



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE PARLIAM E N T A R Y D E B A T E S

(HANSARD)

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

FIRST SESSION-FIRST MEETING

THURSDAY, 14TH FEBRUARY, 2013

SESSION – 2012/2013



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

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First Meeting of the First Session of the Fourth Parliament
Of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone.

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held on Thursday, 14th February, 2013.

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FEBRUARY, 2013**

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IV. BILL

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SECOND READING

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

(SECOND ALLOTTED DAY)



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

FIRST SESSION-FIRST MEETING OF THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC

Thursday, 14th February, 2013.

The House met at 10:00 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown.

I. PRAYERS

[The Clerk of Parliament, Hon. Ibrahim Sulaiman Sesay, Read the Prayers].

[The Speaker, Hon. Justice Abel Nathaniel Bankole Stronge, in the Chair].

The House was called to Order

II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR WEDNESDAY 13TH FEBRUARY, 2013

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for Wednesday 13th February, 2013. Page1? Page2? Page3? Page4? Page5? Page6? Can somebody move that the record of Votes and Proceedings for Wednesday, 13th February, 2013 be adopted as presented?

HON. ALHASSAN JERO KAMARA: I so move Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. SULAIMAN M. SISAY: Mr Speaker I so second.

THE SPEAKER: Any counter motion?

(Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to)

(Record of Votes and Proceedings for Wednesday, 13th February, 2013 was unanimously adopted as presented)

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I must apologise for going to item III instead of item II on the Order Paper. I now go to item II.

III. SWEARING-IN OF ELECTED MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT (THIRD SCHEDULE OF THE 1991 CONSTITUTION OF SIERRA LEONE)

MR IBRAHIM S. SESAY (*Clerk of Parliament*): Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I present Mr Ibrahim Pateh Bah of Constituency 092.

The following individual subscribed to the oath:

Mr Ibrahim Pateh Bah.

MR IBRAHIM S. SESAY (Clerk of Parliament): Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Mr Ibrahim Pateh Bah has been sworn-in as Honourable Member of Parliament. I now hand over the Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act No. 6 of 1991 and the Standing Orders of this Honourable House.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, is there any one that wish to give felicitations? There seems to be none. Mr Pateh Bah, I must congratulate you on behalf of the whole House of Parliament. I wish you well in your present endeavour.

Mr Clerk!

IV. BILL

THE APPROPRIATION ACT, 2013

SECOND READING

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

(SECOND ALLOTTED DAY)

HON. CLAUDE D. M. KAMANDA: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I stand to make my intervention on the Bill before this House; the Appropriation Act 2013, an Act to authorise expenditure from the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the services of Sierra Leone for the year 2013. This Bill is captioned 'Government Budget: A Statement of Economic and Financial Policy' with the theme

'Accelerating Structural Transformation and Inclusive Green Growth for Prosperity,' delivered in the House of Parliament on Friday, 24th December, 2012. Mr Speaker, I will make my intervention in tandem with Standing Orders 51 and Standing Order 63(3).

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as senior Members of Parliament, we owe a lot to the new Members of Parliament, especially when this is the First Session of the Fourth Parliament. I will say that this is a learning session, especially the new Members of Parliament. Therefore, Parliament is neither run nor deliberated by Tradition or Convention, but by the Standing Orders and the Constitution of Sierra Leone. For now, I find it very difficult to say we on this side and the opposition on the other side of this House. If you look on the other side, the wooden bench has been extended to the other side. Now, it is very difficult for us to say you on the other side. This is because we on this side have occupants on that other side.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, allow me to go through Standing Order 51. It reads: *"On a Motion moved by the Minister and the Member in charge or the Member-in-Charge and if necessary seconded that a Bill is read a second time, the general merit and principles of the Bill maybe debated."* In tandem with S. O. 63(3) says: *"The debate shall be confined to the Financial Economic State of the country and the general principles of Government policies and administration as indicated by the Bill and its estimates."* I have decided to bring this forward because of the start of the debate yesterday. We need to know as Members of Parliament and as we are alive on television and radio the purpose of the debate on the budget. What is expected of us as Members of Parliament as we represent the people? In Standing Order 51, two things came out clearly. The general merits. The Economist will say the other word for merit, the Advantages of this document to the Nation. Second issue the Principles. What this Bill or Document intends or how it intends to address the issue on the Agenda for prosperity. I believe these are the issues we should be addressing. And in Standing Orders 63(3), two things again came out clearly to address the Financial Status. That is, how we get our revenue and how we manage them; and how as a Nation we will cut on wastages. The other issues the general principles of Government Policy. What

policies are in this Bill that will take Mama Salone to the path of prosperity that we address the economic status of this our country?

Mr Speaker Honourable Members, as the adage says, 'March will never come if February do not end'. What do I mean here? The Budget always comes after the Presidential Address. That tells us that they are two in one Document. The Budget compliments the Presidential Address. They are symbiotic documents as we say in the Krio 'res and sup,' S.O.2 Mr Speaker. The Presidential Address na di res an di Budget na di sup fo tek it di res.'

Mr Speaker, Honorable Members, theme here says "*Accelerating Structural Transformation and Inclusive Green Growth for Prosperity.*" What are the indicators that are embedded in this Bill that will accelerate structural transformation? This is what we need to find out Mr Speaker. I will look at three areas: road, energy and prosperity on the ordinary man and woman.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will first of all look at Road and Infrastructure. Infrastructure is the foundation for accelerated development and competitive economic growth. It will fast track the flow of goods and persons as well as delivering its importance to us as a nation. Road is key to a nation's development. Mr Speaker, we have witnessed sessions in this Parliament that have been adjourned because of poor attendance of Members of Parliament due to heavy traffic in the city. The roads are very narrow and are not good. This is what this Bill intends to address. If this nation is to forge ahead, we need to look and think about good roads for every Sierra Leonean. Today, we talk about prices, especially for our local commodities or our local produce. This is because of the inaccessibility of those products. Traders want to access our farmers in the interior. These are no-go areas because of poor roads. This is what this Budget wants to address as we want to move on the path to prosperity.

Mr Speaker, Honorable Members, we have the free health care. Lactating mothers and pregnant women in some areas cannot access those facilities because of poor road network. This is what this Bill wants to address and I believe we are on the right path.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, more investors want to come into the country; but because of poor road network, they hardly come. If these roads are good, there will be more investors, more investments, more employments and more food. This is the issue this Bill wants to address as we move along on the path to prosperity. Our traders hardly access the interior, which means that there is scarcity in the markets. Today, the price of palm oil is high because places where we can get palm oil cannot be easily accessed because of bad roads. This is what this Bill wants to address. And that is the responsibility of the Government. Therefore, we need to address issues raised in this Bill.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what has been done or what is intended to be done is documented in this Speech. Let us look at Page 6, Paragraph 32 of the Budget. Mr Speaker, with your leave 'an amount of Le 234.4bn was paid for road construction nationwide, as compared to Le158.8bn in the original budget.' This tells you the commitment of this Government in the last five years. The pace has been set for the years of prosperity and that is why we need to embrace this Address.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let us go to Page 20, Paragraphs 109-112 which deal with the roads. There you will see the list of roads, including those that ought to be completed within this next five years. The list continues on to the profile estimates on Pages 17 and 18. It again continues on profile estimates on Page 12.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Bill before us as far as the path to prosperity is concerned is good. This is because if any nation is to thrive and roads being the foundation for its development, then, it is on the right footing.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move on to Energy. Energy has a strong influence on all economic sectors for sustainable development. We are in the 21st Century. Every sector of governance needs electricity. The importance of it is that, it will increase self employment. Be it Solar, Thermal Plant or Bumbuna, it will surely increase self-employment. We heard in the last Presidential Address that the ordinary man selling ginger beer benefitted as far as energy is concerned. Another importance of Energy is

