

World Bank's N34.53 Trillion Revenue Diversion Revelation Confirms Existence Of A Shadow Government Financial System

The Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria (HURIWA) has reacted with outrage, shock and deep national concern over the disturbing revelation by the World Bank that more than N34.53 trillion in Nigerian public revenue was deducted and diverted through opaque “first-line charges” before reaching the Federation Account between 2023 and 2025. This shocking disclosure by a respected international financial institution confirms the long-standing fears of millions of Nigerians that a dangerous shadow fiscal structure now exists within the Nigerian state — one that permits powerful institutions and politically connected agencies to appropriate public wealth outside transparent constitutional processes and beyond effective legislative scrutiny.

HURIWA states that the implications of this revelation are catastrophic for Nigeria's democracy, economic stability and national survival. At a time when Nigerians are enduring unprecedented economic hardship, mass hunger, collapsing purchasing power, rising unemployment, worsening insecurity, failing public hospitals, underfunded schools and crippling inflation, it is morally indefensible and economically criminal that over N34 trillion could disappear through a system deliberately designed to avoid transparency and public accountability. The World Bank clearly stated that approximately 41 per cent of federation revenue never reached the Federation Account because it was retained through “first-line charges” by government agencies operating under questionable statutory arrangements. This means that while ordinary Nigerians were being told to endure economic reforms and sacrifices, powerful government institutions were quietly operating a parallel financial empire outside meaningful public scrutiny.

HURIWA notes with serious concern that agencies allegedly implicated in this scandal include the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL), the Nigeria Customs Service and other major revenue-generating institutions whose internally retained revenues and cost-of-collection mechanisms have now become subjects of international scrutiny. The World Bank's conclusion that these deductions weakened legislative oversight and created a pro-cyclical spending structure is a devastating indictment of Nigeria's public finance management system. More disturbing is the revelation that some agencies now receive allocations larger than the annual budgets of several Nigerian states and critical federal ministries combined. This is not merely a technical fiscal issue. It is a direct assault on constitutional democracy, fiscal accountability and the social contract between the Nigerian state and its citizens.

HURIWA therefore declares that the National Assembly has failed woefully in its constitutional responsibility to protect public resources and defend the interests of Nigerians. A legislature that permits the operation of massive off-budget spending systems amounting to tens of trillions of naira cannot honestly claim ignorance. The continued silence, passivity and inaction of senators and members of the House of Representatives strongly suggest institutional compromise and political capture. Nigerians elected lawmakers to oversee the executive, not to function as ceremonial spectators while public funds disappear through bureaucratic manipulations. The association further states that if the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), the Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB), the Nigeria Police Force and other anti-corruption institutions fail to launch immediate criminal investigations into this monumental scandal, then the Nigerian people would be justified in concluding that these

agencies have become mere decorative institutions incapable of confronting elite corruption.

Anti-corruption agencies that aggressively pursue petty financial crimes while remaining silent over allegations involving N34.53 trillion lose all moral authority and public credibility.

HURIWA warns that Nigeria cannot survive as a functional democracy where trillions of naira are spent outside transparent appropriation systems while citizens are repeatedly subjected to taxation, subsidy removals, borrowing and austerity measures. No nation can develop under a fiscal culture driven by opacity, impunity and elite entitlement. The association therefore demands the following immediate actions: The immediate establishment of an independent judicial commission of inquiry to investigate all first-line charges, statutory deductions and retained revenues between 2023 and 2025.

A comprehensive forensic audit of the NNPCL, Nigeria Customs Service, and every revenue-generating agency operating retention mechanisms tied to gross federation revenues.

Immediate emergency public hearings by both chambers of the National Assembly to identify all officials and institutions responsible for approving, supervising, or benefiting from the deductions. Full public disclosure of all beneficiaries, amounts retained, legal authorizations, and expenditure records associated with these deductions.

Suspension and prosecution of any public official found to have violated constitutional appropriation procedures or abused statutory revenue-retention provisions.

Immediate reform of all cost-of-collection structures and elimination of automatic percentage-based allocations operating outside transparent annual budgeting systems.

HURIWA further calls on Nigerian citizens, civil society organizations, organized labour, student unions, professional associations, religious bodies, and pro-democracy groups to rise in defence of constitutional government public accountability. The association specifically urges constituents across the country to commence democratic recall processes against lawmakers who continue to shield executive misconduct and institutional corruption through silence and complicity. Public office must never become a license for organized economic sabotage.

