## **Editorial Suite**

Contributed by Bala Dan Abu Monday, 13 February 2012

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Federal ministries, departments and parastatals are, indeed, citadels of corruption and financial irregularities. That is what the latest audit report released by the Office of the Auditor-General of the Federation is saying. The report has just been released but only to a few highly placed people in government. Most of these departments of the federal administration are guilty of one form of financial misconduct or the other. But the more scandalous aspect of the findings is that indicted officials were never bothered about queries raised over their misconduct even though their attention was drawn to them. In most cases, audit queries were ignored by those queried and they carried on as if nothing had gone wrong. Newswatch's cover story this week is based on the Auditor-General's report for 2009 which indicted virtually every government department, including the State House. In the course of doing this story, we made efforts to reach out to the indicted ministries and parastatals for their reactions. They simply did to us what they did to the Office of the Auditor General, that is, ignored us. Only the Nigeria Customs Service, NCS, reached out to us to say all the issues in the report concerning them have been resolved. The case of the NCS, is not even as serious as those that ignored our requests. It is not a case of fraud but under-remittance and, sometimes, over- remittances into the Federation Account. What the attitudes of the nation's public officials to audit queries suggest is that they do not seem to know that corruption is an offence. They see it rather as a way of life that is typically Nigerian, a culture that should not change. The story which we have titled: Fraud Unlimited and written by Tobs Agbaegbu, senior associate editor and our Abuja Bureau chief, has chronicled for you a long list of indicted government departments, ministries and parastatals and their offences. The story is like opening a Pandora box. It is an indication of what happens daily in government.