that it attracts investors and investments. And that will increase employment in the country. And Solar Energy in the rural areas will increase or reduce congestion in our cities and urban areas. Also, when congestion is reduced in the urban areas, then, definitely health hazard will surely be reduced. And that is the importance of Energy. The President is aware of the enormous challenges the Energy Sector faces. The President did mention that on Paragraph 24 of this Speech. With your leave Mr Speaker I read: "*My Administration will work to sustain the functioning of the Bumbuna and other Hydro.*" Mr Speaker, the President is aware of the problem of Bumbuna and other areas. That is why he did mention in this Speech that he will work very hard to see how best to address the issue of Bumbuna. Therefore, there should be no cry or political gain making on the issue on Bumbuna. The President is aware because he is a man who listens. He listens to the voice of the common man or woman.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let us look at Paragraph 34, in tandem with Paragraph 113. Paragraph 34 is on page 6. That tells you the commitment of Government in the last five years. Paragraph 113, Pages 20 says: "*Government is therefore allocating an amount of Le82.8bn.*" We also have our Development Partners who had offered Le19.3bn. That tells you the commitment of this Government for the Energy and Power as far as the Agenda for Prosperity is concerned.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will end up my intervention on the issue of prosperity on the common man and woman. That is the bread and butter issue. During the last five days debate in this House, Honourable Members on the other side did mention that prosperity needs to be seen on faces of the common man and common woman. We are aware of that and this has been addressed in this Bill before us. People want to eat. People need jobs to make life comfortable. Mr Speaker, we need to get employment. Either self-employment or employed by Government or the Private Sector. On the issue of self-employment, the Government has a responsibility by creating an enabling environment for our investors. The country has to be attractive to investors. Agriculture provides self-employment. Government has put in this Document to attract Investors and Investments so that at the end of it all, our people will gain employment.

If we turn to Paragraph 55 of the Budget, Page 10, with your leave Mr Speaker it says: *"Government recognises that transformation is contingent on the active participation of the private sector. A strong partnership with the private sector is imperative for job creation, poverty reduction and accelerated growth. While Government will continue to facilitate their enabling environment for the private sector to thrive, it is incumbent on every private sector to undertake investments venture within the framework of Government's Policy."* That tells you how much Government is concerned and how Government is determined to create the enabling environment. And if you go further to Paragraphs 43 and 56, it depicts the environment Government has created for our Investors. In my Constituency, we have the first step, which is 'the Economic Zone.' This was as a result of the enabling environment that has already been created. We have the ADDAX and the others in the country. These are Investors that have created employments for our people. What is best is found on Paragraph 58. What has the Government done in this Bill for our common man and woman in the business sector to thrive? With your leave Mr Speaker, it says: *"We believe that the ordinary Sierra Leonean has much to deliver if given the necessary policy protection and support to move our country forward. in this regard, we have developed the competition and consumption protection policy, the intellectual property right, and the local content policy for economic growth and participation of local economic agents and enterprise development in our country."* We want Sierra Leoneans to be billionaires and since it is the responsibility of Government to create that environment, to put policies or programmes in place, this is what is embedded in Paragraph 58. We want to commend the Ministry officials that put together this Bill for us as a Parliament to go through. I believe that when we come to the Committee Stage or Third Reading, where we have the authority to amend certain issues, to make reduction or addition, we will ensure the necessary changes.

Mr Speaker, Honorable Members, let us look at the economic risk. People talk about high prices on food and fuel. This has been addressed in this Bill. If you turn with me to Paragraph 137, you will see what I am talking about. What have been put in place in

this Bill for us as MPs to look and see the contributions we will make? It states with your leave Mr Speaker: *"we have witnessed over the past years the external shocks in the international food and fuel prices have had disproportionately negative impact on our people. In particular, higher international food prices to worsen food security. In such instances, Government will resolve to use physical measures to help those who are most vulnerable; especially in respect of food hikes, food drivers, limiting the fiscal space for infrastructure financing."* This is how responsible this Government is. This is a caring Government. Government cares for its people. Therefore, in the area of self employment, I did mention that Agriculture provides about 70% for self-employment.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to end up with self-employment in the area of Agriculture. It is no secret that there are women and men in the provinces whose lives are spent in the area of farming. And as a Government, if you look through Paragraphs 30, 118 and 119, you will see the commitment that this Bill has presented to address Agriculture. We believe the issue of Agriculture is addressed. There is the issue of self employment. And the rate of self-employment will be increased. What we want to make clear here is that, we want to see the ABC functions, we want to see IFBS develops; we want to see the programme of the smallholders' commercialisation programmes be felt in all the Chiefdoms as well as the rural areas. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with these few words, I thank you (*Applause*).

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. I am Honourable Bashiru Silikie, representing the young people through Constituency 72. I want to make my contribution on the 2013 Budget, being an Act to authorise Expenditure from the Consolidated Fund for the services of Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as a young man, I will concentrate my contribution to the youths, especially when the President has dedicated his life to the youths of this country. He has dedicated his Government to the youths for the next five years.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to remind Honourable Members that when the President was here presenting his Speech, he provokingly said that he has not seen

most of his friends because of boycott. I want to tell the President that it is not only because of boycott, it is because of insincerity. We know the problems of our people but we fail to talk about them. We fail because we want to appease our political parties. These are the reasons why the President did not see most of his friends on either side.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the youths are faced with immense challenges in this country. The President made a lot of commitment to the youths. But when you look at this Budget, little is being done for the youths. Mr Speaker, 2013 is a year dedicated to the youths. If you go through the budget and compare this allocation with the 2012 Budget, there are lots of disparities. The Budget was reduced drastically. If you go to Annex Two, under Non-Salary, Non-Interest Recurrent Budget Allocation for the fiscal year 2011 to 2015, Subhead 303; Ministry of Youths, Employment and Sports, Office of the Permanent Secretary, the money allocated in 2012 was Le 6 billion and Le19 million. The 2013 allocation, which is a year for the youths, is Le4.7 billion.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I don't know why the disparity. If this year is being dedicated to the youths and the Budget is being reduced, I don't know how the youths are going to be capacitated. Our Youths are faced with immense pressure. The Rural youths, who are engaged in Agriculture, lack the capacity to acquire their own tools. The bulk of these youths depend on Agriculture for their livelihood. They cannot afford to buy the tools to do their farm work. They lack the necessary support. My Constituency for instance, Constituency 72 in the Baoma Chiefdom, the bulk of the youths in that constituency depends on mining. They do not have the capacity to acquire these tools. They cannot even mine nowadays because of the economic conditions. In 2007, they used to buy one shovel at Le12, 000. Today, the cost of a shovel is Le50, 000 (*Applause*).

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my people in Baoma Chiefdom are jobless. They are jobless because they cannot acquire these tools for mining and farming. They do not have the capacity to do their work. And a lot of emphasis is being placed on Agriculture.

But what has that got to do with our people down there? Where are these tractors? A lot has to be done Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if we convert the budget allocated for the youths into dollars, we are talking about \$1.9. We have 33% of the youths between the ages of 18 and 35. If you divide that money, each youth will have \$100. What is \$100 Mr Speaker? If you go through the Budget, under the Capital Expenditure Estimates by Ministries, Departments and Agencies, and by Projects for the Youth and Sports, there is no project for the youths. The only Project under this Budget for the youths is the Youth Employment Support which is 'cash for work'. That is not Government's own Project. That is the Project from the World Bank (*Applause*). If you go to the other Ministries, you will see many projects. But there is no Youth Project in the entire Budget and the President has dedicated this Government to the youths. Why should he do so? Is it because we rallied behind him during the elections? Or is it because we did the anomalies for him to be there? Did he dedicate his life to the youths just on paper? Up to this moment Mr Speaker, we have not got a substantive Youth Minister. All other Ministries have got Ministers. And a President who has dedicated his life to the youths has not appointed a substantive Youth Minister (*Applause*). All other Ministries have got Ministers and the Youth Ministry has not started functioning.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the youths of this country, who are between the ages of 15 and 35 are youths in either Secondary schools or Tertiary institutions. These are the youths that suffer a lot. The struggles in the universities are enormous for our youths. I do not know what Mr President meant when he said he has dedicated his Government to the youths. The University fee for Law Degree is about Le8 million. Where do you expect my father in the village to raise that amount of money? If you go to IPAM, University of Sierra Leone, the first year fee is Le3, 500,000. That is very expensive Mr Speaker. What will happen at the end of the day? One of my constituents had a very good result to enroll into Fourah Bay College. He cannot enroll because his father cannot pay for him. He has been perambulating around begging me to pay for him. He wants to do Law. Where can I take Le8 million from? The President has

dedicated his service in the next five years to the youths. The President has a very good vision. The Youth Commission is there in existence, but what is happening with that Youth Commission? We have heard about the Youth Commission from 2010. Nothing has happened. Even structures have not been put in place. We only have the Directors and the Commissioners. From 2010 to date Mr Speaker, I want to assure you that nothing has been done to the Youth Commission.

