

OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

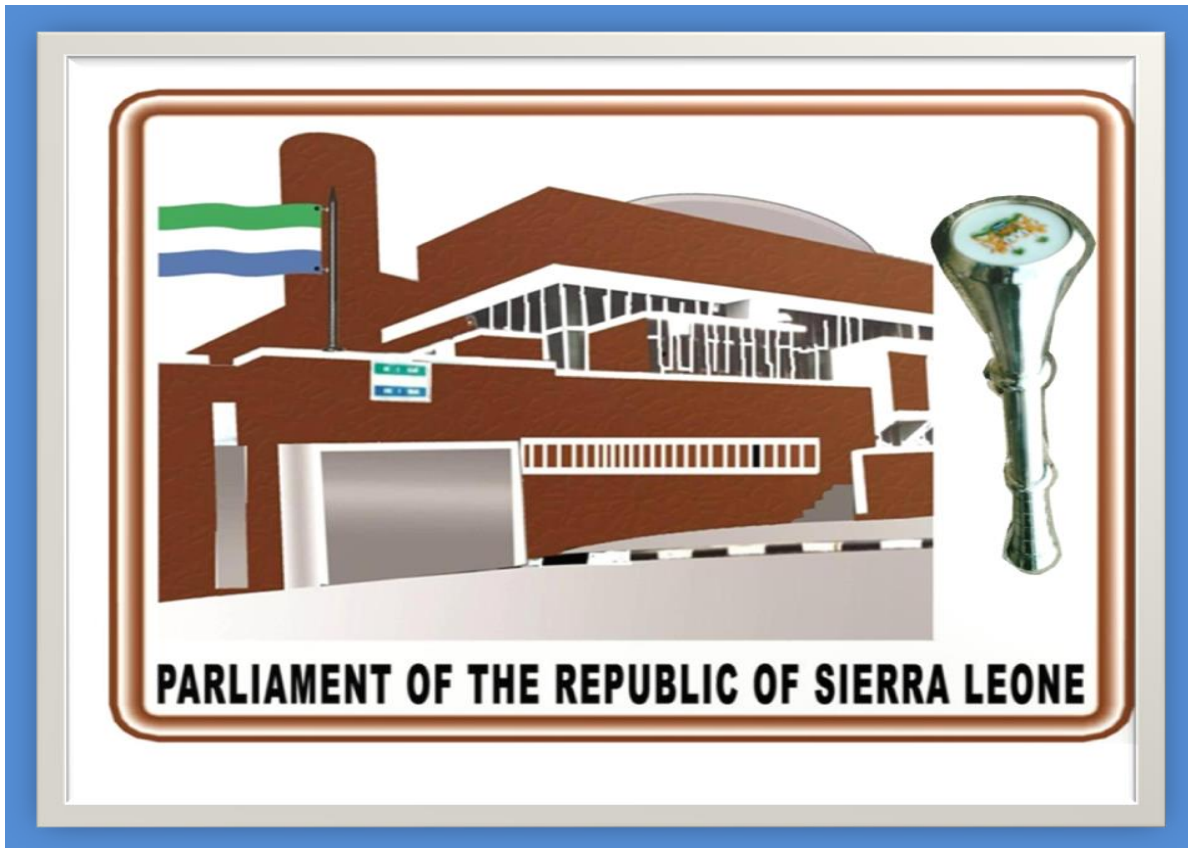
[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

SECOND SESSION -THIRD MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 20TH NOVEMBER, 2019

SESSION – 2019/2020



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMETARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

VOLUME: I

NUMBER: 25

Third Meeting of the Second Session of the Fifth Parliament
of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone.

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held Wednesday, 20th November, 2019.

CONTENTS

I. PRAYERS

II. RECORD OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

SECOND SESSION – THIRD MEETING OF THE FIFTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC

Wednesday, 20th November, 2019.

I. PRAYERS

[The Table Clerk, Mrs Bintu Weston, Read the Prayers]

[The House met at 10:05a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown]

[The Speaker, Hon. Dr Chernor Abass Bundu in the Chair]

The House was called to Order

Suspension of S. O. 5[2]

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, I want to stand on S.O 63 [3] in tandem with S.O [82]. I want this House to agree so that we can debate this Budget for three allotted days. That is why I stand on S.O 63 [3] it is provided in the Standing Order, so that we can shorten the time for the debate.

THE SPEAKER: From 5 to 3 days is proposed.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Yes! Because of some other exigencies, I am sure they will agree with me that the budget is non-controversial.

HON. KANDEH YUMKELLA: Mr Speaker, I stand on point of Order. I am wondering sir, if the Honourable Member could give us a justification why we should shorten the time for the debates. We don't know it is really genuine concern. Can our colleague Honourable Member tell us why we should shorten the time?

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Yes! Mr Speaker, because after the debate we have Appropriation Bill and it will take us 5 days and the time is far spent. This is November, by the time we get to the Appropriation Bill, it is December and we have to write report. If we do the Appropriation for 5 days, after 5 days we have to give the Committee Clerks another 5 days to do the report. By the time we are through with that, we are in December and I am sure you want to go and see your family abroad.

HON. KANDEH YUMKELLA: I have understood your point. I didn't understand, it's a genuine question. It makes sense to me because the work is really at the Appropriation level.

THE SPEAKER: But we did something similar last year.

HON. KANDEH YUMKELLA: Okay sir.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: On that note, Dr Yumkella can you please second my motion?

HON. KANDEH YUMKELLA: I second your motion.

HON. FODAY M. KAMARA: Mr Speaker, please before the question is put to the House, the Honourable Member stood on S.O 63 [3]. I request that he reads it for the understanding of everybody.

THE SPEAKER: You don't have it.

HON. FOADY M. KAMARA: I have it, but I want him to read it aloud because what he was telling I do not seem to agree with him.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: S.O 63 [3] is saying... Mr Speaker, do I have your permission sir?

THE SPEAKER: I am quite sure the Honourable is perfectly capable of reading S.O 63 [3] and understanding it himself.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Motion moved for the Budget to be debated for three allotted days has been carried]

THE SPEAKER: When we come to start the debate, I have only two things to say about the limitation of time and I would draw the attention of this House to S.O [38] so whilst you digesting that one, we can commence today's proceedings.

II. THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON TUESDAY, 19TH NOVEMBER, 2019.

HON. SAHR CHARLES: Mr Speaker, the Votes is not yet available for us.

THE SPEAKER: Did you visit your pigeon hole this morning?

HON. SAHR CHARLES: Mr Speaker, I went there this morning it wasn't available. I don't know if it's available now, and if they are available they should have made it known to us because we are now in the Well.

THE SPEAKER: It would be made available.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, I want to apologise. The Honourable Member knows that yesterday we finished very late and we had a lot of Appointees

yesterday so it took them a lot of time to do the Order Paper and proof read it. But they are now available in your pigeon holes. Yesterday, there was a power outage, but I am sure they are all available now. Sorry for the delay.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, with your leave. I want to stand on S.O [20] for another item to save time.

THE SPEAKER: S.O what?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: S.O [20] just to save time because it is a different item.

THE SPEAKER: Well, I hope whatever you want to tell us will satisfy the condition of urgency.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Yes. It's left to you.

THE SPEAKER: Very well. I grant you leave, I will listen to it.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. I hereby give a notice under S.O [20] for questioning of the Minister of Trade before this Honourable House on the issue of fuel shortage for the past 4 days. I was expecting to some extent that maybe it's just temporal, maybe in 1 or 2 days it will be normalised. But I am sensing that from time and again it is getting worst. The queue is getting more rampant everywhere and people are hoarding the fuel.

People are now using that opportunity to sell it at a very high price. So with your leave sir, I want this House to know and by extension, the people of this country want to know the reason for the fuel shortage. As I speak, you can agree with me that fuel is not available as upon demand, if you want to buy it you have to stand for long hours in a queue. That is my concern sir and it is very urgent.

THE SPEAKER: I agree with the Honourable Member, that indeed the matter is of great moment and we shall take note of the notice of motion. I will ask him to proceed, make his motion available through the Clerk's office.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. I shall do so.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. It may be rendered irrelevant if between now and the time you submit your written motion the appropriate measures are taken to remedy the situation.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: No, well it is not out of bad faith. If the solution comes by the day, in fact that would be one of the proofs that I am not doing it out of bad faith.

THE SPEAKER: I understand.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: I agree with you. I can withdraw; there is room for me to withdraw.

THE SPEAKER: But maybe Honourable Francis A. Kaisamba, you know he is a man who is very resourceful, maybe he is in a position to allay the fear that you have expressed. So I would give him the Floor.

HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA: Thank you sir. Of course yesterday we were all worried because there were queues and innuendos of shortages of petrol and other related commodities, but I am sure the queues have disappeared.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: No, no, as I speak they have not.

HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA: I spoke to the Minister of Trade and Industry yesterday and he said, "Whatever problem they have been fixed up". So, I am very confident that today those problems have been solved.

THE SPEAKER: Well, I don't know maybe as I said, you are a man of great resource. I observe when coming to work this morning that there was very limited traffic on the roads precisely because of the shortage of supplies of fuel. I even commented that as I was coming, I said it is very strange that there are no traffic jams on the road coming in, and I was readily given the reply by my driver that it is because of the fuel shortage.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, in addition to what the Honourable Chairman said, as of this morning I visited about three filling stations, I can report to this House that they are now supplying fuel from this morning.

THE SPEAKER: Did you stop to see?

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: I am not saying there is no queue, there is queue because there was a fuel shortage, but as of now the bowsers are now going to different filling stations. Mr Speaker, I am very sure about that.

THE SPEAKER: Please! Please! Did you stop by any filling station to ascertain?

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Yes Mr Speaker I did.

THE SPEAKER: And what did you discover?