Nigeria cannot continue to function as a republic where ordinary citizens are subjected to suffering while politically connected institutions operate unchecked financial empires funded by public resources.

HURIWA is therefore giving the Federal Government, the EFCC, ICPC, the Attorney-General of the Federation and the leadership of the National Assembly until 12 noon tomorrow to publicly announce concrete investigative and accountability measures regarding this scandal. Failure to act decisively will confirm growing public fears that Nigeria's anti-corruption framework has collapsed completely under political interference, institutional capture, and elite conspiracy against the Nigerian people. History will not forgive those who remain silent while the nation's resources are systematically stripped away under the guise of administrative deductions and fiscal procedures.



Rising Wave Of Extrajudicial Killings By Security Forces

A National Emergency

The Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria condemns in the strongest possible terms the growing pattern of extrajudicial killings of Nigerian citizens by operatives of the Nigerian Army and the Nigeria Police Force, describing the trend as dangerous, unacceptable, and a direct assault on the rule of law. Nigeria is fast descending into a state where institutions meant to protect lives are increasingly implicated in their violation. The persistent reports of unlawful killings point to a troubling climate of impunity, weak accountability, and systemic disregard for human rights under the current administration of Bola Ahmed Tinubu. The recent killing of Abdulsamad Jamiu, a member of the National Youth Service Corps, in Abuja, is a painful reminder of this reality. Eyewitness accounts and family testimonies suggest that the young man was shot inside his home in Shagari Estate, Dei-Dei, raising serious questions about the official claim of “crossfire” during an anti-robbery operation. This incident underscores a broader and more disturbing pattern where security agencies routinely provide convenient explanations without transparent, independent investigations or accountability for those responsible. HURIWA recalls with grave concern past incidents, including mass civilian casualties from aerial bombardments in Borno State, where over 200 Nigerians reportedly lost their lives. Such tragedies have too often been dismissed without thorough investigation or justice for victims. These recurring violations signal a breakdown in command responsibility and an alarming tolerance for the loss of civilian lives. The fundamental rights to life and dignity, as guaranteed under the Constitution and international human rights frameworks, are being systematically undermined.

HURIWA is aware of the latest case of intolerable and unacceptable case of brazen daylight extrajudicial execution of a citizen that happened in Delta State just as this was a clear case of daylight execution by the police from the Delta State command. Eye witness account of the incident is to the effect that the victim Ogidi Mena reportedly went to the Effurun main park at Sapele Road to take delivery of a waybill. When he eventually got there, they told him to add money because the pack was a bit heavy. They curiously asked him what was in the waybill, but he told them someone sent him, and they asked him to open it. When they finally compelled him to open it, they saw a Beretta pistol with 4 live ammunitions. They quickly held him down, but he told them he was sent by his friend to help him pick up the waybill. He cried for mercy that he was ready to take them to the particular guy that sent him. The leadership of the motor park tied his legs and hands backward, blocked the gate of the park to prevent a possible attack from Mena's gang and then called ACP Aliyu Shaba to take over the matter, investigate, and unravel the men behind the gun running business.

The Uvwie Area Commander then mandated their patrol team headed by ASP Nuhu Usman, aka Ogbegbe, to go and bring the suspect to the station. Ogbegbe and his team headed straight to the park in order to bring the said suspect, Mena. On getting there, the moment Ogbegbe saw the pistol, he got angry and was "jolificating" in the euphoria of the crowd hailing him. He

cocked his gun and fired Mena's hand. His team assisted and carried Mena into the vehicle alive. At this point, Mena was still alive agonizing in the pain of Ogbegbe's trigger-happy bullet, says an eye witness whose account is broadly accepted as a reflection of what transpired. It was disclosed that when the police team eventually got to the Ekpan station and instead of Ogbegbe Usman to report to the Area Commander Aliyu Shaba, who sent him to bring the boy, just at the car park, they brought Mena out of their patrol Toyota Seinna Vehicle ASP Ogbegbe shot him again three times at the station, ending the life of the young man. Aliyu Shaba, who heard the gunshot on Sunday evening 26th of April when the incident occurred rushed down, ordered that the ASP be tactically disarmed, handcuffed him, chained his legs as well, and detained all of them. ACP Aliyu Shaba reportedly briefed the CP, and they were taken to Asaba yesterday Monday and transferred to Zone 5 Benin today. They would be transferred to Force Headquarters tomorrow and paraded within the week, hopefully. I hope that they will be dismissed and made to face the charges of murder.