Mr Speaker, Honorable Members, they got \$10m from World Bank. That money was meant to capacitate the Youths of this country. That \$10m was shared amongst three NGOs to train Youths. Where are the Youths? Where are the Youths which they have trained? The Youths are in-capacitated. They do not have the right education. They have been mis-matched between the curriculum and the job sector. We need to do a lot to make sure that the right education is being introduced to the Youth or else, we will have the Youths in the streets begging for jobs. We have graduates here, at least ten or more of us this is our first job. We left the University, we came out with a very good result but we cannot secure a job. Your children are there who do not have jobs because either they did not do the right courses or they did the right courses but there are no jobs for them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want the President to look into the Youth Commission. This Commission should not just be on paper. The Commission should be active and functional. The Commission should cater for the youths of this country. This Budget and the President's Speech are not in any way in tandem with each other. This is because if you look at the President's Speech, you will see the commitment of the President. The President's commitments are placed on the youths and the Budget allocated to the youths is very much abysmal.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I now go to sports. Our young people in this country depend on sports. That is football and all sporting activities. What is happening to the sporting activities in our country? We are here watching all kinds of football matches. The Ivory Coast and other countries we now admire we were at par. But today, we

cannot write anything home about our sport activities. A small sum of money has been allocated to the Ministry of Youth and Sports. That amount cannot even help the Youth Sector not alone the sporting activities. Most of our youths gain their own employment through sports. These are frustrated youths in the streets. They participate in sports activities all the time. Don't we have all it takes to qualify for World Cup?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to crave the indulgence of the President to put more efforts, create more jobs so that the youths can be empowered. It is only the youths who can move this country forward. Thank you very much Mr Speaker *(Applause)*.

HON. BABATUNDE LEWALLY: Mr Speaker, S. O. 2 Sir. Bisimilai... - *(Interruption)*.

THE SPEAKER: Excuse me Honourable Member, what are you doing?

HON. BABATUNDE LEWALLY: I am giving my contribution Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: What you are doing now has been done by the Clerk at the commencement of the Sitting. Can you please proceed with your contribution?

HON. BABATUNDE LEWALLY: All thanks and praise is due to the Lord of the Universe. Mr Speaker, I rise to contribute to the Government Budget and Statement of Economic and Financial Policy for the Financial Year, 2013; with the theme, *"Accelerating Structural Transformation and Inclusive Green Growth for Prosperity,"* delivered by Dr Kaifala Marah, Minister of Finance and Economic Development in the Chamber of Parliament, Tower Hill, Freetown on Friday, 21st December, 2012.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, having read through the Budget Speech, it directs me to one of the verses in the Bible, in the book of Jeremiah Chapter 11:29. Mr Speaker, with your leave it says: *"I know the plans I have for you, the plans to give you hope and a better future."* This is what this document is all about. I am surprised to hear my colleague who has just spoken saying that the Budget Speech is not in tandem with the Presidential Address. He is very correct. But I want to disagree with him. Mr

Speaker, the first page of the Presidential Address makes it clear. Mr Speaker, with your leave Page 2, the 9th Line says: *"we will equitably distribute the fruits of prosperity to all. We will respect the rights of all. We will focus on training and employment of youths and we will continue the restoration of discipline, law and order in society."*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, please let us all allow the Honourable Member to make his presentation.

HON. BABATUNDE LEWALLY: He went further to say in our Agenda for Prosperity that: *"we will have to diversify the Economy in due course and empower human capita with appropriate education to be part of the programme implementation."* Mr Speaker, let me take you back to the Budget Speech, No.3. It says: "The Agenda for Prosperity has eight core values that are inter-related, complementary and mutually reinforcing. The first part of it is economic diversification. The President said in our Agenda for Prosperity, we will have to diversify the Economy. Mr Speaker, this is very serious because when we read through this Speech, we did not understand the contents of what we were reading. Today, what this Document is telling us is about Corporate Governance in the sense of diversifying our economy.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, please in matters of pronunciation if you go to certain parts of the world and you listen to some people how they speak, we are doing well here (*Applause*).

HON. BABATUNDE LEWALLY: Mr Speaker, Honorable Members, what we need to understand is that, this Budget Speech is all about Corporate Governance. It simply means strategies put together and combine various investment packages, such as our gold. We place the gold portfolio for investment. We will create a portfolio investment for diamonds, bauxite and rutile. In overseas countries, the Honourable Ansu J. Kaikai knows very well when we talk about diversifying our economy. We are talking about Stocks and Bonds, including Real Estate. In Sierra Leone, we know for sure that our Stock Market is not in a better condition. It is not working at all. Our Bond is not in working order. Our Real Estate market is not in working. It is a very weak market.

Mr Speaker, Honorable Members, let us look at Page 2, Paragraph 8. It says: *"Nevertheless, our policy makers having seen that global economic growth in 2013, we will be higher than that of 2012; allowing Sierra Leone to capitalise on renewed economic optimism. Mr Speaker, the goal of economic diversification is to reduce risk."* My Government intends to reduce risk to portfolio management. The APC Government is in Governance. We can tend to reduce risk in... - *(Interruption)*.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, do not allow anybody to distract you. We are all here to learn.

HON. BABATUNDE LEWALLY: Mr Speaker, Honorable Members, taking into consideration what we call Economic Volatility. When we bring all these Stocks and Bonds and Real Estate together, we must take into consideration the upside and downside movement of our economic investment. For example, when we invest, we know for sure that not all private entities, individual businesses and companies can move up or down in profit at the same time and at the same rate. Page 13, Paragraph 71 and 72, state: *"Government is also working with our Development partners for the establishment of a Transformation Fund where slice of all our minerals and petroleum, tax and non-tax revenue should be deposited."* I want Honourable Members to take note of this.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the second pillar is managing our natural resources. The Speech says: *"my Government intends to manage our natural resources prudently by managing our land, our soil, our air, the water, everything which the ultimate focus will benefit and sustain our present and future generation. We intend to put a proper land use policy. We also intend to manage our water prudently and also our biodiversity conservation. This will in turn help to give us sustainable productivity in our agriculture, fisheries, mining, tourism and forestry. It will also address the people and their livelihood and the quality of life and also productivity in our human development policy."*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we also talked about the core pillars, i.e., International Competitiveness. This is the degree to which a country meets all the criteria of international market standards at the same time maintaining and expanding the real income of its citizens. Mr Speaker, we must also take into consideration the factors of competitiveness. This is what this Speech is all about. A project cost, export financing, technological and management capability, partnership and multi-lateral development (*Applause*).

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Budget Speech talked about Human Development. Personally, I believe this is the way forward for this country and not infrastructural development. This is what a responsible Government needs to do (*Applause*). By developing and expanding the minds of our youths, men and women would enlarge people's choices. What our Government intends to do is to encourage each and every Sierra Leonean in terms of human development and to acquire better education so as to ensure a decent standard of living. I believe this is where my Government and this Budget spending will be focused.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will not sit down without mentioning what the Deputy Minority Leader said. The Budget is bound to come. I believe it has to come. The Minister of Finance has to present it to this House which demonstrates good governance. That is a tradition. By presenting this Budget, it demonstrates in this Well that this Government intends to spend and secure the life and well being of its citizens. This Budget is just an economic template. But it is going to ensure an equitable distribution of financial resources.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as far as I am concerned, this Budget is rational in nature. It is impressive and supports everything the President has said in his Speech. I want to thank the Minister for presenting this document to us. Indeed, our responsibility is to ensure that we scrutinise, analyse, and debate it and pass it into law so that the people of Sierra Leone will not only prosper but share the wealth of this nation equitably. I thank you.