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: I discovered that there are now bowsers in those filling stations supplying fuel.

THE SPEAKER: Again you may be correct. But in my own understanding, I was far more meticulous than you are and the answer I got from my enquiries was that, diesel is not in short supply but petrol is.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, I can again assure this House that petrol is now being supplied to the various filling stations. I am not saying they have started selling, I said they are now being supplied.

THE SPEAKER: How many petrol stations did you come across?

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Three sir.

THE SPEAKER: Three?

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Yes sir.

THE SPEAKER: And you think that is typical of the rest.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: No, I am just saying that bowsers are now coming to the fuel stations.

THE SPEAKER: Where were you? Travelling from Pujehun?

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: You know I was here from yesterday.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, it is always said; "to thyself be true". As you rightly pointed if the problem is solved by the time I filed my papers, it is not out of bad faith. The S.O provided for me to withdraw because the problem has been solved. Okay, let us don't weigh down the essence of the work of Parliament. As I speak to you now the queues still exist and it is just simple question as to why these issues occur in the first place and why are they still there? That is why we should have done it yesterday, but I was hoping that in the next 2 days it would be solved but now it is increasing. It is not out of bad faith, and in fact thank God for Mr Speaker, if the problem is solved then maybe my question will not even be in place. I can withdraw, but as it is now I have been given leave by Mr Speaker, and I will file today for the question to be put tomorrow.

THE SPEAKER: Okay. We go to the Votes and Proceedings; do I take it that you all have copies of that now? Honourable Members, do you now have the Votes and Proceedings, okay fine? So let's get started please.

III. PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON TUESDAY, 19TH NOVEMBER, 2019.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, as usual we shall skip pages 1 through to 4 and we will start from page 5. Any comments on Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Page 8? Page 9? Can someone please move for the adoption of the Record of Votes and Proceedings for Parliamentary Sitting Held on Tuesday, 19th November, 2019.

HON. MOSES B. JORKIE: I so move Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. ALICE KUMABEH: I so second Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Record of Votes and Proceedings for the Parliamentary Sitting Held on Tuesday, 19th November, 2019 has been adopted]

IV. BILL

THE APPROPRIATION ACT, 2020

Being an Act to authorise expenditure from the consolidated fund to provide for the services of Sierra Leone for the year 2020 and for other related matters.

SECOND READING

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

[FIRST ALLOTTED DAY]

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Mr Speaker, I guess we are about to commence debate on the budget? But we cannot commence the debate on the Budget without us having the estimate that normally comes before the start of the debate.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, on that note I want to ask for at least some adjournment so that I can have meeting with the Leadership of all the political parties in the Speaker's conference room. It is a meeting and it depends on the outcome of the meeting. So Honourable Acting Leader of the main Opposition, the Leader of NGC, Leader of C4C and Independent representatives. Can we have 10 minutes consultation please?

THE SPEAKER: I don't know what time you proposed to have that, but I would have thought that the estimates are more pertinent when we come to the Committee Stage than they are to the beginning of the process. We can for the time being relate our debate to the Budget statement that was read out to this House by the Minister of Finance on the 8th of November, then deal with the estimate when we come to Committee stage. But I do see need for some consultation amongst the various Leadership in Parliament, may be at some time in the course of this morning's proceedings I don't know whether that satisfies the various Leaderships.

HON. HASSAN SESAY: Mr Speaker, this Budget was delivered to the House on the 8th November, 2019.

THE SPEAKER: And today is the 20th.

HON. HASSAN SESAY: Today is the 20th.

THE SPEAKER: I know what you are getting at.

HON. HASSAN SESAY: Well, we expect that what ought to be done, ought to have been done by now, and it is always the practices that we get the estimate on time, even if we get it on the day that we start to get the Budget. But in this kind of situation Mr Speaker, I think let the needful be done. We are not saying anything more than that, but let us get what is due Parliament before we get to work on the debate Sir. I think that is my position.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I can agree more with your observation. It is not new; it has been a perennial problem, not only during this Parliament. I am sure you will agree with me that even during the previous Parliament were faced with similar situations. I am not trying to justify the bad practices, but there has been little or no improvement on that practice, that is the fact. Whether we blame it on the Government printer or somebody else, we should all endeavour to improve on the situation.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, I want to say very big thank to you. But I think in line with the Bo peace process, can I again ask my colleagues that we have some consultation? Please before we start the debate, let move from one step to another. I am not saying we should go back to the old days, I don't want us to put a hold on this Budget, because of the estimate we have done before, but that doesn't mean that we will continue it. But please let us have at least 10 minutes consultation. With that Mr Speaker, I also regretfully announce the death of the father of one of our colleague representing Constituency 127, Honourable John Telson Koroma, he has just lost his father 30minutes ago.

THE SPEAKER: On behalf of the House, we convey our heartfelt condolences to Honourable Member. And I now invite all of us to observe a minute silent prayer. May Allah, the Almighty forgive his sins and mistakes on Earth, and grant his soul internal rest in his heavenly kingdom.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, I don't know if my request is granted if we can take leave of the House now?

THE SPEAKER: I see three of you presents. You may take leave of us now, as you promised not more than ten 10 minutes.

MS PATRICIA N. LAVERLEY [*The Deputy Minister of Finance*]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members of Parliament, I move that the Bill entitled the Appropriation Act 2020, being an Act to authorize expenditure from the consolidated fund for the services of Sierra Leone for the year 2020 and other related matters being read the second time.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, last year when we presented the 2019 Budget we made a total of two hundred and sixteen comments across 11 policies clutter of September, this year 86% of these commitments have either being completed or are on track.

The title of the 2019 Budget was fiscal consolidation for human capital development. During the 2018 and 2019 academic year, we paid exam fees for NPSE, BECE and WASSCE. We provided text books, teaching and learning materials to schools, we paid tuition fees for Children in Government and in Government assisted schools, we commence the school feeding program, provided School busses, we provided and operationalize the teaching Service Commission for better teacher's management and teacher development.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in term of GDP Sierra Leone economy is recovering from subdue growth in 2017 to 2018. The growth projection for this financial year is about 5. 1% because all key macroeconomic indicators are making progress. The trade deficit decrease significantly. The total export during the first half of this year increased to **Le92Mln**. A gross foreign reserve increased from **Le 483 Mln** to **Le 533 Mln** during the same period in comparing to last year. We are making concerted effort to reduce public debts stock and the Bank of Sierra Leone is also working to stabilise the exchange rate.

With respect to our revenue performance, we have been trying to burden the TSA, we are working on liberalizing the petroleum pricing formula, we are migrating ASYCUDA

world, we are adopting the ECOWAS common external tariff, and we also intensifying tax payer education effort.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with respect to the 2020 Budget the total resources envelope for the year 2019 is in the tune of **Le 8.2tln** of this amount, the domestic revenue allocated to next year Budget is **6.47tln**, Budget support is estimated at about **Le 1tln** and domestic Financing is estimated about **Le 873 Bln**. The other categories of resources comprising project loans and grant that will be receive from development partners that will be chanel for Commercial Banks is projected to the tune about **Le 1tln**. Our Expenditures priorities for next year are as follows;

A wage bill is projected to increase from **Le 3.2tln** in 2020 from **Le2.59tln** in 2019. We plan to recruit 5,000 teachers, 3,000 health workers and 8,000 police officers next year. We have also introduced payment to mayors, Chairperson and the Deputy as well, siting fees and transport allowance for councillors; we intend to increase remuneration to paramount Chiefs. With respect to the medium term National Development plan and the different sectorial allocation under Cluster One for human capital development.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the total Budgetary allocation to the educational sector is **Le 1.4tl** representing 22% of total primary expenditures. For the Health Sectors, the total allocated for next year is **Le 674bln** representing 11% of the total Budget.

Under Cluster2; Diversifying the Economy, Agriculture would represent 6% of the total primary expenditure and the total value is **Le 348bln**. With respect to trade, we have allocated **Le 14.8bln** to the Ministry of Trade to support the various Agencies that are engage in improving the business environment. And **Le 22bln** allocated from the domestic capital Budget to support Micro and Medium Scale enterprises.

Under Cluster 3; of the National Development plan, we have allocated **Le 3.4bln** to the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources including **Le 1.8bln** to the National Minerals Agency.

Under Cluster 4; Governance and Accountability for Resource, we have allocated **Le 37.4bln** in 2020 through this Honourable House, and this represent a marked increase from the 2019 Budget of last year.

Under Cluster 5; Infrastructure Development and Economic Competitiveness, Electricity supply represent 6% of the recurrent Budget and that is estimated at **Le 127bln** from the recurrent Budget. For Water Supply and Sanitation, the total value is **Le11.3bln**. For roads, the total value is **Le217bln**.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the last two remaining clusters under the National Development Plan;

Cluster 6, women, children and disability, we have allocated **Le 3.3bln** for gender and children's programme.

Cluster 7; disaster management, climate change and related vulnerabilities, a total of **Le 28bln** is allocated to EPA, **1.9bln** to the Nuclear Safety and radiation protection agency and a total of about **Le3bln** to the remaining agencies.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, of Parliament I move that the Bill Entitled; the Appropriation Act 2020 being an Act to allow Expenditure from the Consolidated fund for the Services of Sierra Leone 2020 be read the Second time.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Speaker, point of Order! Before the question is put I don't see the presences of the SLBC crew, this is very important. This is the State Budget that is going to be debated the public is interested; that is why we have called the MDAs to be here. I was not seeing the presence of the SLBC crew in the last five years in this regime it has been broadcasting live. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Tell us where is the present crew from AYV or SLBC?

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: But they were doing live coverage Sir, and the public is interested in this discussion.

