

Audu faults EFCC's claims on arrest evasion

From Lemmy Ughogbo, Abuja

FORMER Governor of Kogi State, Abubakar Audu has faulted claims of evading arrest by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), stating that he had been outside the country eight days before the purported attempt by operatives of the commission to arrest him.

Audu is wanted for his complicity in the stealing of N4 billion funds of Kogi State during his reign as governor.

The commission had on Monday last week reported a failed attempt by its operatives to arrest the former governor as it claimed he (Audu) fled his Abuja residence.

But Audu in a quick response said he was out for medical treatment as a result of a motor accident he had along Abuja-Jos road some weeks ago and wondered why the commission would go ahead to tarnish his image and give the impression that he had become a fugitive.

In a letter written on his behalf by his lawyer, Chief Mike Ozekhome (SAN) and

addressed to the Chairman of EFCC, Ibrahim Lamorde, he said he flew out of the country through a lawful route - the Nnamdi Azikwe International airport, Abuja and argued that he could therefore not be accused of fleeing especially that he "is a free citizen of Nigeria."

The said letter to Lamorde read: "This is to inform you that Prince Abubakar Audu is at present outside the shores of Nigeria, receiving medical treatment following a ghastly

motor accident he was involved in on September 29, 2012, along Abuja Jos Road. He had legally travelled out of Nigeria through the Nnamdi Azikwe International airport as a free citizen of Nigeria on December 4, 2012.

"As was heavily publicized in the Nigerian media, following the said motor accident, Prince Abubakar Audu had been immediately admitted briefly at the Deef Hospital Aso Drive, Maitama, Abuja, for first aid treatment before he

was flown to a hospital in London for further intensive medical attention as an emergency case, after he had achieved some measure of stability.

"Prince Audu interrupted his medical treatment in London and returned to Nigeria in mid November, 2012, to give away his only daughter in marriage on November 24, 2012. Thereafter, Prince Audu also received a Doctorate Degree of Administration (Honoris

Causa) from the Igbinedion University, Okada, on December 1, 2012, before traveling back to the United Kingdom (U.K) on December 4, 2012, to continue his medical treatment. The flurry of activities had exerted on him, the undue pressure and pains of his injuries. All these activities were widely covered by the national media. The Honorary Doctorate Degree was accorded live coverage by NTA, ITV and other television stations.

Gunmen kill two women in Plateau

From Isa Abdulsalami, Jos

UNKNOWN gunmen yesterday killed two women at Riyom in Riyom Council of Plateau State.

The victims were said to have gone to a market on the outskirts of Riyom town when the gunmen opened fire on them, killing them instantly.

According to the spokesman of the Special Task Force (STF) Operation Safe Haven, Captain Salisu Ibrahim Mustapha,

"the two women were on their way to a local market in Riyom area when unknown gunmen opened fire on them and killed them on the spot. No arrest has been made. Before the men of the STF could get there, the attackers had disappeared into the thin air."

There was another report that a policeman was also killed in a rather mysterious circumstance, but the STF spokesman said he was not

aware of that.

However, the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Deputy Superintendent Abuh Emmanuel said he would contact the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) in charge of the area whether something like that happened. But before filing this story, he said he could not get to him because the line was not going through.

Earlier on Tuesday, after weeks of respite, rampaging gunmen in Riyom Council

killed three people including a member of the STF deployed to the area.

According to Mustapha, at about 8.00am on Tuesday, unknown gunmen attacked Nasarawa village and killed two farmers on their farm.

Also around 1.00pm a mobile policeman attached to the STF was ambushed and shot dead on his way from Sho village in Barkin Ladi to Jos. He was on a commercial motorcycle while his rifle was taken away.

From Karis Tsokar, Abuja

THE Federal Government has signed a grant agreement of more than N50 billion with the Global Fund to expand the prevention and treatment of the human immuno-deficiency virus (HIV) and Tuberculosis.

The grant worth about N50.2 billion (\$335 million) is to fight the acquired immune-deficiency syndrome (AIDS), Tuberculosis and Malaria by helping to create awareness, prevention of Mother to Child transmission, and the protection of the high risk group.

The signing ceremony was performed yesterday in Abuja by the Secretary to the Government of the Federation Anyim Pius Anyim, the Minister of Health Dr. Onyebuchi Chukwu and the Director General of the National Agency for the Control of AIDS (NACA) leading the Nigerian team while the Global Fund Head of Grant Management Division Mark Eldon- Edinton and Andrew Hurst led the other party.

Art exhibition holds in Lagos

A N International Art Expo

Nigeria, Global Fund sign N50b pact on HIV, TB