HON. KOMBA E. KOEDOYOMA: Thank you Mr Speaker. I am going to be very brief. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me also make my own comments. My own is 'Green Growth for Prosperity.' Honestly, this Budget, like the previous ones is a great departure from Budgets that this country used to make. Each time there was going to be a Budget Speech, it will attract national attention. Everybody will be glued to their radios. Those who do not have the opportunity of coming to this great House will glue to their radios. This is because they will be expecting hikes in prices. But like the previous ones, this involved from its inception, every group of persons in this country took part in the discussion that surrounded its formulation. I am happy that out of that discussion groups came out with this policy. To start with, this is a very good start (*Applause*). We are told that this budget is meant for the prosperity of Sierra Leoneans. We have now moved from the Agenda for Change to the Agenda for Prosperity. And this Agenda seems to address or will be built on the gains already made during the Agenda for Change. I am worried about few issues. And that is going to be the bases of my contribution. Worried in the sense that we will really need to ask ourselves have we really made a change? Have we? If we have made a change, then, we should be seeing the prosperity in our doorsteps. My answer to all of these is no. We have not made a move in that direction. I don't think there has been any change, even in our own very lives in this Parliament. We still live a very poor life. We have still not changed our attitude and this is reflected even on the streets of Freetown. If you take a walk around Freetown, you will notice that the capital city is as dirty as 'Bomɛ.' We are talking here that a change has been made. That change is still questionable. But since the majority of the other side of this House is saying we have made a change, I will restrict my own contribution.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I now move to the details of this Speech. The ideas in this document are very beautiful and I must thank the hard working staff of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development for putting together these ideas which came out of that public discussion held at the Miata Conference Hall in Freetown. For that I will just say kudos to all of you.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me go to the issues I wanted to say. Mr Speaker, the Agenda for Prosperity is based on eight core pillars. For those of you who would want to read, I refer you to Paragraph 3, Page 1. For ease of reference, I would refer you to that page but for those who would want me to do so just briefly go over this I would do so with the leave of Mr Speaker. Among the eight core pillars of this Agenda for Prosperity are the following: *"Economic Diversification, Managing Natural Resources, Human Development, International Competitiveness, Employment and Labour, Social Protection, Governance, Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment."* I will briefly go step by step to look at what preparations have been made for us to move into these areas. We would have made changes in our own lives to be able to appreciate those eight pillars which have been put forward here for us to move on to the Agenda for Prosperity. But since the majority has said they have had some changes in their lives, let us look at the various pillars. I have not experienced any change Mr Speaker. I am being honest to myself. I am speaking for, the interest of the country. I have the interest of Sierra Leone at heart. Not a personal interest. This is why I am saying that no change has been made in this country. Why should we be moving to something else when we have not even prepared ourselves for prosperity?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let us look at the Economic Diversification. Do I need to go over what I did say here on the President's Address to this House? Yes, you were not here so I will repeat so that you will be able to understand very clear. I want to take it from this angle. I want to talk about the economic diversification we are beating drums all over this country. Has there been any economic diversification? My good colleague who doubles as Deputy Majority Leader knows it very well. Mr Speaker, for those who do not know what Economic Diversification means, I will tell you in very simple terms. Mr Speaker, the structure of the country does not even cater for diversification. I am talking of the generality of the country here. We are talking about the economic developments which are taking place in the various areas of this country. My colleague from Shenge was talking about the bad roads which exist in that part of the country. But here the Government had put in place a very beautiful white elephant

in the name of jetty at Shenge. We cannot access the importance of that jetty and I do not see how the economic practice can help the rest of the country in terms of providing fish for those areas which need fish. The roads are not good to transport the fish. So, how can you call that Economic Diversification? I go back to Kono. The Kono Road is being approached from two fronts. The Honourable Paramount Chief did say that we now seeing green light at the tunnel. I do not know whether it is a smoke. There is an economic desert in this area because there is no economic activity taking place there. The road stops at Yeyi in Tonkolili District. Therefore, when we talk about economic diversification, we must have in place a programme that would touch on every facets of this country so that we can all benefit. When we talk about ADDAX in the Makeni axis, ADDAX touches on the lives of everybody in the Makeni axis. But let us talk about African Minerals and Koidu Holdings. African Minerals touches on the lives of almost every area that it operates. As a Pastor to thyself be honest and as a Pastor I expect you to be telling the congregation the truth. But when you begin to tell them things which are far away from the truth, then, one begins to wonder how the Parliament of this country has changed. I would have loved that some of you would have known the recent history that has happened. Over two thousand (2,000) people have been sacked from the operations of that Koidu Holdings.

Mr Speaker, Honorable Members, let us come to the management of the natural resources of this country. Are our resources properly managed? They are not Mr Speaker. We still need to put in place a management programme that will take on board our resources which will go to benefit the rest of our poor people in this country. Take the case of gold. Gold is almost found everywhere in this country, particularly in Tonkolili, Kono and Kailahun Districts. Gold is mined in many places today. The small scale miners easily take these across our many porous borders. A mechanism has not been put in place for us to be able to harness the wealth that is coming from the mining activity so as to be able to manage our affairs. So, how can we say we are marching on to prosperity when we have not put in place management programmes?

They are there on paper. We need action and not paper work. We have been on it for many years and we have been singing praises about this.

Mr Speaker, Honorable Members, I want to look at Human Development. Our Human Development Index is one of the poorest along the West Coast of Africa. I say so with proofs. For example, in the London Mining area, our Sierra Leonean brothers are not given the necessary attention they deserve to be able to train themselves. Instead, we go to Ghana and bring technicians to head the operations of our mining sector. This is because we believe that the only people who can provide the lead in that area are foreigners. We bring third grade South Africans here. The recent changes that have taken place in the Koidu Holdings Management is a case in point. And I don't know that would lead us to human development process that will lead this country away from poverty and lead us into the prosperity. We are not ready for International Competitiveness. My colleague from Waterloo was talking about an economic zone because fruit factory has been built there. That fruit factory is a 'white elephant.' It is not operating. So, I don't see how we can internationally compete. Is it a white elephant or is a red elephant (*Laughter*)? We are still far away from being ready.

Mr Speaker, Honorable Members, much has been said about Employment and Labour. My young colleague has been delivering here about employment for the youths. The President himself in his Speech to this House said he was going to dedicate his entire life to the youths. We are yet to see the Ministry properly and functionally organised. There is no Minister for now. There is nobody officially ordained as Minister of that Ministry.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you read newspapers every day, you will be surprised about the social injustice practiced in this country. Mr Speaker, let me just make specific reference to our CID Headquarters, where they detain people. Colleague Members will be surprised to find out that there are no mattresses for those who are detained in that place. They lie down on the bare floor. I will not even talk about the other police stations and that is an inhuman treatment to Sierra Leoneans. This is most

unfortunate, particularly at this time of our development. And yet, we talk about prosperity when a large number of our colleagues are languishing in those police cells. Let me tell you that when the SLPP was in power, the Cells had mattresses. You have stolen them all away (*Laughter*).

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me go to Governance. We are still far away from good governance. We are trying but much needs to be done. In all the areas, we still find poor governance system. My colleague Member of Parliament from Fourah Bay was trying to talk about good governance. I sympathise with him because he was fighting and did not know what to say with regards to the establishment of good governance. It appears to him that he was making a point with regards to good governance.

Mr Speaker, Honorable Members, I now look at Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. I need not say much on this because all the women, including the Honourable Isata Kabia from Lunsar had been calling on the Government to empower them, to increase their percentage representation at all levels. The few they now have are still not very satisfactory. They now have Chief Justice, Auditor-General, Solicitor-General etc. But they need more women in respectable positions. Let us look at what the Minister said. I will refer you to Paragraph 4, Page 1. With your leave Mr Speaker I read: *"Given the plan strategies and objectives, the success of the Agenda for Prosperity will ultimately be the responsibility of Government."* But he goes further to say that *"without the support of the Civil Society, the Youth, the Private Sector and the International Community success will be difficult to achieve."* This is a big challenge for all of us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is a challenge that has been thrown to this House, and in particular to our constituents in general. It will not only be the task of Government to see through what I have briefly gone through. And this explains the reasons why I have said that for us to be able to move on to this great Agenda for Prosperity, we will not go out without bread and butter in the morning. Some of us even struggle to come here because we would not have had breakfast. It is not there.