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Yes! Mr Speaker, before we proceed, we held consultations with the Acting Leader of the ruling party, and Members of Finance Committee. I think

we need to make the provision very clear what we all agreed on in that room. We all agreed that we are going to comments the debate, like we have always said; we will never want to stub anything that is geared towards the progress of this country. But we also agreed that the Ministry of Finance must make available to us the estimate tomorrow to ensure that we continue the debate.

In the absence of that, tomorrow we will not continue if we don't get the estimate, because we believe that they had enough time to make sure that we get this document before we start, that is the procedure. I am just putting them on noticed that tomorrow if we don't get it the debate is not going to continue. I think all of my colleagues that were in that room agreed. Let us be sincere to ourselves what we agreed. If I make it clear I don't see anything wrong Honourable Members.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Acting Leader of the Opposition, you have made your point, Mr Acting Leader of Government Business, what is your response to that?

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Thank you Mr Speaker. Like he has rightly reported, we came to the conclusion that we start the Budget's debate today and by tomorrow we would make sure that we have the estimate.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

HON. KANDEH YUMKELLA: Point of Order Sir! We were also specific that before the commencement of debate tomorrow, there were other extreme views; we agreed with the Honourable Acting Leader of Government Business, that it will be asymmetric information as a good economist knows, with asymmetry of information the other hand cannot properly debate. So, we compromised that with the guide of the Speaker, we start today and tomorrow morning we will get the estimates so that we can constructively engage in the debate Sir.

THE SPEAKER: I am not opening it to debate. No, let me deal with this first. I have listened to the three Leaders. Let me try to put in practical terms what your agreement is that, before the end of today or latest before the start of tomorrow's proceedings the estimate would be made available that is my understanding.

HON. DICKSON M. DICKSON: Mr Speaker, that is the understanding let's get the debate started that is the most important thing.

THE SPEAKER: Equally important Mr Leader, the estimate must be made available to Members of Parliament, either at the end of today or before the beginning of tomorrow's proceedings.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, before tomorrow's proceeding so at least we would go to work till tomorrow morning.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

HON. ALUSINE KANNEH: Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: On this same issue?

HON. ALUSINE KANNEH: No Sir! This is another concern. Before we start the debate you have been very firm on making sure that MDAs are present when debate is going on.

THE SPEAKER: Leave that with me now.

HON. ALUSINE KANNEH: Okay. Thank you! Well we want to know how many of those were present. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Leave that with me. First I am going to put the question and then I would indicate the caveat attached to that question.

[Question Proposed]

THE SPEAKER: A couple of caveat, a circular letter issued last night to all MDAs inviting the Vote Controllers to be in attendance. I would direct that a record of the attendance of the Vote Controllers be made. I would like to know at the end of today's proceedings the names of the vote controllers, and the MDAs they represent to be brought to my attention.

Secondly, I refer Honourable Members to S.O [38] more specifically Paragraph 3 of S.O [38] "that gives me the power to limit the time of contributors to the debate". I want to

believe 5 minutes is more than enough, if you quarrel with that then you are a talkative, what we want is talk sense. If you want to talk sense, you only need 5 minutes not more. I am sure the Honourable Kandeh Yumkella would agree with me?

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, you are right. I just want to, because we have shorten the time to three days and according to you we are only going to accept 5 speakers, from each side of the aisle for a day, I want to appeal that we increase the minute either between 7 and 10 minutes.

THE SPEAKER: I want to be able to accommodate as many Members of Parliament as possible. You know, this is not the platform for campaigning to your constituents. Let's not convert Parliament into a platform for campaigning to your constituents, the time would come, three years from now is a plenty of time, let's focus on what is before us. So, its 5 minutes and I would increase the number from 3 to 5.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, it was initially 5 can we say 7 and reduce the number to 5 minutes.

THE SPEAKER: Okay. I would increase the number to 6. Well, I have just been informed that the attendance of MDAs is being done at the Dispatch point. So, please make sure that you sign the register at that point before you take your seat in the Well.

HON. KANDEH YUMKELLA: Mr Speaker, we are confused about your instructions 5 minutes per each speaker, but you said you would increase the number.

THE SPEAKER: The number of Speakers...

HON. KANDEH YUMKELLA: So, you are saying for three here having the six Speakers every day? We think that is not equitable Sir.

THE SPEAKER: Well you have only 4

HON. KANDEH YUMKELLA: But is six divided by 3, here is 6 divided 1 that is not equitable Sir. We think it is 6 there, 10 here per day then it is equitable Sir, because they get 18 easily for 3 days.

THE SPEAKER: I didn't say per side.

HON. KANDEH YUMKELLA: Then there is Paramount Chief Sir. So that is why we need a clarification Mr Speaker.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, I think I have the same concern, but from what I have learnt I think the other parties stand better chance, if I understand you well.

THE SPEAKER: Take your seat. I am not going to treat all the Parties equally; I am going to treat them equitably not equally.

HON. KANDEH YUMKELLA: That is the equity we need to understand the right Honourable Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: That is left with my digression; safely secreted in my own digression. I am not going to disclosed that. I would like to recognise the Honourable Francis A. Kaisamba, the Chairman on the Finance Committee. Alright, let's take it this way; Honourable Kaisamba would start, his is my number one for today, number two is Honourable Sallieu O. Sesay, number three is Honourable Mustapha Musa Sellu, number four is Honourable John Charles Conteh, number five is Honourable Sahr Charles in that order.

HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will rise to commence the debate on the Appropriation Bill 2020 with the Theme "Fiscal Consolidation for Human Capital Development and Job Creation". But before I go further Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I may want to take the singular opportunity to thank the Minister of Finance and his team, the MDAs themselves, Civil Society Organisations and Journalists, and other well-wishers who spent a lot of time at the Budget discussions at the Mattia Conference centre, and the Ministry of Finance for spending couple of days at retreat centres to put together these document for the attention of Parliament. Having stated that, I wish to state that, like the deputy Minister of Finance rightly mentioned that the 2019 Budget execution by the Ministry of Finance as up to September 2019 was somewhere around 75% of execution or implementation. But there were huge drawbacks which the Ministry of Finance inherited and some of

those drawbacks I may want to talk on briefly and with your leave Mr Speaker; bulk of them were the debts burden on Government and up till now. I may want to quickly refer to Page 20 Paragraph 99 that spoke on Public Debt Policy, and with your leave, I may want to read some portions of Page 20 Paragraph 99 as reported earlier. I read; “external debt is estimated as **\$1.6bln**, and domestic debt is **Le 6.1tl** about **\$650mln** as end June 2019, the total stuck of Public debt external plus domestic is equivalent to 62.8% of GDP, as at end June 2019 making Sierra Leone one of the highest indebted Countries in Sub- Sahara Africa”. So whilst Ministry of Finance was trying to implement the 2019 budget to ensure that it was 100%, this elephant in the room was drawing the Ministry of Finance back, so there were huge challenges with regards to the complete implementation. That is not withstanding, they were able to execute somewhere around 75% and the remaining is on course for completion. Further to that Mr Speaker, domestic arrears with regards to contracts is another burden on Government, which the Ministry of Finance is struggling with. And if I may mention the few on Page 21 Paragraph 103, “Clearance of verified domestic suppliers and contractors are theirs”.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the debt situation is compounded by the stuck of domestic suppliers and contractors arrears are crewed by the past administration. The total amount of claims of arrears submitted to the Auditor General for verification was estimated at **Le 10.7tln** inclusive on unpaid cheques **Le 909bln** held at the Bank of Sierra Leone. Recent arrears verification by Government in collaboration with the IMF estimate that as at April 2019 domestic arrears amounted to **Le 3.2tln** about **Le 340mln** of which 90% were accrued in 2016 and 2017, so all of these factors impeded the complete implementation or execution of the 2019 budget. That notwithstanding, Government through the Ministry of Finance was able to put together a lot of reforms to ensure that the crushing or mitigate effects, so that they were able to provide services and equally to embark on capital development projects. And of course to service the very debts both external and domestic and to look at contractors, and moreover they have been able to pay salaries all throughout. On the 2020 budget, the Minister of Finance made proposals and the projections to Parliament, and of course

eventually they brought the Finance Bill which this House looked at critically and we passed which will enable and allow them to collect the required revenue that they would use to support this particular Budget. And going further on that, the Flagship project of this Government has been Human Capital Development. And of course Primary and Basic Education and so in page 34 for example; paragraph 106 the Minister elaborated with regards the amount of monies allocated to the Ministry of Primary and senior secondary Education. And with your leave the Minister said **Le1.4tl** which represents 22% of the total budget was allocated to the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education. Like I said, one of these days the free quality Education as announced by His Excellency, the President was a very ambitious Project. Some people thought it will never come to fusion, but the determination of Government through the Ministry of Finance and of course the NRA, Donor partners. So far, Government have been able to pay School Fees, to pay for School materials, to pay examination fees such as BECE and WASSCE, to provide buses for school going children, and basically to allow the free quality process to start and is on-going. Naturally, we expected challenges. There are challenges, but this Government is very firm and committed to ensuring that those challenges are surmounted as we go along. So, huge chunk of the budget 22% has been allocated to primary and secondary education which shows determination of Government to ensure at this particular flagship project of His Excellency, the President succeeds. The other critical aspect which Government pays a lot of attention to is Health, as a nations we have pumped a lot of money in health. Probably, some I do not know if they were properly accounted for before now. This Government is committed to ensuring that health care is available and affordable to every Sierra Leonean. So, because of that; at page 35 paragraph 185 the Ministry of Finance allocated **Le674.2bln** which represents 11% of the total budget to the Ministry of Health to ensure that required health activities for example; there are a lot of problems with regards to human resource, some nurses have been given pin code and other health workers, some have not been given, the processes are on-going. They need materials for example; if we have been talking about diagnostic centre, at least Government has ensured that they allocate huge sum alongside other donor funds, and other monies

have been coming so that we ensure we make our health care affordable and better in this country.

