment for marriage engagement processes between you and her in Nigeria and which pretence you knew was false".

The defendants pleaded not guilty to the charge when it was read to them.

In view of the plea of the defendants the prosecution counsel, A. A Akujo asked for a trial date and prayed the court to remand them in prison custody.

Justice Akapo adjourned the case till September 21, 2015 for hearing of the bail application and ordered that the defendants be remanded in Kirikiri Maximum Prison.

Here the the URL of the article, which includes photos,
for as long as it is good:

<http://metrowatchonline.com/efcc-arraigns-2-for-64000-romance-scam/>

15 JUN 2015

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

EFCC Arraigns Internet Fraudster for UK Pounds
54,324 Romance Fraud

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, on Monday June 15, 2015, arraigned Ebiechina Chikeluba (aka Lisa T. Jackson) before Justice O. A Ipaye of the High Court of Lagos State, Ikeja on a 17-count charge bordering on obtaining money by false pretence, personation, forgery and using false document.

Chikeluba who met his victim on Facebook using the false identity of, Lisa T. Jackson, a United States citizen, has been making monetary demands of his victims, using various guises. In one such instance in March 2013, he obtained a total sum of (UK Pounds) 54,324.59 (Fifty Four Thousand, Three Hundred and Twenty Four Pounds, Fifty Nine Pence) from one K. Oaks through Western Union on the pretext that he was an American woman dealing in Gold in Nigeria and needed money to increase her capital. The unsuspecting victim paid, having already agreed to marry the conman.

When the charges were read to the defendant, he pleaded not guilty.

In view of the plea of the accused, prosecution counsel, Andrew Akoja asked for a trial date and prayed the court to remand the defendant in prison custody.

The defence counsel, Chijioko Agu, informed the court that he has already filed an application for bail and asked to be allowed to move his application.

However, Justice Ipaye adjourned the matter to July 20, 2015 for hearing of bail application and ordered that the defendant be remanded in custody.

Chikeluba, 21, a student of Federal Science and Technical College Yaba, Lagos was arrested by the operatives of the EFCC on February 24, 2015 for allegedly swindling Oaks, a UK citizen, of the sum of UK Pounds 54,000 (equivalent of N20m).

Here is the URL of the press release for as long as it is good:

<https://efccnigeria.org/efcc/index.php/news/1400-efcc-arraigns-internet-fraudster-for-54-324-romance-fraud>

12 JUN 2015

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

EFCC Re-Arraigns Suspected Fraudster For \$127, 000 Scam
Docks Another for Forgery

A suspected fraudster, Emeofa Michael Ikechukwu, alias Michael Briggs, was on Thursday, June 11, 2015, re-arraigned before Justice I.E Ekwo of the Federal High Court, Port Harcourt, Rivers State by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC.

The suspect, who had earlier been arraigned on March 10, 2015 before Justice H.A. Nganjiwa, is being prosecuted on a nine-count charge bordering on impersonation, forgery and obtaining money by false pretence to the tune of over \$127,000

Ikechukwu had allegedly obtained the money from his Swiss girlfriend, Mispasi, whom he met on a dating site in February 2013, after tricking her to invest in a phony timber business.

One of the counts reads: "That you Emeofa Michael Ikechukwu (Alias Michael Briggs) sometime in April, 2013 in Port Harcourt and within the jurisdiction of this honourable court with intent to defraud did obtain the sum of \$77,003.95 (Seventy-Seven Thousand, Three Dollars, Ninety-Five Cents) from one Mispasi and which you purportedly claimed to be a business partner dealing with timber which pretext you knew to be false and thereby committed an offence contrary to Section 1 (1) (b) of the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Fraud Related Offences Act 2006 and punishable under section 1 (3) of the same Act."

However, the suspect pleaded not guilty when the charges were read to him.

In view of his plea, counsel to EFCC, D. Ademu Eteh, prayed the court to open his case.

The defence counsel, O.J. Atolagbe, told the court that there was a pending application for bail.

Justice Ekwo adjourned the case to June 15, 2015 for hearing on the motion for bail and ordered the accused to be remanded in prison custody.

In a related development, one Emmanuel Ikechukwu was also docked before Justice Ekwo by the EFCC on an amended one count charge bordering on forgery.

The accused allegedly hacked into his victim's email and later contact their friends or associates for money. One of the victims, Innocent after receiving a mail from the accused, disguising to be a friend, deposited the sum of One Hundred and Fifty Five Thousand Naira (N155,000.00) into his account with a new generation bank.

The accused however entered a not guilty plea, when the charge was read

to him.

In view of the plea of the accused, the prosecution counsel, Ramiah O.E. Ikhanaede prayed for a date for trial.

Justice Ekwo ordered that the accused be remanded in EFCC's custody and adjourned the matter to 18th June, 2015 for hearing of bail application and commencement of trial.

Here is the URL of the press release, which contains a photo, for as long as it is good:

<https://efccnigeria.org/efcc/index.php/news/1397-efcc-re-arraigns-suspected-fraudster-for-127-000-scam-docks-another-for-forgery>

12 JUN 2015

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

Internet Fraudster Bags Four Years For Hacking NASA E-mail

Justice S. S. Ogunsanya of the Lagos State High Court on Thursday June 11, 2015, sentenced one Osarenwinda Idahor (a.k.a Osas Idahor) to two years imprisonment on each of the two count charge bordering on possession of document containing false pretence.

The convict was arrested by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission sequel to a petition from NASA OIG Computer Crimes Division Goddard Space Flight Centre, United States, alleging that the suspect hacked into NASA e-mail account to send scam messages for advance fee fraud.

Further investigation by the EFCC revealed that the convict disguised himself to be one Mrs Carlow Charles, a cancer patient who wanted to donate the sum of \$10,500,000 (Ten Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars Only) to the motherless, widows and less privileged.

The convict upon arraignment on 25th day of May 2015 pleaded guilty to the charge. Consequently, Justice Ogunsanya adjourned the case to June 11, 2015 for ruling and sentencing.

When the matter was called June 11, Justice Ogunsanya sentenced the convict to two years imprisonment without any option of fine on each of the count charges. The sentences are to run concurrently.

Here is the URL of the press release, which includes a photo, for as long as it is good:

<https://efccnigeria.org/efcc/index.php/news/1395-internet-fraudster-bags-four-years-for-hacking-nasa-e-mail>

3 JUN 2015

From the Nigerian Economic and Financial Crimes Commission website:

EFCC Arraigns One for Internet Fraud

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, on June 2, 2015 arraigned Friday Isodje before Justice U.N Agomoh of the Federal High Court, Port Harcourt on a 3-count charge bordering on conspiracy, Impersonation, Internet fraud and obtaining money by false pretence.

The accused was arrested sometime in 2013 alongside one Eloho Akarah following intelligence report on their lifestyles. The suspect was with a laptop computer containing scam mails.

One of the counts read, "That you Friday Isodje, on or about the 10th day of July, 2013, at Port Harcourt within the jurisdiction of this Honorable Court did conspired with one Eloho Akarah to commit felony to wit: obtaining by false pretence contrary to Section 8(a) of the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Fraud Related offences Act, 2006 and punishable under Section 1 (3) of the said Act".

Another count reads, "That you, Friday Isodje, on or about the 10th day of July, 2013, at Port Harcourt within the jurisdiction of this Honorable Court did possess a document containing false representation to wit: a letter of introduction as Alexandra Wallace sent to one Regina Adu, which said representation you made in a bid to obtain by false pretense, and there by committed an offence contrary to Section 6 and 8(b) of the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Fraud Related Offences Act, 2006 and punishable under Section 1 (3) of the said Act".

When the charge was read to the accused, he pleaded not guilty.

In view of his plea, the prosecution counsel, Usman Shehu, thus urged he court to fix a date for the commencement of trial.

Justice Agomoh adjourned the case till June 15, 2015 for trial and ordered the accused person to be remanded in prison custody.

Here is the URL of the press release, which contains a photo, for as long as it is good:
<https://efccnigeria.org/efcc/index.php/news/1372-efcc-arraigns-one-for-internet-fraud>

18 MAY 2015

From the Daily Mail (Australia) sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

Lonely heart, 61, gave her \$350,000 life savings to a man she met on dating site Plenty Of Fish - only to find out her urbane Englishman 'Eamon Donegal Dubhlainn' was a Nigerian fraudster

Jan Marshall lost \$350,000 to Nigerian dating scam and is still paying for it

She signed up for online dating website Plenty of Fish and found a match

She soon accepted a marriage proposal and sent money to a 'British man'

Her match, 'Eamon Donegal Dubhlainn', was an Englishman working as an engineer in the United States, according to his dating profile

Ms Marshall has been told the money ended up in Nigerian accounts

Australians lost almost \$30million in online romance fraud in the past year

By Frank Coletta for Daily Mail Australia

Jan Marshall thought she'd finally found love, but not only has she had her heart broken, her life savings of \$350,000 have been ripped away.

The Melbourne woman is just another victim of the online dating scams which have cost Australians almost \$30million in the past year alone.

Ms Marshall, 61, signed up to dating website Plenty of Fish in the hope of finding love after moving to Melbourne from Brisbane in 2012, and matched with one 'Eamon Donegal Dubhlainn'.

According to his dating profile, Mr Dubhlainn was from Manchester, England, but working in the United States as a civil engineer.

Within a matter of months, she had accepted his marriage proposal, arranged to meet him and started sending money to his bank account.

Little did she know that Eamon Donegal Dubhlainn didn't exist, and his profile was invented and managed by a group of fraudsters in Nigeria that specifically targeted Ms Marshall.

Ms Marshall works in change management for large corporations, she had the successful career and hoped to find love. Soon after leaving Brisbane for Melbourne in August 2012, she signed onto the dating site, Plenty Of Fish.