The means for it are not there and yet we are being bombarded with the fact that we are in the age of prosperity. Here is the challenge, not only for Government but for all of us to be able to put our hands on deck and push the wheel to success. Therefore, the whole essence of this Speech is all about bread and butter which my colleague from Constituency 095 was talking about. I agree with him Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have moved from billions to trillions. Naturally, Budgets are mere forecasts. They are forecasts of what we intend to do for our people. We could make Budgets; but do we have the means to achieve all these goals. That is the problem we now have Mr Speaker. Our means to be able to actualise our goal as a Government lies in our revenue collection exercise. There are many leakages in this country. Our borders are very porous. The leakages in our system that collects our revenue are many. We need to take care of these leakages first. Our precious wealth is going into private pockets. We have to fight hard so that we can be able to attain the goals we have set up. We need to put a lot of efforts in that regard. We would not only be asking our donors to help us. I think it is high time we began to put ourselves together. I am happy that steps are gradually taken to regularise the situation at the National Revenue Authority (NRA). I thank the Leadership very much. We hope that the NRA Leadership will help to bring in more revenue that will help us to be able to achieve some of these goals. But in order to be able to achieve some elements of success, we need to give Government our total support, particularly in the area of vital information. And for my colleagues who are coming from border areas where our trading activities take place, we should be able to inform Government to clog those areas. I am particularly talking about Kambia, Pujehun etc. And those of us who have constituencies along our coastal areas should be able to provide vital information to our security agencies, particularly in the area of fishing. A lot of poaching is taking place in our territorial waters. Vessels coming from Europe poach in our resourceful waters. And we need to take remedial steps to be able to correct this situation so that the required revenue comes into the Government coffers. I thank you for your attention (*Applause*).

HON. ABUBAKARR KOROMA: Thank you Mr Speaker. My name is Honourable Abu Bakarr Koroma from Constituency 057, Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District. Thank you again for giving me this opportunity to say a few words on this Budget. This is a Budget for the fiscal year 2013, read by Dr Kelfala Marah on Friday, 21st December, 2012. Before saying anything on the Budget, I want to take this opportunity to convey my people sincere thanks to His Excellency the President for erecting a solar energy facility at Kontha Line and also for choosing Mamamah for the construction of the proposed new Airport and a new city. All these facilities are going to be in my constituency in the Koya Chiefdom. My people are grateful to His Excellency the President for choosing that area.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we all know when the APC took power in 2007, the Economy was in a mess. And because of His Excellency the President's astute leadership, the Economy has been moving steadily throughout these years. When I was going through the other Budget Speeches delivered in this House, I concentrated on the domestic revenue collection exercise. This is because if the Agenda for Prosperity is going to succeed, then, the domestic revenue must also succeed. I want to say special thanks to the NRA officials for giving us the money for us to do all the Programmes that the President has been doing for the past years (*Applause*).

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, to show that the Economy is growing, I want to compare starting from 2009 to present in terms of our domestic revenue collection exercise. In 2008, our domestic revenue collection was Le492.7bn in the first three quarters of the year. In 2009, Le551.2bn was collected. That registered an increase of Le58.5bn. That is a very great improvement. In 2010, the domestic revenue collection was Le703.4bn. We had an increment of Le152.2bn. In 2011, our domestic revenue collection was Le1.1 trillion. There was an increment of Le703.4bn. In 2012, domestic revenue collected was Le1.3trillion. An increase of 0.2 billion was made.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, some people are saying that this Government is doing much. We have to commend this Government. In fact, when the President took

up office in 2007, Sierra Leone was in a big debt. We couldn't afford to meet our responsibility to pay our commitment to international organisations.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I now go to the 2011 Budget, delivered by Dr Samura Kamara on 26th November, 2011. It says *"the estimated outstanding obligations of subscription to international organisations which span as far back as 1990 are about 30.96 Million Dollars. To normalise our relation and to enhance our participation in regional and international bodies, my Ministry will work with MDAs to negotiate treatment for arrears to seek fully and partial impersonation through shorter, medium and long term arrangements."* In this regard and to comprehensively program the payment to international organisations within the medium expenditure framework, consistent with the foreign exchange council of the Bank of Sierra Leone, all budgetary provisions and payments of subscription to regional and international organisations will be consolidated and centralised at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development." The SLPP didn't do this at all. This responsible APC Government is consolidating all debts to one Ministry, so that all debts would be paid.

Mr Speaker, Honorable Members, the President met the Lungi International Airport about to be blacklisted. This means that Sierra Leone would have lost huge sums of money because no airplane would have been allowed to land in Sierra Leone and that would have cost us good money. Mr Speaker with your leave I read: *"Mr Speaker, when the APC took over governance, the Airport was in the blink of being blacklisted by the International Aviation Authority on account of its mismark state. We privatised the rehabilitation of the Airport and today our actions have shown fully functional, increase electricity, rehabilitated runways, new scanning equipments for security."* I am sure those who have been travelling and using the International Airport would attest to that. All that the President has said in this Speech is true. Mr Speaker, let us look at Page 3. Page 3 tells us about the macro economic performance for the year 2012. I have with me here the Exclusive Newspaper for Wednesday, 6th February, 2013. The Newspaper contains a speech delivered by the Bank Governor, a very reputable person in this nation. With your leave Sir I read: "your Excellency, distinguished Ladies and

Gentlemen, Honorable Minister of Finance and Economic Development, the Honorable Minister of Finance and Economic Development has given us an exhaustive analysis of the state of the economy in his statement for the financial year 2013. Sierra Leone's economy continues to experience significant growth with real GDP estimated at 18.4%." This is what the Bank Governor said. He is a reputable person in this country. He said the GDP is estimated at 18.2%, including mining activity and 6.3%, excluding mining activity. He went on to say *"I am pleased to report that inflation has been on the decline."* If inflation has been on the decline, then, it means our people should have money to spend in the market. Mr Speaker, permit me to give you a summary of the key development in the financial sector in 2012. A total asset of the banking industry was Le19.46% and Le2.98 trillion in 2011 to 3.62 trillion in Le2012. This is telling us that the economy is growing steadily and all of us should be patient to see our prosperity.

Mr Speaker, Honorable Members, there are few other areas I want to touch on. I want to look at the Local Councils. I am happy that this Government has taken a decision to fund only 40% of the Local Councils budget for their programs. This is because some of these Councils are not performing at all Mr Speaker. We are approving moneys for these Councils but at the end of the day they fail to perform. I am really happy that the Ministry of Finance has taken this bold step to reduce their allocations.

Mr Speaker, Honorable Members, let us look at Page 24, Paragraph 13, under security. The Police and the Military are receiving rice today. I would want also this Parliament to recommend that the Prisons and the Fire Force be included in benefiting from this gesture. I am saying this because they are also part of the security sector in this country. I want to say here that the allocation for the Fire Force is Le5.1 billion. To my estimation, that amount is too small. The amount is small because the cost of one fire truck is about Le2 billion. That allocation will only purchase maybe two trucks. I don't know how many trucks we have in this country. But I think we need more than five trucks. Therefore, these monies must be increased.

Mr Speaker, Honorable Members, let us also look at Page 25, Paragraph 135. That paragraph is talking about rehabilitating some Government buildings. Mr Speaker I want you to look at the seats of Honourable Members. These seats are so deplorable. We want the Government to please take action to change our seats. I want to thank the President and all of us here for approving the grant of \$2 Million Dollars for this Parliament. I hope that the administration in this Parliament would take care of that money.