Suspension of S.O 5 [2]

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I have been very accommodating. I am sure you know what that means? I know you are the Chairman of the Finance Committee.

HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA: Thank you. In addition to that, in the health sector other development partners will definitely disburse the World Bank, the Global Fund, GAVA, CDC etc. Mr Speaker, the Government said, "We are going to diversify the economy, because we have over relied on the mining sector in this country", and so in diversifying Government spoke of Agriculture, Fisheries and Tourism. Agriculture is one sector we have to pay keen attention to because the amount of money Government use per month for example; to import rice is so huge. If we can be self-sufficient only in the rice production, we will be able to feed ourselves then we can save all of those and using some other sector. I am sure this can mitigate even the exchange rate variable. So in this Government, we spoke of diversification and we mean just that and a lot of monies have been allocated in page 36 Government allocated **Le 348.8Bln** to Agriculture. I may want to admonish the Ministry of Agriculture, the Minister and its officials that they have to work extra to ensure that we make Agriculture viable in this country and we will make Agriculture our business, for that is the only way we stop the importation of almost everything, and probably the export of very meagre things. So, we want to diversify Government equally spend a lot of monies in the Fisheries sector and Tourism.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, despite our over reliance on the Mining sector, the Mining sector is equally very important sector, and it accounts for a lot of revenue we generate so Government equally allocated, because of the importance of both the Ministry of Mines and the National Mineral Agencies huge chunk of money so that they can be able to look at the mining areas for revenue generation. Of course, Governance and accountability result institution like Audit, the Anti-corruption Commission [ACC], the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and international cooperation etc.

huge chunk of money were equally given. We have a responsibility to improve on our electricity, we have done a lot but I am not sure we are there yet, we still have problems with electricity and many a time there are power outages, so Government equally thought that in page [39] **Le 127.5Bln** from the current budget to the Ministry of Energy to ensure that sufficient supply of energy. A lot of institution are giving support, but they strengthen for example; EDSA to ensure that both EDSA and EGTC do their job, because the subsidy alone Government is paying to those institution is unsustainable. They have to stand alone so that they can be able to do their things, the supply lines transformers, these are all areas of electricity generation, and Government thought it wise to spend this money. Improving our water supply, as a country we have spent a lot of money on water, and water is a very important resource we cannot survive without it, but there is still huge challenges with regards our water supply. Like I said, almost every day we see children on the street with five gallon rubbers fetching water, and some in the process gets involve in social ills, some are been knocked down by accident either motor bikes or vehicles. A lot of money has been allocated **Le11.3 Bln** to Ministry of Water Resources and SALWACO etc. and we know that they equally receive donor funds from other institutions; we hope they can use all of these monies to ensure that we have reliable water supply in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, coming to the issue of children and persons with disability is always very keen in the mind of Government, and so the government was able to address this problem huge chunk of money equally have been allocated to solving the business of women and children.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Budget overall and it outlook is a very good budget. This budget I haven't seen much controversy in it, this budget is peoples centred, this budget will solve the bread and butter issue. For example, in the budget the Minister made mention of contract below amounting to 500 million "That people will go for those projects in their various Districts, and people who permanently resides in those Districts will bid for those contracts, so that monies, notional cake will circulate". Not people from Freetown or some other parts of the country for example; go to

Kenema and bid for fire wood, those who are local indigenes residence can provide. This is another way of putting monies into the pockets of individuals. The Minister also spoke of providing tractors or machinery to Local Councils, so that Local Councils alongside can be able to employ young people, youths so that feeder roads in their areas can be repaired, they can be trained in away so that they can have the knowhow to get themselves job, those are areas that will provide jobs for people, and the Minister spoke of youth farms, chieftom farms you know we chieftom farms across the whole country those farms they will employ young people, they will have experts probably from the Ministry of Agriculture, or some other institutions to train them with regards how they use all of those implements to ensure that they grow their food, and so they will be gainfully employed. So, overall the budget is peoples cantered, and as I rightly mentioned the theme for this year's budget "The fiscal consolidation for human capital development and job creation". Whilst Government is paying attention to human capital aspect, Government is equally thinking of creating jobs for almost everybody, every sector so at the end of the day we all will be okay. Government projects from 2020 to 2022 a lot of stability with regards to the economy it will come to fruition, we all know the reasons why we have the exchange rate variable, in fact that is the only variable that has continued to create problem for us, but we know the background. The other day, we had to summon the Bank Governor and his team to this Parliament to tell us the monetary policies and why all of these are happening, and Members of the Finance Committee who were there were properly briefed, so a lot of other things are happening. There is a synergy between the fiscal policy and the monetary policy; once they work together we can be able to solve all of our problems.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to admonish this House that this budget is a very good budget for even Members of Parliament. Our interest is been captured in this budget, the interest of Members of Parliament is to see their constituents comfortable. So, basically with all of what has been stated in this budget will ensure that our constituents are comfortable, and then of course we as Representative will be comfortable. On that notes, I want to say very many thank you to Mr Speaker for

obliging me to make my comment on next year's budget, and to encourage Members of Parliament that please we don't need so many controversies here. This is a very straight forward and it's the people's budget. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Chairman of the Finance Committee for his contribution to the Debate. The next speaker on my list is the Honourable Salieu O. Sesay.

HON. SALIEU O. SESAY: Thank you very much Mr Speaker for given me the opportunity to contribute to this very important debate on the Budget titled "Fiscal Consolidation for Human Capital Development and Job Creation".

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to join my colleagues on the other side to thank the Ministry of Finance, and all those who participated in putting together this budget. Mr Speaker, I want to allay the fear of the Chairman of Finance, that we on this side we are not going to criticize the budget, we on this side will do justice to the people of this country and my contribution will be more professional than political. Having said, I want to thank the Minister of Finance, for the first time he has deliver a speech on the National budget in Parliament without using the word "battered economy". I have read through the budget, I don't know, maybe I stand to be corrected Mr Speaker. But having gone through the budget, the word "battered economy" or we "inherited the worse economy since independence" cannot be seen in this budget. Therefore, I want to thank him for that and it shows that he has started realising that it is easier to criticise when you are outside. But when you are inside, it's a different ball game. I want to once more thank him for facing the realities of the bread and butter issues, during the election or before the election the bread and butter issues seems to be an issue that can be resolved in less than six months, but we are now going down to more than eighteen months. The bread and butter issue still remains a very important topic to the ordinary man.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the reason why the Minister is struggling to address the bread and butter issue of this country, is that the Minister or the Ministry of Finance and this Government is interested in satisfying the International Monetary

Fund [IMF] than looking into the welfare of the ordinary people. This is why even when you look at the Title is all about "fiscal consolidation for human capital development", but the famous economist "Cobb-Douglas" he was very clear on the growth model that if you want to develop a nation, if you want to increase economic growth, you have variables that are very important to look at, and these variables we have looked at during the previous Government. But when this Government came they decided to concentrate on one variable, and that is "human capital". But when you look at the growth model, you realise that labour is not enough to increase economic growth. You have the infrastructure which is [A] on the model, some of the economist in this room will understand what I am saying, may be I am above the ordinary non economist in this Well. But the Cobb Douglas theory simply say [Q] which represent output is equal to [A] which is the infrastructure, [L] which is labour raised by alpha beta depend on you and capital. The impact of labour, the impact of free and quality education is a very good project which cannot be realised now. So, devoting more than 70% of the resources of this country to free and quality education will definitely constrain the other variables which are capital. Capital is important in this case, because it is capital that brings private investment, it is capital that brings machinery, but when the policies are not there or when the policies are not favourable then you drive away these investors. There has never been a country that has developed without taken into consideration the capital investment. Even on the capital investment, we realised that the previous Government introduced the Public Private Partnership [PPP], this was how we have the tool road today from Waterloo to Mile Siaka, is a public private partnership. This was why the then Government decided to do the Mamamah project that was cost **\$200,000,000**. If the Mamamah project would have been implemented or accepted by this Government, hundreds or thousands of Sierra Leoneans would have been working at this time, if the Mamamah project was accepted by this Government we would have seen the exchange rate been controlled because we would have so many dollars in the streets of Freetown and the country. But because out of ignorance this Government decided to do otherwise, this is why the exchange rate of dollar to Leone is increasing today, this is why I pity the Bank Governor. The last time he came to this Parliament, I

told him "if I were you, I would have resign my position as Bank Governor", because before taken office, you were saying on radio, or you were writing journals that seek to proffer solutions to the exchange rate, but when it comes to the practicality, the Bank Governor cannot perform. This Government inherited an exchange rate of 7, 500 per **\$10** and today we are over 10,500 per dollar, and this is why if you go to the budget and look at page 7 paragraph [34] of line 5 the Minister is very honest, in the sense he confessed to this House that "the import of food items has reduced drastically". The reduction on food imported item is not as a result of good economic policies, it wasn't because of increase in local production. You now need more Leones to buy few dollars in order to import quantity of food items, and for that reason people have decided to cut down on their consumption. This has affected domestic demand, this has affected domestic consumption which has caused the aggregate demand to shrink, and today people have decided to cut down on food items instead they eat bitter kola. Bitter kola is now very popular more than ever, because our people use to say S.O. [2], in temene "sumkola kama mun mant meaning cham kola mek you drink wata". So this economy is nothing more than or less than a bitter kola economy, it's a bitter kola economy because that is the only commodity that has realise a reduction in the price from **Le 1,500** to **Le1000** and even **Le500**, despite the increase in demand. So this bitter kola economy, which I think we need to step up to address the fundamental variables that will kick start the economy.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am a bit surprise when the Minister, or the Financial Secretary [FS] mention on 98.1 FM that the current official inflation is 15.5% a reduction from 17.5%. I find it difficult to accept because when you go to the market, the prices of basic commodities, pepper and the likes they are going up. So, I don't know how the Bank of Sierra Leone and the Minister of Finance came to this value that we have realised a reduction in the prices of goods and services, or we have moderated inflation.