Putting those details on the internet was the start of her problems, as the information was quickly snapped up by the scammers, who deemed her the perfect target.

'I hadn't had a lot of relationships before and I quickly got approached by someone who claimed to be an engineer in America, and he said "I would be happy to go anywhere for the right person", that's apparently what they say,' Ms Marshall told Daily Mail Australia.

'We continued to communicate and very quickly he got me on email and phone and then instant messenger.'

But there was always a technical problem when they were supposed to video chat. The fraudsters provided her two photos, naming 'the man' as 'Eamon Donegal Dubhlainn'.

'He then said he was moving back to England and said "we will be together very shortly, you are a special person and I want to communicate just with you".

'Within a month it got very serious and he asked me to marry him, and I accepted, I was fully drawn into his love and attention.'

But for those closest to Jan, the alarm bells were ringing.

'Several friends tried to warn me, when you were in these things they cut you off from your friends, encourage you to disassociate with them,' she admitted.

'They (the scammers) tell you that no one understands what we have, afterwards I had to go back to family and friends - your initial reaction is of shock shame and embarrassment.'

But the tactics were as effective as they were exhausting.

'They talk to you morning, noon and night, they are professional and manipulative fraudsters, that's the truth of the matter, just calling them "scammers" trivialises what they do,' she added.

'We are not stupid, we are manipulated, we are groomed just the same as child abuse victims are, in a sense we are caught in a honeymoon stage and then you are not really acting normally.'

Groomed, ahead of the inevitable requests for money.

'He'd returned to England and then supposedly took a short-term contract in Dubai and promised he'd come onto Australia six to eight weeks after that,' Ms Marshall said.

'Once he said he was in Dubai, the money requests started, initially he said he had to pay some taxes he hadn't allowed for.

'It all happened over six weeks, and I only paid out to him expecting to get it back.

'And then it was money for business materials, and it got worse, he supposedly got robbed on the way to pay those taxes,' she added.

More excuses and elaborate stories began to build, as did Jan Marshall's expenses.

'It was always amounts like \$40,000, which I gave to him twice, then he said he was in trouble with those he'd contracted work to and had to buy out the contract for \$77,000,' she said.

'The larger amounts went to bank accounts, those of \$40,000 and \$30,000 went through Western Union, even though there is a limit of \$10,000 and I was doing it in multiples of 10.

'Then, when he was apparently on his way to the airport (to come to Australia) he had a car crash and was in hospital, they had other people like nurses and doctors contact you, a document showing the expenses and others playing other roles,' she said.

'I didn't realise it was a scam until he got on a plane to England, he said "I'm on my way now, thanks for everything", it wasn't until then that I realised.

'He would always say "I am a wealthy man but I can't access my funds".

'I would pay over \$270,000 to them, that included savings, additional credit and ultimately I took money out of a self-managed super fund, which I wasn't supposed to do and which now has me in strife with the the tax office.

'I have a \$76,000 tax bill on the super and that is at 46 per cent interest.

'I am a professional person, in a well paid job, and my friends say that if they lined up 10 people in a line to see who would be caught out that I wouldn't have been the last one to have been duped by a scam like this.'

For Jan Marshall, the heartbreak and financial ruin caused by the online scam won't end any time soon

Now Ms Marshall is fighting the Australian Taxation Office, which is pursuing her for \$76,000 after she accessed her superannuation for the 'man'.

Victoria Police investigated, passing on details to Western Union 'so the names used could be stopped, as only they can do this'.

'The only follow up I received is that the money was collected in Nigeria, though I had sent it to Dubai,' Ms Marshall said.

Online dating fraud remains the number one scam for financial losses, with close to \$30 million reported lost by Australians, despite it making up only three per cent of all scam reports.

Delia Rickard, deputy chair of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC), said: 'Scammers are stealing not only your money but also your data, which they then use to commit identity theft or to sell to other scammers.

'Personal data is a valued commodity and one that you cannot put too high a price on when it comes to protecting it.

'Unfortunately, scammers also recognise the value of your personal information and will go to great lengths to steal it.

'Increasingly, scammers are using personal information gleaned from social media profiles to target victims for a fraudulent relationship or investment.'

Nationally, the amount lost to dating and romance scammers jumped by 10 per cent in the past 12 months, cementing the category as the most lucrative for fraudsters.

'Don't think it's just through dating websites, we found 33 per cent of these relationships started on Facebook and other social media,' she said.

'And men are victims as much as women, it's basically 50-50.'

For Jan Marshall, the heartbreak and financial ruin caused by the scam won't end any time soon.

'It left me in a lot of strife, I gave him money from my pay, I had to borrow money to get through that first month, I closed down a lot of discretionary spending and I am still in strife in credit card and tax office debt,' she warned.

'I have been scared off (relationships), I have come to terms with it but haven't wanted to go out there, quite honestly it has had a lasting affect.'

Here is the URL of the article, which includes related photos and videos, for as long as it is good:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3085724/I-groomed-way-child-abuse-victims-Woman-loses-life-savings-350-000-falling-love-British-man-dating-site-sending>

419 Coalition Comment: This cautionary case is nearly as egregious as the UK Ms. Hill case of over a decade ago, in which the 419er, Tony Egbowon, remains unarrested, unconvicted, and unpunished to this day.... see our 6 APR 1999 News for details.... he has recently been reported to be in the Chicago, Illinois area by the victim.

14 MAY 2015

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

FCC strategic to Nigeria's rebirth - Lamorde

The Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, Ibrahim Lamorde, has described the establishment of the Commission in 2003 by the administration of former President Olusegun Obasanjo as one of the major steps towards the rebirth of the nation.

Mr. Lamorde said prior to the establishment of the EFCC, Nigeria's image in the international community had been dented owing to economic and financial crimes perpetrated by some individuals and organizations.

He further said Nigeria was synonymous with money laundering, weak law enforcement and '419' before the creation of EFCC, adding that the citizens were harassed at international ports of entry.

Mr. Lamorde, who spoke Thursday through the Deputy Director, Public Affairs, Osita Nwajah, at the Induction Certificate Course of newly elected legislators, organized by the National Institute for Legislative Studies, also noted that before the establishment of the EFCC, Nigeria was blacklisted by the Financial Action Task Force, FATF, isolated and dishonoured from international businesses.

He, however, stated that the war against corruption and other economic crimes by the EFCC contributed to the de-listing of Nigeria from the FATF blacklist of Non-Cooperative Countries and Territories (NCCTs).

Mr. Lamorde further highlighted the successes so far recorded by the Commission to include "Robust enforcement of economic and financial crimes, anti-money laundering law, routing of notorious '419' and engendering renewed inflow of Foreign Direct Investments."

While stating that the EFCC's mandate is not limited or influenced by tribe, creed, status or affiliations, he said the Commission had been actualising its mandate of nation-building through a number of activities, including enforcement, receipt of complaints, investigation, prevention, enlightenment and advocacy training.

He added that as an anti-graft agency, the EFCC has also ensured restitution for victims of economic and financial crimes, locally and internationally.

While answering questions on the issue of plea bargaining, Mr. Lamorde, who lamented lack of insurance for staff of the Commission in spite of the dangers associated with the job, described it purely as a matter of judicial function.

According to him, most suspects often resort to plea bargaining when confronted with volume of evidences against them.

"Most suspects don't want to go the whole hog. They change their pleas of not guilty to being guilty. It is done all over the world. Therefore, if a suspect does not waste the time of the court or waste tax payers' money, it makes it possible for him or her to resort to plea bargaining."

Mr. Lamorde added that contrary to the impression in some quarters, the EFCC does not have the power to dispose of properties recovered from suspects until final forfeiture is granted by the court.

The induction course was organized by the NLS to train and equip new legislators with the necessary knowledge and skills to be effective in the discharge of their responsibilities as law makers.

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good - it includes a very nice pic of Ibrahim Lamorde, EFCC Chairman:

<http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/more-news/182970-efcc-strategic-to-nigerias-rebirth-lamorde.html>

This press release is also posted on the EFCC website, <http://www.efccnigeria.org>

419 Coalition Comment: We've always liked Mr. Lamorde, from well before he became Chairman of the EFCC, but must admit we are very disappointed with some of the claims he apparently made in this press release. To hit just the main high (or low) points: 1. The claim that 419 has been "routed" is patently absurd, as to anyone even remotely familiar with 419er operations is is overwhelmingly obvious that it is as prevalent as ever; 2. To claim that EFCC deserves kudos for its record on "ensuring restitution for victims of economic and financial crimes, both locally and internationally", is also absurd. Anyone even remotely familiar with the scale of 419er operations, recovered percentages of monies lost by victims, and the miniscule portion of that miniscule portion actually repatriated to victims, knows the claim of EFCC performance in this area is utterly, unequivocally false. And blaming the Courts for the failures of EFCC in the area of restitution is not going to wash either. EFCC has got to Press the Courts in these areas, and Enforce Vigorously the relevant Court Orders, neither of which it does.

Just ask the victim in the famous Odiawa case, in which the 419er was actually convicted (rare) and sent to jail (rarer) and in which around two million dollars restitution was ordered, how effective the EFCC has been in regard to recovery and court-ordered restitution and repatriation of 419ed monies and assets. He'll tell you that in the roughly a decade since the 419er was jailed, and restitution ordered, the 419er has already been out of jail for Years now, and not one cent -- not a penny of restitution has been made and repatriated to him, despite years and years of pressing the EFCC to honor the Court order, get restitution, and repatriate it. 419 Coalition says to Mr. Lamorde - if you want to talk restitution and and repatriation successes, Show Us (actually show the Victim) restitution and repatriation of 419ed monies as ordered by the Court in the Odiawa case. Until you can do that sir, you and the EFCC are just blowing smoke claiming success concerning EFCC performance in the area of recovery and restitution of 419ed assets - despite any ill-advised claims you, or your your Agency, make to the contrary.