Mr Speaker, Honorable Members, I want to talk about good governance. It is found on Page 11, Paragraph 63. It touches on corruption. Mr Speaker, we are approving huge sums of money for MDAs. Now, we are not hearing anything about corruption. But once we approve these moneys, you would start to hear about corruption all over the country. Members of Parliament do not see these moneys. As soon as these moneys are approved, the issue of corruption starts coming up. We want the Anti-Corruption to take full responsibility by taking action against anyone that is found wanting.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my people in Masiaka want the Government to concentrate on Masiaka. If you go to Masiaka at night, you will think that you are walking in a grave yard. This is because Masiaka is very dark. We have the Training College at Kontha Line. We are calling on the Government to install street lights at Masiaka. Masiaka is going to be another city very soon. Once we get the city from Mamamah, it will extend to Masiaka. And from now on, we would want the Government to consider Masiaka by putting street lights in that town.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I Want to thank the Minister for bringing up this budget and I want to ask every Member of this House to approve and support this budget.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, our Airport is fully functional today. I am sure things are going on well there. In his Address, the President said that Sierra Leone Economy is experiencing inflation. He also said that total asset of the Nation has been on the decline. Fire Force and Prisons should be given equal opportunity like other Forces in

Sierra Leone. The Police and Military are receiving more rice supply than other forces. I am asking that all of these forces be given equal opportunity. I would like the MDAs to be very vigilant and go according to what is stated in this budget. I therefore recommend this budget to the House for approval. I thank you for your attention.

HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it gives me a great pleasure to contribute to this important debate. I would start by saying that I am highly disappointed in the manner in which debates in this House are conducted. I am disappointed because we are talking about the national budget. We should not be taken partisan position. Our position here is to critically analyse and look at some areas whether they are underfunded or overfunded. We are talking about peculiarities here. What is peculiar to every budget even in the United States is a deficit. And there is a huge deficit as far as this budget is concerned. Our concern as responsible Members of Parliament is to see how we can finance this deficit. We should not take partisan positions.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this budget is not going to cater for the needs of the people of Sierra Leone. After sometime, we would start bordering our leadership. People would be grumbling for increase in their salaries. This budget has failed to take into account many things. This is the time we should critically and responsibly look at all these areas and see how we can make some of these additions or subtractions where necessary. I will challenge everybody that there is an increase of 12.5% in the expenditure from 2012 to 2013. I challenge everybody with authority here that there is not a single line in this budget that talk about increase. I will challenge the Minister on that. There is no increase of basic salary. I talk with authority Mr Speaker. I will critique this document page by page. The budget, as presented to us has some good aspects. There are very good macroeconomic policies and as a responsible Government, the people who voted for us should be our prime concern. Government is about the livelihood of the people who voted us. We are here today for our livelihood, whether the economy is growing or not, these are the misconceptions.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have the real terms and monetary terms when we talk about economic growth. I will give you examples. If you are paid for instance, Le 10, 000 and there is an increase of your salary from Le10, 000 to Le20, 000, that is what we called increase in monetary term. But what the economists are concerned about is the real term and how it would impact your lives. Is that Le 10, 000 increase going to make your life better or not? That should be our concern as Members of Parliament. I will entreat you with very simple mathematical calculation. I will give you an example Mr Speaker. I am not going to criticise because I want to do so. This document has a lot of calculation errors. When the Minister was reading it, nobody took cognisance of that. But let me go to Page 2, under global economic outlook of regional development. The authors of these documents are very intelligent. What they do normally is that, they look at the average goods of the sub Sahara Africa countries. Let me give you an example. If Mr Speaker and Honourable Rado Yokie were to take an exam, and it happened that Mr Speaker scores 80% and Honourable Rado Yokie scores 20%, and if the average is 50, that means $80 + 20 = 100$ divide by 2, the average is 50%. Does that mean that Honourable Rado Yokie scored 50? This is because $80 + 20 = 100$ divide by 2, the average is 50%. Mr Minister and I are very good friends. But I am going to preface the theme of my intervention. I don't want you to misinform people in the future. Talking about economic growth in the real terms, it is not what you write on papers but how it impacts your life and the people who voted for us. That is what we talking about.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Minister said that Government is now paying Members of Parliament on daily wages, when the economy has a lot of reserve. If they have started paying us on daily wages, does that mean something is wrong somewhere? The neighborhood in Sierra Leone says we are monthly workers. One thing about Sierra Leoneans is that, we don't listen to what people are saying. We have to take them serious. During the APC rallies for instance, they say "*am pa ampo*," S. O. 2 Mr Speaker. That means "*anjala anjedi*," (there is no money). The Governor was telling the people that we have so much reserve in this country. I have document to prove that the reserve he was talking about would even reach and exceed the reserved that

was advised by the IMF. That was why we have so many domestic debts. The Minister can attest to that. According to the IMF regularities, we should not supersede that quantum of money. That was not even there because there was no reserve. I am proving it to you Mr Speaker. If there was plenty of money, I see no reason why they would wait to pay Honourable Members 50% of their gratuities. When you are dismissing somebody, the first thing you would do is to calculate his or her benefit. If you have money, the first thing you would do is to pay off that person. They have nothing as we speak. We have to sit back for six months. We even invited the Minister here. We had to force him to pay us our balance. That was unfortunate Mr Speaker. If there was money, there was no need to do that.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me go to Page 2, Paragraphs 9 and 10. The authors of this document are very intelligent. They watched the average of the sub Sahara Africa but I have said as a very good economist and as a responsible Government what you would always do is to put things in place. You put in place very good macroeconomic policies to absorb those external shocks that are on Page 2, Paragraph 10. This is a very good; I say kudos to the Minister. Let me read with your leave Mr Speaker... - *(Interruption)*.

S. O 5(2) Suspended being 12:00 p.m.

HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE: I am looking at the good and bad aspects of this budget, juxtapose with the reality of life in Sierra Leone. We would ensure that our domestic macroeconomic environment continues to blossom in the face of any domestic economic development globally. That is what we call a responsible macroeconomic policy. That is, you place those policies to take those external shocks like he said in Paragraph 9. Those external shocks affect us Mr Speaker. That is why those who manufacture shock absorbers have done well. Macroeconomic policy makers should put in place this kind of policy.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let us look at Page 3, under Macroeconomic Budgetary Performance in 2012. I will take the entire 2012, instead of taking it page by

page. I was taken aback when the Minister was saying in the budget that there was a deficit and one of the reasons he gave to this noble House and the people of Sierra Leone was as a result of payment of backlog of gratuity of Members of Parliament. That is not economics. That is unfortunate Mr Speaker. He has misinformed the people of this country. When we talk about budget like what we are discussing now, its covers from January 1st to 31st December. Therefore, the payment of gratuity to Members of Parliament was taken into cognisance. This means that whether Parliament was going to resume or not, 124 Members were going to be laid off at the end of September. Those moneys should be budgeted for. I beg to differ. That is one of the factors responsible. The theme for my intervention is Fiscal Indiscipline. I don't need to go through this document.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, why are we talking about revenue? I have said fiscal indiscipline is the theme of my intervention and that is why I am calling on Honourable Members not to be partisan. For some of us who have read the most recent audited Accountant General's Report, you must have noticed a lot of seepages in the economy. If we are serious as Honourable Members, this is the time we should deal with those seepages so that there will be no reoccurrence of what happened in 2012. That is the responsibility of Honourable Members of Parliament. The Oversight Committees should do their work diligently. The Ministry of Finance is now shifting the blame to Members of Parliament. And that is why I am begging all Honourable Members not to take partisan position as far as this budget is concerned.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let us look at Page 5. We are now talking about budgetary expenditure on Agriculture. This is a good expenditure on Agriculture. According to the Constitution, who mandated people to spend additional moneys they called extra budget? Was that brought to us for ratification? There is Le3 billion of the amount allocated. That amount is on Page 5, Paragraph 30. An additional Le3 billion was allocated to the Ministry of Agriculture. What did they say? They said they bought rice, bags of fertilizers and 15 thousand bushels of seed rice. The seed rice is normally allocated to farmers after harvest. They use it for self consumption. Mr Minister, with all