THE SPEAKER: I have allowed you to exceed the allotted time because you are the opening bats man, and a lot is vested in you, in your delivery. So, I will give you two more minute but you conclude at sharp half pass twelve.

HON. SALIEU O. SESAY: Mr Speaker, I know I don't have the luxury of time. I wish you would have at least given me thirty minutes that would have helped.

THE SPEAKER: That is out of the question you know it.

HON. SALIEU O. SESAY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, for some of us we are professionals in this area. I studied in England and that tells we are all UK trained so please allow me. I know you are not happy because of the bitter kola economy, but Mr Speaker I want to guess you are also one of the Sierra Leoneans very much in love with the bitter kola because of its medicinal advantages.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me quickly round up, because I don't have the luxury of time. The Honourable from the other side was talking about debt Burden inherited by this Government, all over the world Government borrow, when the credit crunch hit the world, America went to China to borrow billions of dollars, so let us stop talking about borrowing. This Government is even now borrowing than the previous Government, but the importance is when you borrow you invest on infrastructure, you invest on human capital, you invest on viable projects, viable and sustainable projects, that is the reason for borrowing. So, therefore if this Government is expecting revenue of **Le 8.235 tln**, and its expenditure by 2020 will be **Le 9. 340tln** when you minus you have **Le 1.113tln** deficits where will the money come from? Except through browning, so let us stop talking about browning, let us served our people, let us do the right thing and take these countries forward. So when David Cameron took over office from the labour Government the economic was in a very bad shape, but what they did to correct that was to introduce austerity measures. When the past Government face the same situation as a result of Ebola and the closure of the mines, the past Government in 2016 introduced the austerity measures of which Government expenditure reduce drastically. On the other hand, in the case of this Government instead of introducing measures that will cut down on expenditures, they have decided to increase expenditure by more than

85%. These will not take us anywhere, this administration is not the same as purported by the new direction during the campaigning period. It's has not been actualized in the current situation.

Therefore Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Government can do the needful by; closing down on certain agencies that are not contributing to the development of this country, cut down expenditures that are creating burden on Government at least for a while and that will definitely increase or improve the economy. This Government inherited **5.6** economic growth from the previous Government and now we are going down to **3.5** this means if care is not taking, we would go down to minus or a recession this is very important. Therefore, the police for example; they are getting a bag of rice you can reduce it to half a bag this can save some money, the office of the Chief Minister, with all due respect to His Excellency, the President I am not questioning his wisdom but I believed taking into consideration the functions of the Chief Minister and that of the Vice President will definitely overlap in one way on the other, and if we eliminate the office of the Chief Minister it will save us **Le13.448bln** every year this can be used on education. The Chief Minister can do something else better, than even been a Chief Minister. This is a concern that has come from the International Community; let us do the right thing so that this country can move forward. We can also close the national youth service commission, because what we anticipated of the national youth commission is not functioning. By eliminating it Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it will save us **Le2.406bln** and this can be used in other areas. We can pay our local contractors in other to develop this nation. Mr Speaker, the national HIV/AIDS Commission also can be eliminated because there is a centre for disease control. This centre for disease control is helping so much and taking care of the HIV situation. By eliminating it will give Government the opportunity to have more resources to stay within it limit.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have a lot to say but time is not in my favour and as Chairman for Agricultural, we all know that Agriculture is the second flagship project

to education, and 6% of the GDP is been allocated on agriculture and we all know the Maputo declaration talks about 15% increase.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you all realized that our people are very hungry; if care is not taking and if we don't try to address these issues the people will start chasing politician in the street because they are very hungry. I was in Kenema few weeks ago, the youth there are very bitter because of bitter cola economy. So, imagine the youth of Kenema are bitter with this Government, what do you expect from your village, definitely is chaos.

Therefore Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let us put political or partisan business on the other side and try to do the right thing for the development of this nation. Any nation will developed without research and development, and that is why there is Sierra Leone Research Institute [SLRI], but when you look at the budget for SLRI it is appalling **Le 3.4bln** and you have the proposed District farm we talking about **61.1bln** and that is appalling. Let me round up; imagine the Ministry of Finance has been allocated **Le500Mil** for feasibility studies to identify the areas of 14 District where these farms will take place. What is the job of SLRI, why do we have SLRI? This **Le500Mil** should have been giving to SLRI so that they may have enough time to do research and with that research, we have seen the output of SLRI, for example; the Abu rice and other items like Erika. These are some of the output and when we invest in those areas, we are definitely going to see Agriculture moving forward. The Chairman of Finance Committee mention that "without Agriculture we cannot move", we need food; we are here because we have eaten, but our people are hungry because Agriculture is not providing solutions needed. Why they are not providing the solution needed, is because they are been deprive financially and otherwise in other to push the agenda of President Bio forward.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, to be very honest in this bitter cola economy we need to fine tune it, and we need to work together and make sure we provide or do some sacrifices if we want to move this country forward and one of that I mention is the elimination of the Chief Ministers office. I thank you very much *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. You exceeded the time limit enormously, but I allowed it because you are the open baseman for your side. Before I call on my next speaker, let me take this opportunity to recognize the presence in our midst of the Honourable Minister of health and sanitation, Professor Alpha Wurie. The next speaker on my list is the Honourable Mustapha M. Sellu.

HON. MUSTAPHA M. SELLU: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank you for giving me this opportunity to...

THE SPEAKER: I want you to look at the time over there.

HON. MUSTAPHA M. SELLU: Mr Speaker, thank you very much for reminding me. I am looking at the time but I have to respond adequately to my senior colleague.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, before I advance my point into this budgeting debate for 2020 I will want to re-educate the general public and Members of Parliament on the issues raised by my colleague on the other side. He talks about impact on education which is our flagship programme for this Government, I want to draw the attention of the Honourable Member that impact cannot be measure within the shortest period of time. All what we are doing as a Government is to measure the input and output and the outcome level, nobody in his right sense can talk about impact at this level, because impact is at the higher stage. We can now talk about the input which is what we are doing now by paying fees, providing busses, these are the input. We are talking about the immediate output, we have seeing increase in the enrolment of schools, and we talk about the output level. We have seeing the promotion and the examination passes, we talked about the impact at the end. Maybe four five years from now we can talk about the impact, so let allay your fear Honourable Members
[Applause].

I will now sheet to the other point that the Honourable Member raised about the exchange rate, we can agree that the exchange is at the point that nobody in his right sense is happy about it, including my self-standing, but we don't want to put in place major that are cosmetic. We want to look for possible affordable and sustainable

solution to problems. Like the Honourable Members, said "We inherited the exchange rate at **Le 7,500** per **\$10**" but guess what, there was nothing maintain in the foreign reserved at the Centre Bank by then. As a responsible Government, we don't want to revert to take in money direct physical foreign exchange from the reserved to pump into the economy, because we are against the International and the global best practice for banking institutions. That is why we are trying to restrain ourselves from doing that, we know what is happening about the mid-rate exchange at the Centre Bank, Commercial Banks and that of the black market, it is killing us we know that. But let me allay your fears, we would soon get over that. So for the Honourable Member, to say the exchange rate is sky rocketing, we agree, but that is one of the reasons. If we say as a Government, we have to go to the Centre Bank to take our reserved for three months from the coffer, and pump into this economy, you will see the dollar will drop immediately, but we don't want to revert to that.

Thirdly, let me re-educate on the Maputo declaration 2003 on Agriculture, its reads Mr Speaker with your leave; "Maputo declaration 2003 aim to increased annual national budgetary allocation for Agriculture to at least 10% not 15% and to ensure a growth of Agricultural output to 6% annually". I have the blessing of Mr Speaker. No two Honourable Members can stand at the same time [*Undertone*]. I am going to hammer home and put the record straight.

THE SPEAKER: Order! Order! If you are saying that you have been misquoted, then correct yourself now.

HON. SALLIEU O. SESAY: That is what I am saying.

THE SPEAKER: Okay how.

HON. SALLIEU O. SESAY: I mention 10% as the...

THE SPEAKER: Hold on!

HON. SALLIEU O. SESAY: I even advocated for an increase in the allocation on Agriculture, so what is the point? I was simply saying the allocation is 6% whiles the declaration is talking about 10% minimum. That was what I said.

THE SPEAKER: Okay. You have made your point, carry on.

HON. HINDOLO M. GEVAO: Mr Speaker, Point of Order, we have to go by the Order.

THE SPEAKER: What is your of Order?

HON. HINDOLO M. GEVAO: Mr Speaker, the Order my colleague stooled on was wrong, it is my duty, he ought to should have come under S.O 33[a] I read; "No Member shall interrupt another Member- except; [A] By rising to a point of Order under S.O 34 [Raising Point of Order]; or [B] To elucidate some matter raised by that Member in the course of his speech, provided that the Member speaking is willing to give way and resumes his seat and that the Member wishing to interrupt is called by the Speaker or Chairman. You cannot take the Floor let us have an orderly debate.

THE SPEAKER: You will get an orderly debate, but both of you have sited to me the wrong S.O; the correct one is paragraph 13 of S.O 32[13] that is why I allowed him go ahead please.

HON. MUSTAPHA M. SELLU: That was a deliberate plot to derail me, but I will still stand and give the point straight. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my colleague on the other side, I want to take your attention back in the days of 2007 when the then Government took power initially. We are talking about the burden of the debt we incurred in 2007, I want to take you quickly to the International lenders including the IMF, the Paris club and the World Bank, our debt were written off. With the understanding that the incoming Government or the President will sell on a smooth and a clean platform in terms of economics delivering, but what happen? In economics, we have what we called the "diminishing retune" the Law of diminishing says, "when the fixed factor, and the variable factor is been applied to the fixed factor" what happen at the binging? You will see the result going up and in a short while, you seeing it decline to a point that it will have no effect. That is exactly what happens in the economy, and we are now suffering today.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I now moves to my debate proper. I want to narrow down myself to couple of three sectors; one is health, Agriculture and the lastly but not

the least social protection. I am prepared and set for that, I know what you guys can do. Let me take you to...