Repatriate monies to victims, Mr. Lamorde. Do it routinely. Do it in something even remotely approaching the huge sums that are actually stolen - and Especially when a Court has Ordered restitution. Then sir, you will be able to arguably claim success in the area of recovery and restitution of 419ed monies. Until that time, it might be better to simply..... just..... shut up..... on recovery and repatriation matters. Just sayin'

13 MAY 2015

From DarkReading.com, the IT Security section of US based InformationWeek.com, sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

Oil & Gas Firms Hit By Cyberattacks That Forgo Malware

New spin on the 'Nigerian scam' scams crude oil buyers out of money with bait-and-switch.

By Kelly Jackson Higgins

An unusual type of targeted attack underway for two years uses legitimate Windows file functions and a few homemade scripts -- but no malware -- to infiltrate companies in the oil and gas maritime transportation industry.

Researchers at Panda Labs first discovered the attack campaign early last year, which had slipped by antivirus software and hit around 10 companies since it launched in August of 2013. The attackers are stealing information from oil cargo organizations and then using that information to pose as legitimate firms in scams against oil brokers.

"This is an innovative targeted attack" but not an APT (advance persistent threat) or cyberespionage, says Luis Corrons, technical director of Panda Labs. "They use no malware; I'm not sure if they're not using malware because they don't know how to â€¦ They were stealing credentials without malware."

The attack campaign, dubbed Phantom Menace by Panda, was first spotted by the security team at an oil and gas transportation company in the U.K. It began with a convincing-looking spearphishing email with a phony PDF file that when opened by the victim user, was empty. "It has a self-destructer file, and it creates a folder where it puts files inside. It runs one of the

batch files and that's it. There are no malicious" code tools, he says.

Panda was able to root out the stolen files from an FTP server used by the attackers, and drill down into the attack itself, which turns out to be a new spin on the Nigerian scam. It works like this: the scammer contacts an oil broker and offers them anywhere from 1- 2 million barrels of Bonny Light Crude Oil (BLCO) -- at a bargain price -- from a town in Nigeria called Bonny that's well-known for oil with low sulfur content, which makes it a low-corrosive grade product.

"They have to show proof the product, quantity and quality of the oil, and they ask for \$50- 100,000 in payment to close the agreement," Corrons says. "They [the broker] goes there, and there is nothing," no oil or supplier, he says.

"Our guess here is that they were interested in [oil cargo transportation company] user credentials so they can steal and copy real certificates from those companies" that they can use in the scam to pose as legitimate oil firms, he says.

Most of the victim organizations were in Europe, including Spain, Germany, and Belgium. There also were victims in Asia, he says.

The initial infiltration of the victim systems once the phony PDF is opened works like this: an executable file using an Adobe Acrobat Reader icon self-extracts, creates the folder, and moves six files into that folder. It runs a series of files it planted, and ultimately uses a .bat file to modify the Windows registry such that each time the computer starts, it runs its .bat file to grab usernames and passwords from the mail client and browser, and then save them in a text file.

There are additional steps to mask the folders, including disabling the Windows firewall. The last step is using FTP to upload the stolen files to the attackers' own FTP server.

"Why would you bother to buy or build a Trojan," which could be detected, Corrons says. The legit files fly under the radar.

Corrons and his team found some 865 unique files of stolen information in the FTP server, all of which were from the oil and gas maritime transportation sector.

Unmasking An Attacker

The researchers also have been able to identify one of the likely attackers involved. But in the end, that may not matter: none of the victims will report the attack to law enforcement. Panda's theory is that's because they don't see it as a pure breach: none of the information and credentials stolen from the victims was actually used against them, but instead was used against other companies. They don't want to report that they were duped for fear of negative publicity, according to Panda. "They prefer to keep a low profile, change their credentials, and continue to operate just as if nothing had happened."

And if law enforcement has no official complaints filed, there's no investigation, Corrons notes. "The broker who lost the money was unofficially buying the oil from the underground," he says.

"The guy [attacker] leaves free," he says.

Panda began tracking the attackers by following the FTP connection used to send the stolen credentials. That took them to a free FTP service, where one of the attackers had registered for it. While his name and location information was fake, it appears the city was not -- the village of Ikeja in Nigeria, which is also known as "computer village" in the country, due to its large concentration of technology vendors.

They also traced his gmail.com address, and they were able to decipher his name: "We took the 9 characters that made up the email address and started combining them to see if we could form an alias, a first name, a last name or similar. And we got it," Panda says in a report on the campaign.

The suspected attacker is a Nigerian national, and they found his Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn accounts as well. He's a resident of Ikeja who owns a goods transport company. "Too many coincidences. So, even though all the evidence seems to indicate that this is the person responsible for the attack, there is no way for us to prove it. It would require the police to launch an investigation and obtain information about the FTP connections, etc., in order to get the IP address of the person who signed up to the service and find the culprit," Panda said.

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

<http://www.darkreading.com/attacks-breaches/oil-and-gas-firms-hit-by-cyberattacks-that-forgo-malware/d/d-id/1320417>

419 Coalition Comments: We'd like to mention that Oil Scam 419 is one of the original, oldest, and longest running forms of 419.

The 419ers have always used oil industry information, wherever they can obtain it, to buttress the believability and checkability of their "tale" - to include industry journals and publications, company contact lists, news articles, press releases, stockholder publications, etc. What is new(ish) here is that the 419ers are using phishing

techniques to get into company servers directly in order to support the "tale" that they are telling to others, in addition to culling such materials from other sources.

12 MAY 2015

From The Guardian, a Nigerian newspaper:

Two Nigerians sent to 12 years in prison in Vietnam for email fraud

By Deola Adebisi

A Vietnamese court has sentenced two Nigerian men, Christian Nnadike, 34, and Collins Deke, 37, to 12 years each in a Vietnam prison for hacking into emails of local companies, contact the company's foreign partners and swindle them of their money.

The men along with a Vietnamese female accomplice, Le Thi Kim Quyen, was sentenced to 15 years in prison and another Nigerian, de facto husband of the Vietnamese lady, Mark Mamado Abdallah, 39, who is currently at large, ran a scamming syndicate in Vietnam.

At the court hearing which took place in April, the men and their accomplice were also found guilty of another fraud scheme in which they pretended to be a British friend of two Vietnamese women on Facebook and asked them to send money as shipping fees to receive gifts.

According to prosecutors, the group defrauded many unsuspecting victims of over VND3.3 billion (US\$150,000) between April and August 2013. Most of this came from the email hacking scheme.

Prosecutors said over the four months, the Vietnamese woman, Quyen and her Nigerian husband, Abdallah hacked into the emails of several Vietnamese companies doing business with foreign companies. They gave the information to Nnadike and then Deke, who would later transfer it to another Nigerian man living in Malaysia. The unknown man in Malaysia then used the compromised email accounts to contact the victims' foreign partners, asking them to send payments to a bank account opened by Quyen and Abdallah.

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

<http://www.nguardiannews.com/2015/05/two-nigerians-sent-to-12-years-in-prison-in-vietnam-for-email-fraud/>

10 MAY 2015

From BBC News:

Inside the world of Ghana's internet fraudsters

By Sammy Darko
BBC Africa, Accra

Internet fraudsters in Ghana are easy to spot. The young men in fast cars have become such a conspicuous group that they even have their own nickname. Meet the Sakawa boys.

David is 25 years old. He's been defrauding people on the internet for the last two years.

"I know it's wrong but it gives me a lot of money," he says.

He used to sleep on the streets. Then he saw his friends in internet cafes earning money defrauding people online.

A typical con is pretending to be a woman romantically interested in men from Europe, America or Asia.

He learnt the trade and, with little formal education, earned enough money to rent an apartment, buy a car and have money left over to spend.

But he insists the money isn't earned easily.

"Some say this work is easy but it is not."

"You have to be patient, smart, fast and cultivate trust between you and the white person". Fraudsters in Ghana say they are the women in pictures and videos to draw in victims

Fraudsters like David (not his real name) pretend to be beautiful women. They play clips of the women saying hello. They then tell their targets that their microphone or speakers aren't working so they can't speak, they can only communicate via messages.

Over time they build up a romantic relationship with them before convincing them to send them money.

Others pretend to have a concession in gold, timber, securities or oil

to persuade people to hand over money for their fake business arrangements.

The group of fraudsters have come to be known as the Sakawa boys in Ghana, a term which means "putting inside" in the Hausa language.

It's not just a living, but a lifestyle.

Sakawa boys are so renowned in Ghana that a primary school pupil can point one out - their lavish lifestyle gives them away.

They can be spotted on a Saturday night in Santa Marie, a suburb of Ghana's capital Accra. Sakawa boys are known for driving around playing loud music.

The streets are filled with unlicensed Range Rovers and Toyota Camrys.

Young men in tight jeans, baseball caps and flashes of gold sit with their car windows wound down and play loud music.

A decade ago the term Sakawa was not even used in Ghana. Instead internet fraudsters were called Yahoo boys - a term mostly used for conmen in Nigeria.

The Nigerian singer Olu Maintain released the song Yahooze in 2007. In the song he says "it's all about the Benjamins baby", referring to hundred dollar bills. And at gigs he started spraying money at fans.

He said in an interview with Modern Ghana at the time "nobody is interested in how you got to where you are. Everybody is interested in results".

Although he said in the same interview "the song has nothing to do with yahoo".