respect to you Sir, I want to use you as good example. When we talk about fiscal indiscipline that is the only way Sierra Leone as a country would move forward. I will take the Honourable Minister who is seated here as a good example. In the first half of his appointment as Deputy Minister of Finance, he used his personal car to do official work. If we are to go to the President and say Mr President, we want cars. That is fiscal indiscipline Mr Speaker. If you have one, you can keep it.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when I was doing my research, I found out that a huge chunk of money was spent on maintenance. Moneys meant for the betterment of Sierra Leone are not used wisely. We have been talking about economic diversification. Economic diversification means we should not rely on the production of one item alone. To diversify means giving different faces to production. That is what we called economic diversification. This country is blessed with Iron Ore, Diamond, Bauxite and Diesel. Fiscal indiscipline is the cause of our economic predicament. We are told that the economy is growing. An economy that is growing has single digit inflation. How do we calculate inflation? Let us compare the prices of yesterday and the prices of today. The difference is what gives you the inflation, i.e., Consumer Price Index (CPI). If I should use the USA Economic Indicator, our economy as of now is 11.9% inflation. The Ministry of Finance gave us projections from 2006 to 2012. What are the economic indicators? I am going to do the talking and you are going to be the judge. This will enable you to know whether you are better off or worse. We should be better off in terms of monetary issues. I am saying this because there is an increase in local production.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the economic indicators that were spelt out by the Ministry of Finance is the source of this document. They will tell you the real GDP is growing by 6%. I don't know where this mathematics is coming from. It was during the campaign they told us about 32%. But when the Budget came, they said 21%. The figure keeps fluctuating. I don't know where that mathematics is coming from at all. But everywhere in the world an economy cannot grow more than 6% on an average. Therefore, if they are saying that there is an economic boom of 31%, I am asking you

to be the Judge I will do the analysis. Is your standard of living improving by 21%? The answer is no. You are suffering as we speak. I thank God for all those Honourable Members who were able to come back. For those who are coming for the first time, I pity them. As the saying goes, *"for whom much is given, much is expected."* You are now saying you are better off. The people are hearing you. If you are better off, it should be reflective on the people out there. S.O. 2 Mr Speaker, *"Trade, we u get Le1 milyɔn, u en you wɛf it am, ɔ u en u man; bɔt naw, u dat u de get Le15, 000 to 20,000 milyɔn, u pipul dem de wat u."* It is never enough. Even if you are paid Le20 million every month, it will not be enough. That is what we call monetary terms. I don't want you to take a partisan position. I want you to speak the truth. Who is a friend? A friend is a person that will say the truth. The Honourable Minister of Finance is one of my best friends in the APC. But when your friend makes a mistake, you will be in better position to correct that mistake. But people are always saying that the economy is growing. They always say: *"thanks to President Koroma."* You are deceiving the President. He is my friend as well. He is not an ordinary friend. He is like an elder brother to me. During the campaign period, I told him thus: *"Mr President, with all respect to you, your friends in Bo are not saying the truth to you. You will not win a seat in Bo. You will only increase your presidential vote."* I told him the truth. The people misguided him to go and fight for himself in constituency 068. I told them that the candidate they presented was a weakling. We should learn to say the truth to our brother. But don't come and say the economy is growing when you and I know that it is not. That is not good. I will come to some other aspects.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are lots of calculation errors in this document. The Minister himself did not take cognisance of those errors. Honourable Members should have read this document before coming here so that it would be very easy to make references. With your leave Mr Speaker I read: In the Energy and Water Sector, Le103.2bn was spent on energy related project compared to Le75.5. How can you spend Le75.5? That is what the Minister is telling us. I will analyse this document if you give me the next ten hours. There are lots of inadequacies in this Document. What is

Le75.5? The Minister did not even take notice of that. I have read this Document Mr Speaker. I have done my assignment and that makes you a responsible Member of Parliament. We have to say the truth. If we say the truth, we can move forward as a nation. To thyself be true. The theme of this intervention is 'Fiscal Discipline.' A very good example was demonstrated by the present Minister of Finance. I learned that when he was going to England, he took the Economy Class. Economy Class is \$700. The Business Class is \$2,000. He saved \$1,300 for Sierra Leone. I want you to start doing the same. That is why I said he is one of my best friends. I admire him for his modesty. He drove himself throughout his five years and he was using his private car. How many Ministers are doing that? Some of them don't even have bicycles. No sooner they are appointed, that will be the time they look for new vehicles. They will be saying that I will not use that car. It is too old. I am not seeing the Deputy Speaker using his own official car because he is looking for a brand new car. That is fiscal indiscipline. You should manage what is available.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I refused to make comment on Operation WID. The reason is that, Sierra Leoneans are quick at moving towards something new. What is very important is sustenance. I went to Youyi Building few days ago. The Youyi Building car park is filled with private cars. Government officials are using Government vehicles to do their private businesses. I saw the Whip at Lunsar. That is fiscal indiscipline. You took the car to Mile 91. That is not your private vehicle. It should be used for official purposes only. Mr Speaker, we are spending fabulous amount of money on wearing and tearing in terms of maintenance of these vehicles. The last time I engaged the Minister on interest rate. There are lots of economic indicators that will tell you whether your economy is growing or not. Interest rate is one of them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I told the Minister that the Lumley/Tokeh Road is a very good project. We need that road. Those of us in the provinces favour that road because of the traffic congestion along Kissy Road. We prefer the Peninsular Road. But the rate at which that loan was contracted is just too high. When I went through the documents, the Lumley/Tokeh Road's interest rate is too high. We are being exploited

here. It is unfortunate Mr Speaker. Whenever it rains, Murray Town/Wilkinson Road Junction becomes a complete mess. Does it look like the quantum of money spent on it? The answer is no. That is poor engineering. The Minister was saying that most of the Chief Engineers are not doing their works. Most of these works are sub-standard. I am merely quoting him. My reference is the Minister of Infrastructure. I am on television and the people of this country are watching me. There is no need for me to misinform the people of this country. That is why I am referencing the Minister of Infrastructure.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I now move to electricity. How many of us have read the Agenda for Change Document? This is the PRSP (2) Document. The PRSP (2) is what you coined to be the Agenda for Change. Mr Speaker, I would just go to the preface. In this Document, there were four priorities of the President. I will just do the analysis. The President said he would spend ex-amount of money to ensure that we have a steady flow of electricity in the capital city and the headquarter towns. I will start with Freetown. How many times do you have light in Aberdeen per week? How many times do we have water? Deputy Speaker doesn't have water in his house. He gets water from the bouncer.

HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH (*Deputy Speaker of the House*): Mr Speaker, I rise on S.O 32 (9). The Honourable Member is saying is saying it with impunity. With your leave Mr Speaker, my colleague has misinformed this House twice, referencing me as a point in case. First and foremost I have water twenty four hours and electricity in my house. And that is a fact. I live at off Spur Road, close to Wilkinson Road. To prove me right or wrong, he can drive to my house now. I have enough water to service me on a daily basis. He also made mentioned that I have refused to use the official vehicle because I want a new one. I have been conveniently driving my private vehicle because I have a very comfortable vehicle. So, I want to guide my colleague to be careful of what he is saying here. He is misinforming this House. Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, in view of what you have just heard, I think it is also proper for you not to misinform this Honourable House?

HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE: In the first instance, the Honourable Member misinformed the House. I never said he refused. We have Stenographers here who are capturing what we are saying here. I stand to apologise. I am very conscious of what I say. I know remembered what I said. I don't drink alcohol. I said he has not used the official car given to him. I did not say he refused to use it.

THE SPEAKER: It should not be far from your records. Honourable Member, the objection brought up by the Deputy Speaker is that you imputed with improper motive. Do you understand it that way? Do you agree you imputed with improper motive?

HON. RADO YOKIE: Accepted Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. If that is so, what is the Honourable thing to do?

HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE: I say sorry to my younger brother.

THE SPEAKER: You use the word apologise. Don't take this as a joke. I hope you take it seriously and I am saying it for the last time.

HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE: Mr Speaker, as I was saying, the interest rates at which we are contracting these loans are very high. Let us turn to Page 19.