THE SPEAKER: I just want to give you a piece of advice, considering the time constraint. In future go straight to make your points and then you spend the last minute or so replying go ahead.

HON. MUSTAPHA M. SELLU: Thank you Mr Speaker. I want to take you to health on page 35 paragraph 185 Mr Speaker with your leave. The health sector is allocated **Le674.2Bln** representing 11% of the total budget; I think this is a huge development. The civil society and other advocacy groups have been pushing for at least 14 to 15%, but gradually if you look at where we started and where we are coming now, we are gradually moving and I can assure you by the Leadership of the Presidency we have and the head of the Ministry of health, Professor Alpha Wurie sitting here, we will move to the 15% that is our target. We have now seeing the improvement in the health sector, before this time Ambulances were stock somewhere in this country without been utilized, they were brutally underutilized. Thank you for the dynamic Leadership of the Ministry of health, today we have Ambulances services all over the country, even in Kroo bola and that is a laudable venture this Government has taken up. I think we should give kudos to those who deserved that. Pregnant women can be easily taken from their villages to the nearest health facility for treatment and for delivering; I think that is huge development in the health sector as well.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the other issue is the chain of supply of the free health medicines from the centre store to the District, and to the chiefdoms and the peripheral health unit, that has been strengthen as well. I think there is a well-coordinated and mechanisms put in place by the Ministry of Health. During the past regime, a truck of drugs loaded will live Freetown before reaching to Bo there will be a different story altogether. But now the supply chain has been strengthen to a point that you cannot have those actions again in place. That is just about Leadership, and we have a very sound dynamic people handling that particular Ministry. I think we are on course.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in the mist of all of these advancement or achievement we have a few challenges that we can aspect as a Government, but not withstanding we want all of us in this Well representing our people to put our hands on shoulders so that we can push the economy or the health sector forward. Last year we heard about criminal budget and today you talking about bitter coal economy, but it's the same economy we are all benefiting from. I think it's an irony for you to say that "its bitter cola economy" however we expect from the Opposition to critic the budget. But as far as we are concern on this side, and the nation is concern, I think this is one of the most finest and the most explicit and correct straight forward budget for the people of these country. If this budget is accomplished come 2020 the bread and butter sugar, mayonnaise will be addressed in this country *[Applause]*. This is a people's centre development sustainable budget 2020; I can assure this House. Before I moved to the next area, I want to look at Agriculture. We all know how much money this country or the Government is spending on just importation of rice annually, it's about **\$200Mln** are we in place to have a short term intervention to savage this the answer is no, we have the mid-term and the long-term intervention. This is the long term sustainable one, we want to improve on the Tomabom rice farming so that we cannot be talking about importing rice, but we will be exporting to other countries *[Applause]*. I think that is the direction any sensible or visionary Leadership will look at instead of coming with cosmetic and a short term interventions to just savage the situation at the end of the day is not sustainable. We want a sustainable solution to our challenge in Agriculture, I think that is some were we are moving to, if that is achieved come 2020, 2021 we would have a sustainable result to show the people of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we all know what happened in the past, you have equipment for Agriculture such as tractors and individuals syphoning them for their own personal gain. With this new direction, the mechanisms put in place by the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Food Security is not going to be business as usual; we will now see instead of people own it as an individual it's going to be District and Chiefdom base asset and that will provide the expected result for Agricultural productivity.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am aware of the time but I want to move quickly to the social protection which is paragraph 190 and 192 page 36. Mr Speaker, With your leave I read; "the World Bank IDB, PFW, GIZ and UNHCR will disburse a total of **Le89.6bln** for the implementation of various social protection programmes implemented by the National Social Commission for Action [NaCSA] of which I am a Chairman of that particular Institution. Let me quickly take you to annex 4 line 308 where the budget estimate is been generated. The National Commission for Social Action, when you look at the pro-poor growth for peace consolidation, Empowerment Protection Programme, Relief and Resettlement Project, under that you look for foreign 2020 you will see the figures that collate with what is on paragraph 192. I think these are the real budget or physical support that will go in the pocket of Sierra Leoneans. I know I don't have much time because Mr Speaker is constantly looking at me whiles I am debating.

THE SPEAKER: I am just admiring you.

HON. MUSTAPHA M. SELLU: Thank you very Mr Speaker. Meaning, I have more time. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I think to be very honest we can all agreed with this Budget laid before us. If implemented to the fullest, I think it will be able to solve most of the issue that we are raising as Members of Parliament and the Sierra Leoneans in this country, because it is people's cantered, community base, national interest budget, we have here today as we are debating. I want to encourage my colleagues on the other side to speedily approve this budget and pass into law, so that come 2020 we will all enjoy the fruit of our labour and the fruit of the labour of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and other Ministries that have worked for us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with that I want to thank you very much for given me audience and the Floor to at least add my voice to this budget debates come 2020. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member, for his contributions to the debate and I think this is a convenient point that we can break for lunch, so we can take an adjournment now and come back in 45 minutes.

[The House stood down at 1:45 pm and Resume proceeding at 2: pm]

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, when I allocated 5 minutes per speaker, it was a deliberate decision on my path to give every Honourable Member of Parliament an opportunity to regulate themselves and in so doing you have a stack choice, either to adhere to the 5 minutes rule we have agreed upon or to be selfish, and your selfishness will involve you eating into the time of your colleagues. Because the reason for limiting you to 5 minutes is to create a platform for as many MPs as possible to participate in the debate, if instead of 5 minutes, you take 15 minutes that means, you are taking the place of 3 MPs and no selfishness can be greater than that. So, don't force me to regulate you, but regulate yourselves and be considerate. Please, realise that you have your fellow colleagues who also wants to be heard. Thank you. For the whole morning, we only able to take three speakers, so now I will give the Floor to Honourable John Charles Conteh.

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, of course I am Honourable John Charles Conteh of Constituency 031 Bombali District, but specifically here to represent the people of Gbendenbu Chiefdom, Magbandadowan Chiefdom and Kamaranka Chiefdom.

Mr Speaker, it is a norm that every given year it mandatory upon the Ministry of Finance to present to this House the budget that will give His Excellency, the President power to expend money from the Consolidated fund. It was so graciously delivered here by the Finance Minister and let me also commend the Finance Minister and his team for also delivering the Finance Bill to this House and I think I must commend you Madam Minister and your team for that.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we as opposition we are here to help the Government to succeed and because of that, we are here to proffer solutions to see

whether the Government will adhere to it so that we can be development partners together and that is what my Chairman the Honourable SOS did earlier on.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the budget presented to this House is good and somehow bad, in any aspect when something is good you have to say it is good, and I will start by outlining them; when the Finance Bill was presented to this House and also the budget, the Minister made mention but before that when His Excellency came to this House and delivered his speech on how He want to run this country, he said "he is going to diversify the economy, he talked about tourism, he talked about the mining sector and Agriculture etc." Today we are seen the manifestation of that in the tourism sector, because the huddles of coming to Sierra Leone is no more. People that are outside who wants to come to Sierra Leone they will just buy their ticket and come, and as soon they arrive and they get their Visa, which is perfectly done by this Government and the people of Sierra Leone, I applaud that Mr Speaker, what is the impact of that one? The impact is, it will broaden and widen the business growth of this country and at least when more investors will be coming to this country, they don't have much huddles again because they know as soon as they reach, the are going to have their Visa on arrival and that will open the country to business. It will allow people to come down to Sierra Leone and economic cash flow will be very much available in the country and thereby to large extent, when investors flocks into this country you will see job availability and that is very good one. I give kudos to His Excellency, the President and the Minister for that.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, also you will see there is another movement made by the Ministry in the area of air fare and air landing fare for flights that come into Sierra Leone, what does that also means? Is that you reduce the fares in the area of taxes that are geared towards landing of flight coming into this country, it reduce the ticket fares for people that are coming into this country. When I went to USA in the last three months I paid **\$2000** for ticket but because of this, it will drastically reduce the ticket fares for people that are coming to this country and I give you kudos for that again.

Mr Speaker, when MCC score card was read out Sierra Leone pass so many other threshold, but we failed woefully is in the area of fiscal policy where we scored 4% which is very much bad, and because of that I will be talking about consolidation and prudent spending in the area of managing our economy. I think there are not adhering to that because you have seen the score card of MCC which is 4% in the area fiscal policy. Let me take you to the wage Bill, if I take you to the minimum wage Bill, I want to commend this Government again for increasing the minimum wage from **Le500thnd** to **Le600thnd** which is very good and it is a laudable venture.

Mr Speaker, from the little economics I know, if you are increasing the minimum wage Bill you must take into cognizance the inflation rate in the country. The minimum wage should correspond to the inflation rate in the country, now if you increased it to **Le600thnd** as you are saying now, what impact would that create to the ordinary man in that locality? Let me say now the teachers you said, there will be increased by 30% but it will only manifest in April, so 30% of **Le600thnd** is **Le180thnd** will that **Le180thnd** buy a bag of rice? There is no significance increased that is why I said, should that correspond to the inflation rate in the country?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if I take you to page 33 in the budget, I read "the Government wage Bill projected to **3.17trl** in 2020 from **2.59trl** in 2019. Mr Speaker, this is House of Parliament, we are here to make Laws and when we make Laws, we must adhere to it. Mr Speaker, I will tell you now that, the Minister of Finance and his team, that the budget we pass in this House of Parliament during the last budget, they didn't adhere to it. Let me tell you how, take a look at it Mr Speaker, they are saying the Government wage Bill is going to be increased by **Le3.17trl** in 2020, from **2.59trl** in 2019, it was not **2.59trl** we approved in this Well of Parliament. Let me tell you people now, in 2019, we approved **Le2.40trl** so what they did now, I want the Minister to tell us Mr Speaker, I want you to take a look at it again because it is very important.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member alias Youth Leader.