Now the term Sakawa boy has taken over in Ghana. There is even a collection of Sakawa boy films, whose storylines often reference the use of black magic. Ghanaian films have storylines about Sakawa Boys

One reason they have taken off in Ghana is that it has one of the highest internet penetration rates in Africa.

Sakawa boys are not just conspicuous consumers.

Some claim they also wield considerable influence.

The Ghanaian Times reports that a government minister complained that chiefs "condone and connive with such criminals" - referring to Sakawa boys.

Northern Region Minister Alhaji Limuna Mohammed Muniru said he had received a death threat after issuing a directive to arrest some Sakawa boys.

The same minister also claimed some of the conmen had bribed a chief to rename his town either Galaxy City or La Palmas.

The negative effect of Sakawa boys' cons is felt across the country.

Cybercrime contributed to Ghana being blacklisted for money-laundering by the international watchdog the global Financial Action Task Force in 2012. This dented the country's international reputation as an investment destination.

The government says those who have been victims of Ghana's conmen should lodge formal complaints but so far, there have been few convictions - partly because of the difficulty prosecuting this type of crime, with the victims living abroad.

David recognises that being a conman doesn't help his own reputation either. But the money is too much of a lure for him to make a career change any time soon.

Here is the URL of the article, which includes photos, for as long as it is good:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-32583161>

5 MAY 2015

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

Suspected Internet Scammer Arraigned By EFCC

A 19-year-old suspected internet fraudster Ojosipe Adebayo, has been arraigned by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, before Justice A.O Ipaye of the Lagos State High Court, Ikeja on a two- count -charge bordering on possession of a document containing false pretences and forgery.

The defendant is allegedly a member of a syndicate of internet fraudsters that specialize in using fake cheques and scam mails to defraud unsuspecting victims.

When the charges were read to the accused person, he pleaded not guilty.

One of the charges read: "That you Ojosipe Adebayo (a.k.a. "Marty Jason" and "Candice") on or about the 8th day of May, 2014 at Lagos, within the Ikeja Judicial Division had in your possession a document in which you represented yourself to be a single lady called Candice from Trenton, New Jersey, United States who helps the needy to organise Charity concerts and also helps the homeless to get funds for Motherless Babies Homes which representations you knew or ought to have known to be false having regard to the circumstances of this case."

In view of the plea of the defendant, the prosecution counsel, Ayokunle Fayanju prayed the court for a trial date and also for the defendant to be remanded in prison custody.

However, defence counsel, Michael Asai asked for a short adjournment in order to file an application for bail.

Justice Ipaye subsequently remanded the defendant in Kirikiri Maximum Prison and adjourned the matter to May 21, 2015, for hearing of the bail application and commencement of trial.

Here is the URL of the announcement, which contains a photo, for as long as it is good:
<https://efccnigeria.org/efcc/index.php/news/1319-suspected-internet-scammerarraigned-by-efcc>

12 APR 2015
From the Trinidad and Tobago Guardian, sent in by
Ultrascan AGI:

Public duped of \$2m through Internet fraud
FIU now target for scammers

by Rhondor Dowlat

In two years, people living in T&T lost over \$2 million to lottery scams.

A lottery scam is a type of advance fee fraud, a rising type of crime targetting Internet users around the world.

T&T's Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) has published advisories on several such financial scams, namely "e-mail hijacking," advance fee fraud and "conference scams," in order to assist the public in identifying the activity so as to reduce monetary loss and emotional harm, which the victims suffer.

In fact, just recently the FIU issued a warning to be on the lookout for false and misleading information being circulated by people claiming to be FIU agents, after it was brought to the body's attention by people who had been contacted by the con artists. According to the FIU, these people may present bogus letters, e-mails, text messages or faxed documents purporting to be issued by the FIU.

"The FIU wishes to make it clear that it does not charge fees for services, issue clearance certificates or seize assets of any kind; does not communicate via text messages or social media e.g. Facebook and Twitter and requests no fees. Clearance certificates or similar invoices made in the name of or on behalf of the FIU are false," a release stated.

While financial scams take many forms, the focus here, according to FIU public affairs officer Heather Baldwin-McDowell, is on the advance fee fraud, otherwise called the "419" or "Nigerian scam."

"The common theme is a notification or invitation to take up an offer with the promise of significant sums of money or other reward. The intention is to persuade the intended victim to part with his money in the expectation of receiving a large future monetary gain or other benefit," Baldwin-McDowell told the Sunday Guardian.

She said although the vast majority of recipients do not respond to the communication, a small percentage do, but as many millions of messages can be sent daily using technology it makes the scam worthwhile.

"As well, often persons are too embarrassed or too ashamed to admit that they were gullible, so they fail to report the fraud," she said.

In the past two years, during the period October 2012 to Sept 2014, the FIU received 17 reports of advance fee fraud. Baldwin-McDowell explained, "These scams have induced citizens of T&T to wire/mail/transfer thousands of dollars of their savings to persons they do not know to claim 'large fortunes,' 'lottery winnings,' or 'inheritance.'"

The reports reflect that scammers/fraudsters have requested sums as low as \$5,000 to as much as \$400,000 (TT dollars) at a time.

"Anyone can be a target," she added.

Wide tentacles

The scam usually begins with a letter, e-mail, fax, text, phone call or on social network sites seeking contact with the potential victims. The fraudster may impersonate a known person or organisation which exists, or may create a fictitious person or organisation.

The intended victim is made to believe they were a selected recipient although the same communication is sent to thousands of intended victims. The subject line of an e-mail or message may read, "You are a winner;" "Dear conference invitee;" "Attention (your name) Beneficiary;" "My dear friend;" "From the desk of Barrister (name)" or "Your assistance is needed."

Asked by the Sunday Guardian if the T&T Police Service had launched an official investigation and if there were any people of interest thus far, Baldwin-McDowell replied, "By law the FIU is not allowed to disclose this information or make any comment on this question. Refer to section 22 (1) of the Financial Intelligence Unit of Trinidad and Tobago Act Chap 72:01."

In Another example is a fraudulent conference e-mail invitation or Conference Scam.

In this scam, Baldwin-McDowell said, "The intended victim receives an e-mail invitation to a conference, seminar or other academic or professional event. The e-mail appears to come from an international or professional organisation such as the United Nations, various human rights organisations, non-governmental organisations, foundations, sporting foundations or key personnel in these organisations. The scammers may also use the names of organisations that do not exist, but closely resemble well-known organisations."

These invitations are usually sent to a person's e-mail address or through their professional networks such as LinkedIn.

These invitations, she added, frequently appeal to a benevolent humanitarian cause such as human rights, global peace, human trafficking, child abuse, racism or HIV/Aids awareness.

"The e-mail usually states that conference costs, flight and accommodation will be borne by the organising committee and that only a registration or processing fee is required," she said.

"The conference is usually held in an exotic or international location and the names of bonafide hotels and conference facilities are often used. Visa assistance is offered at the time of registration. False e-tickets may be provided."

More Info

The Financial Intelligence Unit of T&T (the FIU) is a specialised intelligence-gathering unit. It receives reports of suspicious transactions and activities from financial institutions and certain business sectors. It analyses this information with other information from various sources and produces intelligence, which it sends to law enforcement agencies to investigate. The FIU's intelligence-gathering functions are therefore separate and distinct from investigative functions, which are carried out by law enforcement agencies.

Side Bar

Common types of advance fee scam are:

- * Lottery winner
- * Inheritance and its variant "unclaimed money"
- * Employment or job offer
- * Distressed relative/friend
- * Romance
- * Online sales

Common Elements - Be on the alert for:

- * Requests to send money using wire transfer services such as Western Union and Money Gram. An international wire transfer is equivalent to sending cash; the transaction is fast and cannot be reversed.
- * Non-face-to-face communication where you cannot determine the person's true identity
- * Delays or monetary hurdles which prevent the deal from occurring as planned, e.g. unexpected taxes; insurance or licence fees; clearance certificates; legal fees
- * Psychological pressure, e.g. the offer will expire after a stipulated time or the money must be received to pay certain costs

* False documents, e.g. use of fake letters from international organisations or government offices to gain victim's trust

* Fake cheques, e.g. where payment to the victim is required to solidify the victim's confidence in the validity of the scheme

You may seek additional information on FIU Advisories by clicking on the FIU website link: <http://www.fiu.gov.tt>

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

<http://www.guardian.co.tt/news/2015-04-11/fiu-now-target-scammers>

31 MAR 2015

From the Nigerian website The Eagle Online sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

Man, 22 attempts to bribe EFCC N6m

By Anurika Onyelemelam

The suspect, who has been discovered to be the owner of a tastefully furnished four-bedroom bungalow, was further alleged to have duped one Stephanie, an American lady, of \$75,000, with which he acquired some of his seized properties

Dumi Osayemi A 22-year-old man was shocked out of his wits when operatives of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission slammed handcuffs on him for allegedly offering them N6.9 million bribe.

The suspect, Dumi Osayemi, alias Larry, was said to have compounded his problem when he offered the stern faced agents the money. Osayemi offered the bribe, hoping that they would let him off the hook as they investigated him for suspected internet fraud.

The suspect, who has been discovered to be the owner of a tastefully furnished four-bedroom bungalow, was further alleged to have duped one Stephanie, an American lady, of \$75,000, with which he acquired some of his seized properties.

The suspect allegedly indulged and pampered his girlfriend, Dorcas, and her mother, Rose, with his ill-gotten wealth. The EFCC spokesman, Wilson Uwujaren, said: "A suspected internet fraudster, Dumi Osayemi, a.k.a Larry, is currently ruing his attempt to compromise operatives of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC."

"The 22-year-old, who was arrested following a tip-off about his suspicious flamboyant lifestyle, allegedly offered a N6,900,000.00 bribe to EFCC operatives so he could be let off the hook."