THE SPEAKER: Take your time Honourable Member. Never mind the waste of time.

HON. FODAY RADO YOKIE: Thank you. Let us look at Page 19, Paragraph 107. There is another calculation error on that page. This is what we are talking about. Mr Speaker, with your leave I will read. These are simple additions and subtractions. I will not bore you with dispensations and integrations. Paragraph 107 says the total interest payment on Government debt for 2013 is projected at Le345bn. The interest on domestic debt will amount to Le304bn; and interest on foreign debt is Le40.8bn. These higher interest repayments represent the cost of funds for enhancing the country's last days through infrastructural development. I want us to calculate what they have said on

paper that the debt is projected as Le345bn plus Le40.8bn. When you go to the annex there is a difference of Le200bn. That is a lot of money. Please do the addition and subtraction. Mr Speaker, 345bn plus Le40.8bn is Le385.8bn. Therefore, we are talking about a deficit of Le200bn. When we come to the Appropriation Sub-Committees, I would like the Ministry of Finance to give an account of this Le200bn.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have lost my appetite in this debate. As I have already said, we should not take partisan position. Our job is to critically analyse this budget and look at some areas that are underfunded. I will not sit down if I do, then, I have not done justice to myself. In this allocation, I was going to look at the budget in its entirety. I have lost faith in the budget. But I am still going to do some analyses here. Mr Speaker, there are some Ministries or Departments that are very important. I believe these MDAs are grossly underfunded. Let me take for instance, the Sierra Leone Prison Services. I was a Prisoner for eleven days. I am therefore agitating for them. In the budget, the Internal Affairs is going to receive Le440m. The National Registration Secretariat will get Le600m, Sierra Leone Police Le58bn, and Prison Services will get Le15.290bn.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are saying here that the focus for the next five years is on the youth. The Prison is such a very important place. In the United States for instance, they do not call it Prisons. They call it Correction Centers. Most of the people languishing in the Prison are very innocent. But if you are sent behind bars, they tend to correct you. By so doing, you engage in professions like blacksmithing, tailoring etc. And I believe that Le15bn for that important Department is very small. The Public Relations Officer (PRO) was on the radio the other day telling the public that for the past five years Guma Valley Water Company has not supplied them water. They had to buy water. I want the Minister of Finance to take note of that and increase their allocation so that we can encourage our brothers. These Prisoners can learn trade from within the Pademba Road Prisons and elsewhere.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, a lot has been said about the youths. I was taken aback when the entire Presidential Speech was talking about youths. I am very much impressed. I want the younger generation to take over governance and that is one thing I will say kudos to the APC Government. That is a good initiative. Like the Honourable from Newton said, what will precede the Budget Speech is the Presidential Speech. In other words, the Budget Speech is the modified component of the Presidential Speech. What the President will state for the next twelve months are modified in the form of a Budget. The President had laid so much emphasis on the youths. But the question is, why the ₦4.7bn allocation to the youths? This amount is very small compared to the quantum of emphasis placed on the youths. Unfortunately, if you are going to work it in percentages, it is about 1.9% of the total budget allocated to the youths. I am saying this again that the Ministry of Youths is underfunded. Therefore, we need to increase that allocation so that we can engage them productively. We are talking about diversification of the economy as part of the Agenda for Prosperity. We cannot prosper as a nation if we do not utilise the talent of the younger generation. That was why I said it was a very good move in the right direction. We have to increase that allocation. The money allocated for that particular purpose is grossly inadequate.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to look at Fiscal Decentralization Policy. Fiscal Decentralisation is found on Pages 12, 67 and 68, Paragraph 67. It is a very good policy. And that is the shock absorbers I was talking about. Those are policies you put in place to absorb the external shocks. If there is an increase in fuel prices in Kuwait for instance, it will affect us. But it will not adversely affect us. The Minister knows what I am talking about. If Honourable Chennor R. M. Bah is sick for instance, I will not suffer for that. That is a very good macroeconomic policy. But what policy I do not agree with is the one in Paragraph 68. With the leave of the Speaker, I will read the entire paragraph so that you can begin to see the direction I am coming from. I don't like that policy because it will favour some Local Councils against the others. I will explain why. With your leave Mr Speaker I read: "*Government will provide funds to Local Councils to*

complete ongoing projects. Similarly, Government will continue to fund health and education, infrastructure in all Local Councils in the medium terms. Local Councils will be required to provide 60% of the project costs for all economic infrastructure projects they wish to undertake." The reason why I said it is a bad Macroeconomic Policy is simple. We have different locations where different Councils are endowed with different natural resources. The Bo City Council and Tonkolili District Council are two examples. In Bo District, there is gold mining in Baoma. Therefore, what we call local governance own source is very small. I have juxtaposed it to Tonkolili. For instance, there is a big mining activity going on in Tonkolili. If we are saying for instance the African Mineral and the London Mining are to give royalties, the Tonkolili District Council for instance will be better off than the Bo District Council. This is because they can provide royalties.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you can see the difference in own-source revenue. I am not talking about the Management. I am talking about the generation of revenue. How much is generated in the form of own-taxes. The own-source revenues are very important towards the achievement of those planned projects. If you are paid for instance by London Mining or African Minerals the sum of Le5, 000m, you can put forward 60% of whatever activity you have for 2014. Mr Speaker, unlike Pujehun and Bo District Councils that have one mining company, they rely on property tax. Let us be honest to ourselves. How many people are paying property tax in this country? I am using two examples just to tell you why I said it is a bad policy. What we should do in order to achieve this prosperity is to have a level playing field for everybody so that nobody will be disadvantaged. Therefore, if you say 60%, it is like you don't want to finance my projects. An under resourced Councils will not meet their targets. Bonthe District relies on fishing. They will not meet that 60%. If they meet the 60% target, they will not be able to perform effectively and efficiently. What will happen? In the next phase, they will vote all of them out. But places like Kono, Tonkolili and Port Loko will be better off because there is high level of mining activities going on in those areas. They will be able to pay the 60% upfront. That is why I have asked the Minister to

revisit that policy so that we will provide a level playing field for all the Councils for the betterment of us all.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we need to revisit the Local Council Act so that Members of Parliament will now be part of it. Let me tell you why I was saying that we should not take partisan positions. Members of Parliament are not charged with the responsibility of taking development to their various constituencies. What we are expected to do if we are working hand in glove with our Local Councils is that we are expecting Local Councils to invite Members of Parliament to be part of the planned Budget for their activities. Members of Parliament will be opportuned to articulate on behalf of their constituencies. For instance, if I want water well in my constituency, we will factor it into the Development Plan of that Council. And that Development Plan will be budgeted for. That is the budget we are discussing now. You will go back home to tell your people that very soon you are going to benefit from this project. You will be able to stand tall and say I was one of the people who fought hard for you to have this water well. But most of the projects are taken place in the absence of Honourable Members of Parliament. We should not forget the fact that the people are on the necks of Honourable Members of Parliament and not the Councilors. But when you have ambitious Councilors, he will always want to overthrow Honourable Members of Parliament. That is why I pity these new Honourable Members because I am okay with the two terms I am serving. I want us to start revisiting some of these policies. Ambitious Councilor will tell you, S.O 2 Mr Speaker, "*na mi don mek brig.*" He does not even know that is not the responsibility of Honourable Members. We have to revisit the Local Government Act. We have to be part and parcel of whatever development plans that are going on in our constituencies. I think that will be better for those who are seeking another term.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we should be looking for solutions as to how we can finance this deficit. We have to:

(a) contract loans at a lower interest rate; and

(b) ensure fiscal discipline. We have to be utilising money for which they are meant for.

(c) step up our Oversight functions. There are lots of seepages in our economy. Majority of the people out there are looking forward to Members of Parliament. There are MDAs looking at us as well. We do go to them for fuel. They are eating our money. They should not be eating our money at all. That is Government's money. Thank you.

ADJOURNMENTS

(The House rose at 1.00 p.m. and was adjourned until Tuesday, 19th February, 2013, at 10.00 a.m.)