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: Mr Speaker, please I want you to take a look at this again because this is House of Parliament, and it is very much important, let me read the

2019, Budget Page 27 Paragraph 117 "The Government wage Bill is projected to increase to **Le2.40trl**" now take a look at the 2020 Budget, the Government wage Bill projected to increase **Le3.17trl** in 2020, from **2.59trl** so you see what I am talking about Mr Speaker. It is clearly stated there, what we approved here is not what is written in this document, this is fraud. We approve **Le2.40trl** and they are saying here it is projected to increase to **Le3.17** in 2020 from **Le2.59trl** in 2019, but in 2019 the budget it was **Le2.07trl** so why **Le190bln** was inserted this budget? We want the Minister to tell us without the approval of this House how come this **Le190bln** was used how come Mr Speaker, they should have come supplementary budget to ascertain this figure. Mr Speaker, I hope you are following because this very much serious, this is the House of Parliament we are here to make Law.

THE SPEAKER: If you don't see me taking notes, it is quite deliberate. That is why we have the Minister here to pilot the Bill. She is following the debates, and she taking notes of your concerns and your questions. I am sure at the appropriate time she will respond.

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: Thank you very Mr Speaker. So, Madam Minister please take notes about that **Le2.40trl** was approved in 2019, and not **Le2.59**, so if we minus that, we will have an excess of **Le190bln** so you have to tell us where the **Le190bln** goes? When we did not approved it, and who gave you the authority?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me take you to the most talked about thing now in Freetown. It is good that when the Finance Bill was read here there was an issue of non-accountable impress for the President, and now people of this country are bashing at us, but it's good for me it very clear. On that day Honourable Daniel Koroma, made mentioned about the issue, and you over ruled him. After that, it was later now agreed by all of us that "let it go through, but with the inclusion of the Speaker". I am coming Mr Speaker, let me land.

THE SPEAKER: Correction! Correction!

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: Yes Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I never overruled anybody. Motions were put to the House, motions were approved, and motions were rejected.

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. But as far I am concern and for the edification of the public, we on this side thank God somebody stood up and made mentioned of it that “we did not agree to the non-accountable impress system for the President and the Vice President”. So, the reporter that did that story said, it was only Honourable Ibrahim T. Conteh who stood up and talk about that. But I will now tell the General Public that it was not only Honourable Ibrahim T. Conteh, but also Honourable Daniel Koroma from the APC made mentioned about it. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, so I want to...

THE SPEAKER: Since you are speaking to the Public, you need to speak to the Public correctly.

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: Yes Sir.

THE SPEAKER: Several motions were moved here on that particular matter, and at no stage did Mr Speaker, overruled any Member of Parliament. All the motions that were put were properly put to the vote and that matter was voted on. Maybe you were not here I don't know.

HON. DAINEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, since my name has been mentioned may I be heard?

THE SPEAKER: By all means.

HON. DAINEL B. KOROMA: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. On that note, I did say here that, that provision was and still continue to be an expenditure provision and it has no place in the Finance Bill, but it was even supported by Honourable Lahai that there are separate documents we have the Finance Bill 2020, and the Appropriation Bill 2020. Finance Act help to enable the Ministry of Finance to get money and then the appropriation Act direct the Ministry of Finance to expend money and the methods of expenditure to be used and I said that particular provision bordered on expenditure as to how the impress system should go for the overseas travel of the President and His

Vice President that was my objection. You asked me to do the needful, but I said, I am not going to stand on any motion I will leave it to you to rule on it and then accordingly you give your ruling. There was no vote on that matter, you gave your ruling and allowed the provision to continue under Finance Act even though it is an expenditure Clause.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. You are quite right but that is a totally different thing from what the Honourable Member is saying. Your point of contention was to as where that particular item belongs, should it be in the appropriation Bill or the Finance Bill? That was your own point, and I ruled that from the practice of this Parliament it appears to be the case that the Finance Bill is an omnibus Bill, it contains provisions that relate to expenditure as well as to income. But that is the fact; nobody can again say that, that is the practice of this Parliament. Be that as it may, you may continue.

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: You have two more minutes.

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: Mr Speaker, so there lies the problem.

THE SPEAKER: But you are questioning the substance of what it's contained not what Honourable Daniel Koroma contended with. His own contention was where it should go, should it go to the Finance Act or to the appropriation Act am I right Honourable Daniel Koroma?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Yes Sir.

THE SPEAKER: That was your point, you did not question the substance of it, and you are now questioning what?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: I cannot question the substance. It is not supposed to be there in the first place, so questioning the substance will come when it is properly placed. But as far as I am concern, I cannot even debate in the first substance because it is wrongly placed. I have no right at the time to debates on the substance because my point was wrongly placed.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. You have made your point and have more than made your point for you to be clear. When you are seeking support from Honourable Daniel Koroma, and you are on two different wave length that is where I want to draw your attention to.

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. All I will say is a bad precedent because we are getting bashing from the Public, because we are here to make good Laws for our people. During the previous Government of Dr Earnest Bai Koroma, there was never a document sent to this House by Dr Earnest Bai Koroma to have freedom to spend money and not to account for it. That is why we have the Commission of Enquiry, because you people are afraid of accountability and that is what this Bills means that is why you said let this Bill go to Parliament so that when tomorrow comes, you will say "that Bills was passed through this Parliament and the Parliamentarian approved it" and that is bad precedents, so that is why you put it in this Bill.

Mr Speaker, we as opposition we do not buy that idea, because it is a bad precedent and I don't know but for me it should be expunge.

THE SPEAKER: Let me remind the Honourable Member, again how are you going to do that act of expunging? This was a motion that was carried by the House *[Applause]*. And you are saying that motion should be expunge?

HON. MOMOH BOCKARIE: Point of Order Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I am not entertaining any Point of Order on this one. That mater was put to a vote in this House and it was carried, and it found its way into the Finance Act which has since been passed by this House. If you want to change it, bring a private Member motion.

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: Mr Speaker, I was coming slowly to that because I was called yesterday by my Constituents and they said, they don't need it and as their Honourable Member, I will say it. They don't need it Mr Speaker, so definitely I will come with the private Member motion to this House.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you take a look at again the NPPA, its stated in the Finance Bill that, the President will be responsible to procure sensitive materials. Is only the President has the authority now? But there is an establish Act from the NPPA that says "it should be the sole responsibility of ONS to do that work" so I don't know the rational of the Finance Minister sending it now to the president. When you take a look at the office of the President, there are no procurement officers there so how can they do that work very much well. That is my problem.

THE SPEAKER: Hold on. Yes!

HON. BOSTON MUNDA: Mr Speaker Point of Order, I believe the Honourable Member, is not limiting himself with the time and again with the budget before him. He is deviating from the budget to ONS and as far as I am concern the budget does not capture ONS. I don't know what his is talking about right now Mr Speaker.

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: Mr Speaker, I want to know if ONS is not part of the MDAs.

HON. BOSTON MUNDA: It's, but I don't know why the Honourable Member is moving away from the point.

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when you again take a look at the same NPPA 41 Clause 2, the first schedule of the public procurement Act 2015 is amended by repealing and replacing paragraph 2,3,4 and 5 with following new paragraphs. What I am saying here is that, we should allow institution to operate freely

HON. HINDOLO M. GAVAO: Mr Speaker, Point of Order. I am standing on Order S.O [32] rule 5, "A Member must confine his observation to the subject under discussion and may not introduce matters irrelevant thereto" That is my submission.

THE SPEAKER: I have heard your Point of Order. What I find rather intriguing, is the fact the Honourable Member, where you there when we debated

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: I was here Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I don't know how I could have missed seeing you on that day considering the location of your seat.

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: I stood several times Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I am coming, you are almost directed behind Honourable Daniel Koroma, and next to Honourable Daniel Koroma is Honourable Lahai Marah, I don't see how I could have missed taking notice of you, if you were here on that day then I will rule you completely out of Order. You should have raised this matter when we were discussing the finance Bill.

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: Mr Speaker, I was not given the opportunity.

THE SPEAKER: The Finance Bill has gone through the House like it or not it is now law. If you are against that law, you are at liberty to come back here with a Private Members motion or a private member Bill and seek an amendment to that law.

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: Thank you very much Mr Speaker, we will do that.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker Point of Order. Can I please stand on S.O.32 [7]? Because you have repeatedly said, to this House that that particular item was put in the motion and the motion was carried so I want to stand on 32[7] which says "It shall be out of Order to attempt to reconsider any specific question upon which the House has come to a conclusion during the current session except otherwise substantive motion for discussion" and there is no substantive motion on that matter.

THE SPEAKER: I have tried to remind the Honourable Member, and on his own admission, I thought he was not even here so may he was acting out of ignorance. But if you say you were here, then you must have been part and parcel of the proceedings that led to the passing of the finance Act 2020 and the S.O that has been quoted you is perfectly relevance and unless you want to bring this House into disrepute. Please comply with S.O32 [7]

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. I said, earlier we are here to represent the people so if we are here to represent the people, if we pass a law that is not convenient with the people as representative of this House I will say it. Mr Speaker, Honourable Member, it is not a new phenomenon now in this country that we are paying *[Interruption]*.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, do you when you started? You are first speaker after lunch.

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: Mr Speaker, you know what was happening. They interjected me several times.