Uwujaren said at the time of Osayemi's arrest, the following items were recovered from him: a 2011 C350 Mercedes Benz car and a Toyota Venza.

The suspect will soon be arraigned in court.

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

<http://theeagleonline.com.ng/man-22-attempts-to-bribe-efcc-n6m/>

4 FEB 2015

From Saharareporters.com (New York) sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

EFCC Arraigns Youth Corps Member, Two Others For Cybercrime

The suspects, who were living at 4, Coal City University Close, Independence Layout, Enugu, were arrested by operatives of the EFCC following intelligence report over their alleged involvement in Internet crime.

by Wilson Uwujaren

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, on Wednesday, February 3, 2015 arraigned the trio of Solomon Uchendu, Ndubisi Agu and Uchendo Chikwadu before Justice D. V. Agishir of the Federal High Court sitting in Enugu, Enugu State for offences bordering on obtaining by false pretence and Advanced Fee Fraud.

The suspects, who were living at 4, Coal City University Close, Independence Layout, Enugu, were arrested by operatives of the EFCC following intelligence report over their alleged involvement in Internet crime.

One of the suspects, Solomon, who is currently undergoing the mandatory

National Youth Service Corps, NYSC, in Akoko, Ondo State, confessed that he had about seven different email accounts registered with different names. Solomon, who is facing a seven-count charge, further disclosed that most of his victims were from the U.S., Canada and Germany.

According to him, "One Patricia from Canada gave me \$1200USD; Larisa from Germany gave him \$300USD; Ethel from the U.S. also gave me \$300USD. All of them know me as Lincoln, but they don't know that I live in Nigeria."

One of the charges read: "That you Solomon Uchendu on or about 3rd day of May 2014 in Enugu, Enugu State within the jurisdiction of the Federal High Court of Nigeria was found in possession of a document containing a false pretence titled "Hello. I am Mark; sorry for stumbling into your profile" and thereby committed an offence, contrary to section 6 and section 8 sub-section(b) of the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Related Offence Act 2006 and punishable under section 1 (3) of the same Act."

The second suspect, Agu, who hails from Umuelem in Ihitte Uboma LGA of Imo State, also told the court that he had numerous email accounts.

Agu, a final year student of the Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu further told the court that he realized \$13000USD between 2013 and February, 2014 from some of his victims across the world.

The third suspect, 22-year-old Chikwadu, a native of Imezi LGA Enugu State, confessed that he had three fake drivers' licences, which were procured in the names of John Omoarojake, Gary Harry and Chikwadu Uchendu at a cyber cafe on Airport Road and at the licensing office at Jakpa Road in Warri, Delta State.

Chikwadu, who is currently seeking admission into the Delta State University, said he met one 32 year-old nurse, Grace Talves of Blackpool, United Kingdom on a dating site named "Tagged".

The suspect, who claimed to be Harry Phillip, 42, thereafter, began to send love scam mails and pictures to Talves, a British divorcee and mother of one, who is currently in Nigeria for an engineering job.

He stated that he duped her 500 UK Pounds, an Ipad and a Mac Air laptop.

One of the charges read: "That you Uchendu Chinonso on or about 3rd day of May 2014 in Enugu, Enugu State within the jurisdiction of the Federal High Court of Nigeria was found in possession of a document containing a picture in which you presented yourself as a white man by name Gary Harry Philip a pretence you knew to be false and thereby committed an offence contrary to section 6 and section 8 (b) of the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Related Offences Act 2006 and punishable under section 1 (3) of the same Act."

The prosecuting counsel, Barrister Innocent, applied orally for a trial date and pleaded that the suspects be remanded in prison custody.

But the defence counsel, Barrister Aneke, prayed the court to grant the suspects bail, which the prosecuting counsel kicked against.

Justice Agishir adjourned the case to February 10, 2015, while ordering that the suspects be remanded in prison custody.

Here is the URL of the article for as long as it is good:
<http://saharareporters.com/2015/02/04/efcc-arraigns-youth-corps-member-two-others-cybercrime>

24 JAN 2015

From the Vanguard, a Nigerian newspaper, an excellent long article on 419:

419: The world of the Nigerian fraudster

By CHIOMA GABRIEL

Their modus operandi is unique. It could be that man in your neighbourhood who doesn't seem to have any visible means of livelihood but lives big and drives the best cars. He might even have a business front but lives larger than the business that you begin to wonder if his lifestyle is strictly derived from that business you know.

Or, it could be that man you see around everyday when workers and businessmen are leaving their homes in the early morning who does not go anywhere but lives like a prince in your neighbourhood.

They also come in other forms. Suddenly, you realise that somebody is using your email account to solicit funds from your facebook friends, your colleagues or other contacts in your email.

Or maybe, you are worshipping in a church but you are not sure if the man on the pulpit is called by God or whether the church is just another business enterprise where people are milked dry and dumped. It happens.

Perhaps, you have been receiving text messages from unknown sources informing you of an inheritance you don't know about being paid into your bank account and leaving a number for you to contact for details that could lead to maximizing the benefits of that inheritance and before you know it, you are duped!

It could also be a text message informing you about winning a lottery you never entered into or using things they think you are familiar with to hoodwink you!

Sometimes too, it could be a rich married woman being lured into a love web with the motive to dupe her of her resources or that of her husband via blackmail whether the love scene is real or make-believe.

The stories and the experiences are endless. All over the world, Nigerians are dreaded due to a few bad eggs that have mastered the scam game.

Overseas, it is believed that scamming is the country's third largest export industry, the 'sweetheart swindle' being the most devastating. Not only are women taken for thousands of dollars, but their families are torn apart, their hearts broken and their ability to trust damaged.

Whether they call it 419, Obtaining By Trick, OBT or Yahoo-Yahoo, it is the same story. People are using the internet to perpetrate scams that deprive many of their hard earned money, destroy businesses and make nonsense of their lives.

In the newspapers and the internet everyday, stories are read of Nigerians of all ages who wreak the life of other Nigerians and foreigners through the advance fee fraud running into millions of Naira, Dollars, Pounds Sterling and Euros.

Scammers have developed new ways to try to convince people that their money-grubbing cons are really genuine. Nigerians are duped everyday through business and love scams. Foreigners are the worse victims.

On weekly, nay daily basis, new variations of the so-called Nigerian 419 scam (named for the section of the Nigerian constitution that deals with this crime) appear.

Some scammers are pretty clever but with healthy skepticism, one can still see through them.

One thing is very clear though. Every swindle is driven by a desire for easy money; it's the one thing the swindler and the swindled have in common. Advance-fee fraud is an especially durable con. In an early variation, the Spanish Prisoner Letter, which dates to the sixteenth century, scammers wrote to English gentry and pleaded for help in freeing a fictitious wealthy countryman who was imprisoned in Spain.

Today, the con usually relies on e-mail and is often called a 419 scheme, after the anti-fraud section of the criminal code in Nigeria, because it flourishes here.

Sometime ago, a Nigerian comedian, Nkem Owoh released a song which was the title track in a film he played a lead role. He taunted Westerners with the lyrics "I go chop your dollar. I go take your money and disappear. Four-one-nine is just a game. You are the loser and I am the winner."

Most 419 letters and emails originate from or are traced back to Nigeria but some originate from other nations, mostly also West African nations such as Ghana, Togo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast (Cote D'Ivoire) etc.

In most cases 419 emails from other nations, even European nations like the UK, the Netherlands, Spain etc. are also Nigerian in that the "Home Office" of the 419ers involved is Nigeria regardless of the apparent source of the contact materials. But there are occasionally some "local" copycats trying to emulate the success of the Nigerians, generally not very successfully.

EFCC

In a desperate effort to contain the embarrassment of internet scammers, the Nigerian government established the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC.

Monies stolen by 419 operations are very rarely recovered from Nigeria, although the Nigerian Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) when led by Nuhu Ribadu and Ibrahim Lamorde made some welcome progress in that regard for several years prior to 2008.

Ribadu and Lamorde were, however, replaced by Mrs. Farida Waziri as head of the EFCC in early 2008. Under her leadership, the EFCC was not as active in counter-419 matters as it was under Ribadu and Lamorde. The performance of EFCC in the area of recovery and repatriation of 419ed monies had waned. Mrs. Waziri was replaced in November 2011.

Ibrahim Lamorde returned to the EFCC as Director of Operations in December 2010, and replaced Waziri as Director of the EFCC in November 2011.

Advance fee fraud is still thriving

On April 16 2012, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission claimed it secured the conviction of over 288 persons due to internet fraud. The EFCC also said four fugitives were extradited to the United States while another 234 cases were still being prosecuted.

Lamorde put the counterfeit financial instruments seized by the EFCC in collaboration with the Nigeria Postal Service, at \$24m, 858,937 pounds and euro 1,195, 218,214 respectively.

The anti-graft body boss said, "We must collaborate to, at least, survive the onslaught and then fight back from the position of strength conferred by pooled resources, shared intelligence, joint operations and other efforts such as this."

The Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Mohammed Bello Adoke, also said Nigeria was leading the fight against cyber crime and other economic and financial crimes in West Africa and across the world.

Adoke said, "While we cannot deny the involvement of some Nigerians in these unwholesome practices, we vehemently reject the tendency on the part of nationals of some countries even within ECOWAS sub-region to label Nigeria a 419 nation."

"Our law enforcement agencies have recorded giant strides in the enforcement of these laws as evidenced by the increased arrest, prosecution and conviction of internet fraud related offences recorded monthly."

Nigeria has continued to live under the continual embarrassment of the activities of fraudsters and internet scammers.