OUR DEMANDS:

Immediate Independent Investigations: All cases of alleged extrajudicial killings must be subjected to transparent, independent, and time-bound investigations with full public disclosure of findings.

Accountability and Justice:

Any security personnel found culpable must face the full weight of the law through due judicial processes. There must be no protection or cover-up for offenders, regardless of rank.

Compensation for Victims' Families:

The Federal Government must establish a structured compensation mechanism to provide adequate financial restitution and support to families of victims of unlawful killings by security forces. The killers in uniforms must be identified, prosecuted for murders and dealt with appropriately and heavily to serve as effective deterrence.

Institutional Reforms:

There is an urgent need for reforms within the armed forces and policing institutions to strengthen oversight, enforce rules of engagement, and ensure respect for human rights.

International Oversight:

HURIWA will explore all lawful avenues to engage international human rights mechanisms, including appropriate global bodies, to ensure that allegations of serious violations are independently reviewed in line with international standards. Nigeria cannot continue on this path where citizens live in fear of those entrusted with their protection. The continued erosion of accountability within security institutions poses a grave threat to democracy, public trust, and national stability. HURIWA stands with victims and their families and reiterates its call for justice, transparency, and urgent reforms to halt this dangerous trend.

Nigeria's cost of living crisis:

A Nation on the brink, demanding urgent rescue

The Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria (HURIWA) expresses deep alarm over the catastrophic rise in the cost of living across Nigeria, warning that the country is fast approaching a socio-economic breaking point driven by policy missteps, weak economic management, and a troubling absence of accountability. Data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) confirm what Nigerians already experience daily: runaway inflation, crushing food prices, and a steady erosion of purchasing power. Independent assessments by the World Bank and other global rating institutions further paint a grim picture—Nigeria is grappling with rising poverty, stagnant growth, and deepening inequality at a scale that threatens national stability. Unemployment has reached crisis proportions. Millions of young Nigerians remain locked out of meaningful economic participation, while those



employed face declining real incomes. The informal sector—long the country's economic shock absorber—is itself under severe strain.

It is both ironic and indefensible that Nigeria, a major crude oil producer, now records some of the highest petrol prices among oil-producing nations. This reflects a profound failure in energy policy, the prolonged neglect of domestic refining, and the painful consequences of poorly managed subsidy reforms.

HURIWA also condemns the persistent dysfunction in the power sector under the administration of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu. Businesses are collapsing under the weight of unreliable electricity, households are forced into expensive alternatives, and economic productivity continues to suffer. The absence of clear, measurable progress in power generation and distribution underscores a systemic governance failure.

Equally disturbing is the pattern of underperformance in the implementation of capital budgets over successive fiscal years. The apparent disregard for the Appropriation Act—through delayed releases, poor execution, and lack of transparency—amounts to a serious breach of public trust and constitutional responsibility. Such lapses, which should ordinarily attract sanctions, have instead been met with silence and impunity.

Nigeria cannot continue on this trajectory without severe consequences.

Immediate Stabilization Measures (Quick Wins)

HURIWA calls for urgent, practical interventions that can deliver rapid relief and restore confidence:

Fuel Price Stabilization Through Local Refining: Fast-track operationalization of domestic refineries—public and private—to reduce import dependence and ease petrol prices within months.

Emergency Food Security Plan:

Direct support to farmers, subsidized transport for food distribution, and aggressive measures to curb post-harvest losses to bring down food inflation quickly.

Power Sector Shock Reform: Grant full autonomy to states and credible private investors to generate and distribute electricity, bypassing bottlenecks in the current centralized system.

Enforced Budget Discipline:

Immediate publication of capital budget performance reports, backed by legal consequences for any breach of appropriation laws.

Targeted Social Protection: Expand direct cash support and wage adjustments for vulnerable Nigerians to cushion the immediate impact of inflation.

HURIWA maintains that governance must translate into measurable improvement in the lives of citizens. At present, the gap between policy pronouncements and lived reality is dangerously wide. Nigeria stands at a critical crossroads. The government must move beyond promises and act with urgency, competence, and transparency. Anything less risks deepening public despair and eroding national cohesion. The Nigerian people deserve relief. They deserve accountability. And they deserve leadership that works.