A statement posted on the Internet by the U.S. State Department, states that 419 schemes began to proliferate in the mid-nineteen-eighties, when a collapse in oil prices caused severe economic upheaval in Nigeria. The people who are literate, English-speaking, and living with widespread government corruption, faced poverty and rising unemployment. These conditions created a culture of scammers, some of them violent. Victims are often encouraged to travel to Nigeria or to other countries, where they fall victim to kidnapping, extortion, and, in rare cases, murder.

In the nineteen-nineties, at least fifteen foreign businessmen, including one American, were killed after being lured to Nigeria by 419 scammers according to the US State Department.

But Nigerian officials tended to blame the victims. "There would be no 419 scam if there are no greedy, credulous and criminally-minded victims ready to reap where they did not sow," the Nigerian Embassy in Washington was quoted to have said in a 2003 statement.

The following year, Nuhu Ribadu, the then chairman of Nigeria's Economic & Financial Crimes Commission, noted that not one scammer was behind bars.

That year also, Ribadu's commission convicted two crime bosses who had enticed a Brazilian banker to spend two hundred and forty-two million dollars of his employer's money on a fictitious airport-development deal.

One of the most common, longest-standing Nigerian scams is the invitation to share in some ill-gotten gains. To get your hands, supposedly, on the dough, you have to either supply personal bank account details (for ID theft) or make a money-wire or credit card payment to get the money released (which, of course, doesn't exist).

To deal with the inevitable skepticism, the scammers often supply a link to a true story, usually about someone (the benefactor) being killed in a road accident.

Every week, there are scores of reports about Nigerian scams. They come in several variations which include: Hacking into Facebook accounts, then sending messages to all the listed friends claiming the account owner is in trouble and asking for cash to be wired for their rescue; collecting names and email addresses of people who leave messages on obituary site guest books and contacting them with a request for money, supposedly on behalf of the bereaved person; sending complimentary messages to bloggers and article authors (both online and in print) as a way of establishing a friendship that, sooner or later, results in a cash-call attached to a tale of woe; offering to buy your Internet domain name, then asking you to visit a site (their site) where you have to pay to have it valued; and using Microsoft Word documents as attachments. These contain details of the scam story but, because they are not in the main body of the email, they often don't get picked up by scam detectors in your security software.

The one thing you can be sure of with Nigerian scams is that they may not be worded well, but they are big-time sneaky in the way they try to fool people.

And you can be sure Nigerian scammers will find even more new tricks to test your gullibility.

The many stories of the Nigerian con artists

In the United Kingdom, a conman who posed as a Nigerian prince in high society while masterminding massive immigration scam was jailed for seven years. The story written by Chris Greenwood and published in Daily Mail of UK told the story of the Nigerian-born fake prince, Dr Yilkyes Bala who lived the high life and was chauffeur-driven in a Bentley.

But the 'businessman' was a criminal running an immigration racket.

Posing as a member of the Nigerian Royal family, he mingled with diplomats, captains of industry and senior police officers. Dr Yilkyes Bala was chauffeur-driven in a black Bentley and hosted sumptuous dinners at the Dorchester to mix with society's elite. But the supposedly flourishing businessman was an ordinary scammer responsible for an ambitious immigration racket.

Investigators believe he helped more than 100 of his countrymen, including most of his extended family, to enter the UK illegally under false and stolen identities. At the centre of the scam was a corrupt Home Office worker who sold him genuine, but improperly issued, refugee passports for 1,500 pounds each. Bala then used his network of security companies to give the illegal immigrants references and jobs.

They could then "hit the jackpot" and obtain a National Insurance number, giving them full citizen's rights and access to State benefits.

But the racket, which continued for up to 16 years, unravelled when the Home Office employee was caught.

Bala, 55, was sentenced to a seven year jail term from August 1st, after a jury convicted him of conspiring to breach immigration laws.

An Australian named Jill got ensnared in the 419 scam in September 2005 when she was contacted by someone pretending to be the Commissioner of Health in Nigeria, who was apparently looking for Australian companies to renovate some hospitals in Lagos. The potential profit in the deal was a cool \$1 million.

Jill was already running a successful interior decorating business, she saw this as a great opportunity. She said her scam started in September 2005 when she was contacted by someone pretending to be the Commissioner of Health in Nigeria, who was apparently looking for Australian companies to renovate some hospitals in Lagos. The potential profit in the deal was a cool \$1 million.

"I have been in business all my life and feel I'm fairly savvy. One of the things they tell you at a very early stage is that you won't have to part with any money, and like a fool, you believe them," said Jill.

After communicating with the scammers over a long period of time, Jill began to trust her contact. "I really believed they were my friends, how wrong was I," she said.

The scammers cost Jill her business and then led to her marriage break up. "In 2011, my husband and I split because I went public with my experience. He said he didn't want me to expose him and myself to the public, but I felt I had to do it," Jill said.

Brian Hay, who heads up the Queensland Police's Fraud and Corporate Crime Group, said most victims were "smart business people" who were over 45 and held professional qualifications. "We are not talking about stupid people. It's not because they are greedy. They saw an opportunity and got excited".

Also in 2005, Janella Spears, an Oregon woman lost a whopping \$400,000 to a Nigerian scammer. Janella Spears, a registered nurse from Sweet Home, Oregon, said she started sending money to the scammers in 2005 after she received an email promising her several million dollars from a long-lost relative. The fraudsters randomly contacted Spears over the internet, claiming they would offer her a substantial cut of \$20.5m fortune in return for the cash injection which would help move it out of the country.

For Spears, it started, as it almost always does, with an e-mail. It promised \$20 million and in this case, the money was supposedly left behind by her grandfather (J.B. Spears), with whom the family had lost contact over the years. "So that's what got me to believe it," she said.

Spears didn't know how the sender knew J.B. Spears' name and her relationship with him, but her curiosity was peaked. It turned out to be a lot of money up front, but it started with just \$100. The scammers ran Spears through the whole programme. They said President Bush and FBI Director "Robert Muller" (their spelling) were in on the deal and needed her help. They sent official-looking documents and certificates from the Bank of Nigeria and even from the United Nations. Her payment was "guaranteed." Then the amount she would get jumped up to \$26.6 million "if she would just send \$8,300. Spears sent the money.

More promises and teases of multi-millions followed, with each one dependent on her sending yet more money. Most of the missives were rife with mis-spellings. When Spears began to doubt them, she got letters from the President of Nigeria, FBI Director Mueller, and President Bush. Terrorists could get the money if she did not help, Bush's letter said.

Spears continued to send funds. All the letters were fake, of course, and she continued to wipe out her husband's retirement account, mortgaged the house and took a loan out on the family car. Both were already paid for.

For more than two years, Spears sent tens and hundreds of thousands of dollars. Everyone she knew, including law enforcement officials, her family and bank officials, told her to stop, that it was all a scam. She persisted.

An undercover investigator who worked on the case said greed helped blind Spears to the reality of the situation, which he called the worst example of the scam he's ever seen. He also said he has seen people become obsessed with the scam before. They are so desperate

to recoup their losses with the big payout that they descend into a vicious cycle of sending money in hopes the false promises will turn out to be real.

Spears said it would take her at least three to four years to dig out of the debt she ran up in pursuit of the non-existent pot of Nigerian gold.

A Canadian story

In 2009, a Canadian man in a well celebrated scam lost \$150,000 to Nigerian Lottery Scam. John Rempel of Leamington, Ontario, got an email way back in July, 2007 from someone claiming to be a lawyer with a client named David Rempel who died in a 2005 bomb attack in London, England, and left behind \$12.8 million dollars. The scammer said it was a long-lost relative of the victim, or the deceased millionaire had no relatives so they sought someone who shared the same last name.

The unidentified lawyer said his client had no family but wanted to leave the money to a Rempel. It was John's lucky day.

"It sounded all good so I called him," said John. "He sounded very happy and said God bless you. But, then the Advance Fee Fraud came in."

The man told him he had to pay \$2,500 to transfer the money into his name. He then had to stump for several more documents some of which cost \$5,000. The scammer told Rempel he had to open a bank account in London, with a minimum \$5,000 deposit. He said some of the money had been transferred into the account for "safe keeping".

The scammers then upped the ante, sending an email from a "government department" claiming he owed \$250,000 tax on his inheritance. Rempel's contact assured him he'd "negotiated the fee down to \$25,000".

Rempel decided to travel to London to check that the deal was legit. He made his way to Mexico, where his uncle who owned a farm gave him cash and money for a plane ticket. He said: "I had \$10,000 in cash in my pocket and my uncle sent another \$25,000 when I was over there."

Once in London, Rempel met "some people" and handed over the \$10k. The next day, the 419ers showed their target a suitcase they said contained \$10.6m in shrink-wrapped US bills. Rempel demanded further proof, at which point one scammer extracted a bill and "cleansed" it with a liquid "formula" which "washed off some kind of stamp". The process converted the cash into "legal tender", Rempel was told. Rempel said: "I was like holy crap, is that mine? They said 'yes sir, it's yours.' It all sounded legit."

Rempel went back to his hotel room with the magic formula to wait for the 419ers "so they could cleanse all his money". They, of course, disappeared, later claiming they'd "been held up".

The victim then managed to drop the bottle containing the formula, breaking it. He rang his contact who said he'd get further supplies. Rempel flew back to Leamington and waited several weeks until a call which confirmed more formula was available for \$120,000.

Rempel said: "I thought, 'let's work on it, nothing is impossible'" The 419ers told Rempel they "were willing to meet associates in different countries to get cash for the formula", but that they'd need several plane tickets, at \$6,000 a person.

The scammers subsequently confirmed they'd collected \$100,000, but were still \$20,000 short. Apparently, there was "a guy in Nigeria who had it, but another plane ticket was required". The contact then insisted he could only get \$15,000 of the balance and "begged" Rempel for the remaining \$5,000. Rempel obliged, borrowing the money and defaulting on his credit card and car payments.

A week later, Rempel got the call he'd been waiting for "the cash was ready to go if he could just find an extra \$6,900 for "travel costs and to rent trunks to ship the money".

The final contact between Rempel and the scammers was when they called to say they'd arrived at the airport in New York. However, there was a slight snag "security had stopped them and they needed \$12,500 for a bribe.

Rempel, still none the wiser but substantially lighter in the wallet, told them: "No way, I'm cleaned out."

In one last desperate act, Rempel drove to the airport with his parents and 10-year-old brother, but found no trace of his friends or the money. They then went home and called the police.

The final cost of Rempel's mix of greed and remarkable stupidity was \$55,000 from his uncle in Mexico, \$60,000 from his parents to "cover fees for transferring \$12.8 million into his name", plus the money he personally lost "a total of \$150,000.

He said: "They're in it now because of me. If it wasn't for me, nobody would be in this mess. You think things will work out, but it doesn't. It's a very bad feeling. I had lots of friends. I never get calls anymore from my friends. You know, a bad reputation. I really thought in my heart this was true."

A scam too big

But what was described to be the biggest scam ever by the former chairman of

Nigeria's Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Alhaji Nuhu Ribadu involved Banco Noroeste S.A. a Brazilian bank which recorded the "single biggest advanced fee fraud case in the whole world".

Between May 1995 and February 1998, a total of US\$242 million was reportedly stolen from the Banco Noroeste S. A. through offshore banks in the Cayman islands. The money was allegedly remitted by swift transfers through various banks to accounts controlled by Nigerian nationals.

The authorisation for all the transfers was done by Nelson Tetsuo Sakaguchi, a senior official at the bank. The Nigerians, in a 419 plan, came up with a fake contract to build an airport in Abuja. They promised Nelson Tetsuo Sakaguchi a big commission in exchange for funding the contract.

The fraud was detected in February 1998 while Sakaguchi was on vacation, in the process of auditing carried out in readiness for the intended sale of the Bank Noroeste to Spanish banking group Banco Santander. Inquiry revealed discrepancies in the bank's books, with at least US\$242 million missing. Of this sum, US\$190 million had been transferred directly to accounts controlled by the Nigerians or through unlawful money changing operations conducted by Naresh Asnani (a British subject of Indian descent resident in Nigeria) and another Nigerian businessman resident in Enugu.

Following the discoveries, civil actions aimed at recovering the money were commenced in Brazil, Switzerland, Hong Kong, the United States of America and in Nigeria. In addition to the civil actions, criminal complaints were laid in Brazil, Switzerland, USA, Hong Kong and Nigeria.

The accused persons and companies were charged with obtaining by false pretence \$190 million from one of the directors of Banco Noroeste Bank. In prosecution, the Nigerian nationals pleaded guilty to numerous crimes and forfeited \$121.5 million dollars in assets. The woman amongst them too pleaded guilty and received a two and half-year sentence after agreeing to give back \$48.5 million.

Investigators acting for the bank's shareholders persuaded Sakaguchi to visit New York, ostensibly for a meeting with the shareholders, where he was arrested on an international warrant issued by the Swiss government and extradited to Switzerland to answer money laundering charges. He admitted involvement in the fraud. In December 2002, Naresh Asnani was arrested in Miami, while en route to a meeting with lawyers acting for the shareholders, on an international warrant issued by the Swiss Government. He was extradited to Switzerland to answer similar charges of money-laundering. On October 31 2003, he too admitted involvement in the fraud.

The love scam

Besides the strictly business fraud, there were also many reported love scams. The sweetheart swindle scam, also known as the Nigerian romance scam is the worst. This one focuses on manipulating the emotions of a person who is seeking love online. These scam artists meet unsuspecting women (and also men) on dating sites. They know exactly what to say to make the victim fall in love with them and trust them completely. Once the scammer has caught his victim in his trap, he begins to ask for small amounts of money to assist him on daily expenses. Over time, these amounts become more. He needs money to pay his medical bills after falling ill, he needs help because he was mugged, he needs your help buying a plane ticket so the two of you can finally be joined together.

There was a story of one particular scammer who conned countless women since 2007. He was Roy Innocent Moore and he is a professional Nigerian Romance Scammer. Roy Innocent Moore concocted a persona that was complex and varied slightly from victim to victim. Certain things always remained the same however. His mother was from the UK and he was born in Jamaica. After the death of his father, his family relocated back to the UK and he attended Bradford University for Art. He eventually moved to New York City, married and had a daughter. Depending on which of his victims you speak to, Moore was either a widower or recently divorced.

A victim's relative told a US tabloid: "I first came to hear of his name three years ago when he met a family member of mine on a popular dating website. They were in love almost instantly. Each day, he sent her poetry, and romantic emails filled with promises of their future together. He was staying in Nigeria at the time because he had a contract with the "National Museum" in Lagos."

"As time went by and her love for him deepened, he began to have financial troubles. She was more than willing to assist him, knowing that any money she sent him would be returned to her when he came home to America. He still has not shown up on her doorstep though she has sent him thousands in order to bring him here."

"Though he swears his devotion, she is not his only "love." Several women also came forward and shared their stories. The love they feel for him is real, however he is not. Nigerian romance scammers steal personal photos of people that they claim to be them. They are more than happy to send these to their victims. This results in damage not only to the victim but to the individual who truly is in the photographs.

"The problem with this particular scam is that it is so prevalent. When I reported him to my local FBI headquarters, they expressed sympathy but also said that with this scam it is extremely hard for them to catch the criminal. All information that the scammer provides the victim was fake and therefore difficult to track. These women have lost thousands of dollars to this man, and been manipulated into theft and fraud, and they may never truly know justice, and they will never see that money again."

"I know "Roy Innocent Moore" will more than likely never be caught and prosecuted for

his many crimes, but that does not stop me from telling my story. It is my hope, not that he gets thrown in jail, but that by putting out information about him on the internet, it will stop any future victims from falling prey to this criminal."

In another scam, a Nigerian tabloid reported on November 19 2012, how a Nigerian gospel artiste was jailed for defrauding online lovers of 120,000 UK Pounds.

The gospel singer, Oluwamayowa Ajayi, reportedly fleeced four American women he met on the internet dating site of over 120,000 dollars and was jailed for six and a half years at Snakesbrook Crown Court in East London.

Ajayi, 31, who performed under the stage name "Malo Joe" pretended to be an American fighter pilot, a grieving widower and an oil executive to the women he fleeced before the long arms of the law caught up with him.

The crown prosecutor summed up his argument stating how Ajayi lived off the women by lying among others. In one instance, he claimed that he had been held hostage by Niger Delta militants and therefore, his captors needed some ransom before he could be released, otherwise, they would kill him.

Despite the pleas for mercy, it was inevitable that he would be caged. The Judge detailing the seven- count charge ruled that Ajayi had been found guilty by the jury who had found him guilty four days earlier.

In one instance, he tricked and lied to one of his victims who parted with over \$100,000 that he was a businessman who was short of cash and therefore, needed a loan. The woman used some of the money on her credit card and also borrowed from family members to raise the funds.

In another, Ajayi claimed he was in the hands of Niger Delta militants and they would kill him within 20 hours if the woman didn't do anything about the ransom they asked her to pay. She hurriedly sent \$500 through Moneygram to Nigeria, where he then cashed the money.

Just recently, Kudirat Jose of a Lagos High Court convicted and sentenced Promise Ntuen Ekemini to one year imprisonment for hijacking the e-mail of a lawful owner of a property, located in Western Australia valued at \$800,000 (Eight Hundred Thousand United States Dollars), and attempting to sell the property. Ntuen Ekemini was arraigned in April, 2014 on a 5-count charge bordering on conspiracy to defraud, attempt to obtain money by false pretences and forgery. Justice Jose found him guilty of all the charges and convicted him.

Ekemini got into trouble by impersonating Brian Roderick Daniel, owner of a property located at No. 143, Sprinaway Parade, Falcon, Western Australia and offering his property to buyers on the internet without the consent of the owner. The Australian Police alerted the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, to monitor a controlled delivery of some documents related to the transactions to Ekemini. He was arrested at the point of collection of the documents.

Even students are in it

The scam stories are not the prerequisite of just a few. Even university undergraduates are into it. In 2007, for instance, a final year student of the Department of Survey and Geo-Informatics Engineering, University of Lagos, Lawal Adekunle Nurudeen, was sentenced to 19 years imprisonment for obtaining \$27,900.91 from an Australian woman, Pee Loo Rosalind Summer.

The convict was arraigned before Justice M.O Obadina of Ikeja High Court on 19-count charge bordering on obtaining money by false pretence and forgery.

He was found guilty on all the counts and consequently sentenced to 12 months imprisonment on each count. The convict was also ordered to pay the sums of \$5,900, N526, 117.15 and any interest standing to his credit in his savings account with the Ikorodu Branch of a new generation bank, to the victim.

In addition, the convict was asked to pay \$250 monthly to the victim until the total sum fraudulently obtained by him was liquidated. His two plots of land lying and situated at Mowo Kekere Ikorodu bought from the proceeds of the crime, were sold and the money realised remitted to the victim.

The Honda prelude car recovered by Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) from the convict was also sold and its proceeds remitted to the victim.

A statement signed by the then EFCC's Head of Media and Publicity, Femi Babafemi, said the convict who was an undergraduate of UNILAG met the victim on the internet and introduced himself as Engineer Benson Lawson, a Briton working with a multi-national company in Nigeria. "Along the line the victim, a 56- year old woman from Australia told the convict that she wanted a husband and all the men she had met always disappointed her. The convict, who is married with three children instantly applied and told the victim that she had met her Mr. Right."

"To convince his prey, he told the woman that he was a 57 -year old widower and that few years back, his wife and their only child died in a ghastly motor accident in Lagos. He sent the picture of a white man to the victim to foreclose any suspicions. The victim accepted his proposal and that gave room for the next stage of the 419 heist." Few weeks later, he called the woman to introduce himself as Dr. Saheed Bakare and informed her that her 'fiance' Benson Lawson had an accident and needed money for his treatment. The love-struck woman sent some money. "Two weeks after the convict called the victim and thanked her profusely

for her kindness. He now told her that he would like to visit her in Australia so that they could consummate their relationship. He demanded for money for air ticket, police and customs clearances and all sorts. "At the end of the day he duped the woman to the tune of \$47,000 before his arrest and arraignment by EFCC."

A prevailing problem

Despite Nigeria's efforts, the schemes have reached epidemic proportions. A publication by the U.S. Federal Trade Commission said the agency received more than fifty-five thousand complaints about them last year, nearly six times as many as in 2001. The increase is due in part to the Internet, which makes it easy for scammers to reach potential marks in wealthier countries. "If we educate the public to the point where nobody falls for it, then they'll go out of business," Eric Zahren, a spokesman for the Secret Service, the lead U.S. agency in investigating advance-fee frauds, says.

The agency estimates that 419 swindlers gross hundreds of millions of dollars a year, noting losses by victims too embarrassed to complain.

Robert B. Reich, the former Labor Secretary, who has studied the psychology of market behaviour, says, "American culture is uniquely prone to the 'too good to miss' fallacy. 'Opportunity' is our favourite word. What may seem reckless and feckless and hapless to people in many parts of the world seems a justifiable risk to Americans."

The mind-set was best explained by the linguist David W. Maurer in his classic 1940 book, "The Big Con": "As the lust for large and easy profits is fanned into a hot flame, the mark puts all his scruples behind him. He closes out his bank account, liquidates his property, borrows from his friends, embezzles from his employer or his clients. In the mad frenzy of cheating someone else, he is unaware of the fact that he is the real victim, carefully selected and fattened for the kill. Thus arises the trite but none the less sage maxim: 'You can't cheat an honest man' " [419 Coalition note: But of course one can, the 419ers do it all the time, as several of the accounts above demonstrate]

- See more at: <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2015/01/419-world-nigerian-fraudster/#sthash.j3LrOR74.dpuf>

This URL also works for the article for as long as it is good:

<http://www.vanguardngr.com/2015/01/419-world-nigerian-fraudster/>

18 JAN 2015

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

EFCC arrests man for duping Dane 'love' \$100,000

by Fidelis Soriwei

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission has arrested a suspected internet fraudster, Ikechukwu (surname name withheld), for obtaining \$100,000 from a Dane, Hengamesh Misepasi, in a love scam.

The Head of Media and Publicity of the EFCC, Mr. Wilson Uwujaren, said, in a statement on Saturday that the suspected fraudster was arrested by operatives of the commission at Port Harcourt, Rivers State, in response to a petition from the Nigerian Embassy in Stockholm, Sweden.

Uwujaren said the suspect, who met the Dane online, had conned his unsuspecting victim by posing as an American business executive on a business trip to Nigeria.

The arrested fraudster was said to have proposed marriage to the lady after which he started making monetary demands from her.

The EFCC spokesman said the fraudster, who told his victim that he was having some problems with government officials, requested a loan from her.

Ikechukwu was also said to have convinced her to partner with him in a non-existing timber business.

Uwujaren said, "The suspect allegedly met the victim online in February 2013 and falsely represented himself as an American business executive on business visit to Nigeria."

"In the course of the internet affair, Ikechukwu promised his victim marriage and later began to make monetary demands from her, using various excuses."

"Once, he told her that he had problems with government officials and requested a loan. He later cajoled her into partnering with him on a phantom timber business."

Uwujaren said Ikechukwu made demanded \$100,000 from the Dane, ostensibly to enable him to travel to Denmark to meet her but was arrested while

trying to withdraw money he received from the victim through Western Union.

He said the suspect would be arraigned in court on completion of the investigation.

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

<http://www.punchng.com/news/efcc-arrests-man-for-100000-love-scam/>

18 JAN 2015

From the Brisbane/Queensland (Australia) Courier Mail,
sent in by Ultrascan AGI:

Australian victims of online romance scams could be funding
deadly Nigerian terror group

by Neil Doorley
The Sunday Mail (Qld)

THOUSANDS of Queenslanders being ripped-off by lucrative
online "romance" scams could inadvertently be funding Nigeria's
deadly al-Qa'ida affiliated terror group, Boko Haram.

Overseas intelligence has revealed links between the scams
and the Islamic extremist group, who this week massacred 2000
people near the Nigeria-Chad border.

Boko Haram also attracted international condemnation when its
fighters kidnapped 276 schoolgirls from a boarding school last
year.

Research by the Holland-based financial information agency,
Ultrascan AGI, found groups including Boko Haram were tapping
into the cyber scams for much-needed funds.

Officer in charge of the state's fraud and cyber crime group,
Detective Superintendent Brian Hay, said Queensland police had
held long-term "suspicions" about links between the scammers
and Boko Haram.

"Terrorist financing had been researched and discussed over
long periods of time, and enforcement strategies have been put
in place since 9/11 because authorities recognise the necessity
and value of focusing on such funding," he said.

"If you are talking about money from Nigerian scams, or advance
fee frauds, the general belief is that it is going into the pockets
of criminals to maybe fund drug trafficking, firearms, and pornography
operations."

"We are aware that terrorists have used financial crime as a method
of funding operations in the past."

"We do know that Nigerian scammers have a global base and that
some overseas agencies have touted about certain links (with
terror groups)," he said.

"But have we established a nexus? We have our suspicions."

Det Supt Hay said Australians lose about \$90 million a year to
West African frauds, mainly run by Nigerians, who are believed
to be behind about 90 per cent of online "romance" scams in
this country.

"Just this week, Iâ€™ve spoken to an elderly gentleman who came
forward after sending over about \$900,000 through a number
of their scams," he said.

Det Supt Hay said it was imperative law enforcement agencies
collaborated on measures to stem the flow of money to the kingpins
behind the Nigerian scams, who were rarely ever caught.

"So much cyber crime is being perpetrated at a global level, and
weâ€™ve got to improve our communications, our pathways and our
co-operative spirit to work more effectively," he said.

"Queensland officers have worked with Nigerian authorities, the
FBI, and US Secret Service while we've passed on information to
the UK, New Zealand and Spain to combat the scammers, who have
developed a high level of expertise."

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

<http://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/australian-victims-of-online-romance-scams-could-be-funding-deadly-nigerian-terror-group/story-fnn8dlfs-12271882>

15 JAN 2015

Press release from the Nigerian EFCC:

Love Scam: American Victim Lauds EFCC

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC has been commended for helping to recover \$2000 for an American victim of love scam, Margaret Sanders, just as the agency announces the recovery of \$23,886 for another victim.

Sanders who lives in Sherman, Texas, made the commendation after she was presented with a cheque for the sum by agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI.

She expressed delight at the professionalism demonstrated by the Nigerian agency in helping to recover the money which she thought she had lost to the scammer.

The FBI agent who made the presentation lauded the cooperation with the EFCC, while explaining that the FBI only facilitated the repatriation of the money after it was recovered by the EFCC.

Sanders met a suspected Nigerian fraudster, Benjamin Akugbe, online and fell in love with him. The scammer who claimed to be Benny Brown from Warri, Delta State, promised her marriage, and requested for the sum of \$2000.00USD to enable him join her in United States of America.

The money was wired to him through Western Union, into an account with the name, Gladys Ikpoba domiciled with a new generation bank.

After an endless wait for the fiance, Sanders came to the sad realisation that she had been duped. But her efforts to recover the money were unsuccessful until she petitioned the EFCC.

The latest recovery of \$23,886 by the Commission was made in similar circumstances, for Jolanta Kasza, an American based in New York. She was fleeced of \$64,000 by a suspected Nigerian Fraudster, Ndekwa Jindu (aka Dr. Daniel Coffman) in a romance scam.

Kasza allegedly met Coffman online in June 2012, and the fraudster introduced himself as self employed Caucasian pharmacist.

Impressed by the profile, Kasza "fell in love" with both agreeing to get married.

According to her, in the course of the affair, the suspect at different times requested for money under various guise. Before she realised that she was dealing with a con artist, she had lost \$64,000 USD to the fraudster.

She consequently petitioned the EFCC, which through discreet investigation recovered \$23,886 USD. The agency is in the process of repatriating the fund to the victim.

419 Coalition Note: We are very happy that the EFCC was able to recover and repatriate at least part of the losses of these 419 victims. However, it is also fair to note that given both the historical and current billions of dollars lost to the 419ers, only a relatively miniscule amount has been recovered by the Nigerian government and repatriated to victims of 419. Even in the relatively rare cases where 419ers are actually convicted and restitution ordered, the overall performance of the Nigerian Government is dismal. A famous case in point is the Odiawa case of about a decade ago, in which the 419er was convicted, but in which no recovery was ever made, and no restitution ever paid, though Odiawa stole Millions of dollars from the victim and was ordered to pay a million plus in restitution - and the victim to this day has not received one cent in restitution money through the EFCC or from Odiawa himself (who is now out of jail and living happily ever after).

Here is the URL of the Press Release for as long as it is good:

<https://efccnigeria.org/efcc/index.php/news/1148-love-scam-american-victim-lauds-efcc>

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