THE SPEAKER: Let me remind the Honourable Member, regulates yourself, you have a clear choice. You either regulate yourself or adhere to the rule of five minutes or you continue to be selfish or self-indulgence and that is exactly what you are doing now.

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. It is not a new phenomenon in this country that BECE, NPSE and other exams have been paid for the first time. It was there since time in memorial during the days of the APC, we paid BECE, NPSE, WASSCE and granting aid for pupils, so it's not a new phenomenon. So, I wonder why Members on the other side trumpeting it, "that they are now paying NPSE, BECE and WASSCE" it has been there for ages. So, definitely Mr Speaker, we commend them for upholding what Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma's legacy he left for this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Government is also claiming that they are managing the economy very well, but if you take a look at what this Budget is trying to portray it's unfriendly to the poor man in this country. What do I mean by unfriendly to the poor man, now the goods and extra duties and also other prices are just sky-rocketing, so it means the Budget is not in the interest for the poor man. What they did in this Budget was that they reduce the tax for cooperate and cooperate is for rich people.

They reduce the tax from 25% to 30% for cooperate people; it is not good for the ordinary man, so definitely what I was thinking is that at least let them create the environment for the poor man to enjoy the economy. But what you people did was to reduce cooperate tax from 25% to 30% so that is for the rich people and not for the poor people. Again let me take a look at this budget...

THE SPEAKER: You have 30 second to stop.

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me just summarise. Year in and year out Budget presented to this Parliament, you will hear the Minister of Finance saying “We are going to recruit 5000 teachers, we are going to recruit 3000 health workers, we are going to recruit 1000 police officers”, all of those things with the same amount of money. So, I want to know because every year you recruit 5000 teachers, 3000 health workers, and 1000 police officers. I am wondering where that money is going, because what I have been seeing from 2019 to this year is recruitment Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: I will depart from the tradition of thanking you Honourable Member, the reason being that you are my first speaker this afternoon, you have taken up 30 minutes which means you have spoken for six Members. You deprived five other Members. The next speaker on my list is the Honourable Sahr Charles.

HON. SHAR CHARLES: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start by thanking the Minister of Finance and his entire team for putting a document of this nature. We all know that monetary matters are not matters of fancy and thus they required serious attention and it must have gone through huddles to put this document together. However, I believe I started by thanking the Ministry because for the first time in the history of this Government they have acknowledge the fact that indeed they much talk about bread and butter was part of their massage during the campaign, as for the first time the people of Sierra Leone has had a Budget that the Minister himself described as a bread and butter Budget. So, it means the cry of the people to answer in the area of bread and butter is reality. This Government indeed owe it to the people of this nation that the issue of bread and butter must be addressed. So, for thinking about it this time around and describing this Budget as the bread and butter Budget is the step in the right direction. It tells us that indeed they have started showing some amount of commitment in going back to their campaigning promises, we appreciate them for that. Without wasting time Mr Speaker, as you advice for us to regulate our self I will do that fairly. I want to focus my debate on the description itself given by the Minister that the

Budget is a bread and butter Budget, which means we are going to qualify the Budget as the bread and butter it's very important.

The efficacy and that of the legitimacy of democracy cannot be realise if the citizens are not informed, and we as Members of Parliament, believe that one of our key responsibility to keep our constituents inform on happenings. Of course before the commencement of the debate, a colleague of mine raised a concern that the national broadcaster that is supposed to be broadcasting this particular hearing live is not doing it. This document that we are debating here today is the life line of the people of this nation. For the whole of 2020 everything that involve financial matter and the running of this country, I believe it's in this blue book here with us. Therefore, every important thing is to be accorded to this document.

So, I will take on few issues in this Budget that I want to talk on. The first one will have to do with the labour based work; it's not a new phenomenon and it's something that has been happening.

At first, we use to have local people that come together and do communal labour, they will brush their roads, and they will do some assistance to make their roads. But over the years, we have seen the introduction of the road maintenance fund administration whose responsibility I believe is primarily to see that our roads are maintain and as its name implies, each year huge fund is allocated to the road maintenance fund. Like the coming financial year 2020 they have allocated **Le100Bln** to road maintenance funds administration. But you check our roads how well is this administration maintaining the roads, what is happening? For this Government to think of labour based work and to engage our young people so that they can work with councils for the maintenance of our roads, I believe it's a laudable venture only that the local councils will be given the free hands to see that they monitor this project adequately.

In the area of national council for civic education, I said for democracy to be effective, for democracy itself to have its legitimacy the citizens need to be informed. The national council for civic education and development have been established for over a year, what have they done so far now this Government is allocating to them over

Le10Bln to that particular department. I believe the primary role of that department is for them to be able to inform our citizens, our populace out there on what is happening and how Government work.

This is their civic responsibility and these are very important things that are why when it was established we applauded the effort of this Government because we think that particular department will help save our neck as Members of Parliament or as public officers. There are most times they attribute things to us that are not part of our functions. This is the responsibility of this particular department to be doing civic education, but over years now that department is been establish and what they have done that Government is allocating **Le10Bln** to them. Is a call for concern.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, moving forward we talk about the local content policy under the award of contract. To me contracts that are not more than **Le500mln** is not too much, we still believe we must give opportunity to the local indigenes that are living within their localities. For instance, there is a project going on presently in Kono District in my constituency, a particular road network that is been sponsored by SCADEP over ten contractors from Kono District applied and they went to almost to the final stage, none of them got the contract and they got people elsewhere to do the job wherein we have contractors that have all the capacity to be awarded the project. We have to look into that as well, honouring the local content policy is an issue, not to talk about the supply of fire wood, pepper, Maggi etc. these are all the things that the people in the locality can provide, we have to think about that as well.

As we go along, I will talk on the intervention made by this Government for job creation as presented in this document by the Minister of Finance. He made mention of over **Le22Bln** to be given as micro-credit in which 70% beneficiary should be women. Macro-credit is good, but I believe it is one thing that has been destroying the economy of this country because most time people take advantage of this money because the manner in which you administer this credit facility do not reflect national interest, but instead its reflect political interest. For example, if I know that I am C4C and I receive an opportunity because of my political belonging I will definitely have no

fear to misuse such opportunity. That is the reason most time this micro-credit facilities are not sustainable because they will say S.O [2] *na wi dance for am, na wi goment dis, wea den don gie wi so na wi yon tem dis for eat*, this is what they will say. So, I want to advice the Ministry that they should be careful as to how they should administer those loan facilities.

In the area of Chieftdom youth farms and that of military farm are also very important, but my fear is that if they are not going to politicizing them. As I speak, there is a turning issue in my Constituency even though the issue of Chieftdom youth farm has not yet be implemented and some people have gone there to identify a particular portion of land, they have identified the land as SLPP Chieftdom youth farm. They are in conflict with the people there, so if you are doing these things and the Honourable Chairman of Agriculture made mention of over **Le500mln** has been given for the purpose of visibility studies within these 149 Chieftdom youth farms.

I believe that is a waste, every District has a District directorate of Agriculture, we can work through them, we can work through SLARI to support these institutions that have been created so that they can be viable instead of us coming with new things every now and then.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will also want to draw the attention of this House to the National Investment Board, it was just mention to us in the statement read by the Minister and in the statement it is clearly written there that "It is yet to go through Cabinet approval and subsequently to come through this House for final ratification." But we already have a huge sum of money which has been allocated to the National Investment Board for its establishment. A Board that Cabinet has not yet approved, not to talk of this House, where are we going? It means whether we approve this Budget or not the money has already been allocated. So, these are some of the things we always remind this Government of, if you can remember as well, last year similar things occurred with the demolition of the formal US embassy building while the process was on, they came with a document here for us to look at it and give go ahead.

I also want to talk on the Independent National Peace Commission. The President made mention of it in his statement during the state opening of 2019. I believe when you look at the colours of the books, the Presidential address to this House and that of the Finance statement, they are the same. I give the answer directly to what the President propose, so if the President in his statement made mention of the Independent National Commission for Peace and we have not seeing anything reflected in this Budget. Instead we are seen things that were not even mention there, so this is a concern and we still believe that this commission is very important because as I speak there are so many turning issues left unresolved, and we cannot keep on been quiet on some of these issues. Everybody is important in this society, if Sierra Leone must move forward we need everybody on board. So it is very dishearten for the Minister of Finance to present a Budget of this nature without making consideration to that.

My colleague made mention of the Budget approval, and there I can tell you categorically that since this Government came into existence, the first statement we heard from the President was the recruitment of 5000 teachers and we are hearing that out of 5000 teachers it includes the replacement as well. This is a concern, up till now we have not got those 5000 teachers. As I speak, teachers that have been approved have also not been catered for and it has past eleven months now, this is a concern.

At this juncture, I want to thank His Excellency, the President for realizing the fact that indeed in running a Government you don't only need the idea of your party, you need the idea of every other parties.

Once again, I want to say thank to His Excellency, the President for taking the idea from our Leader Chief Sam Sumana under C4C by taking the idea from one District one factory, is very much important I want to applaud this Government for that. I believe by so doing the much talk about S.O [2] de grun dry will reduce. We need to encourage investors to come and invest. The challenges to this Budget implementation was also mention, and if I can take you back to last year Budget they also mention the closure of the iron ore mining, this is something the Government need to look into for the past one year. We have seen mining activities been drastically affected and these minerals

cannot continue to lie down useless, we need to make use of them and they need to benefit the people of this country. So we are asking that mechanisms are put in place so that we can tap from those resources. I thank you very much for your attention.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution to this debate. I now give the Floor to Honourable Sama S. Sandi.

HON. ISHMAIL S. SANDI: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as this Budget is political and economic expressions of our Government continuous commitment to the “paopa” ideal I have with all sense of rectitude carefully examine this Budget from the right base perspective. I have judiciously analysed this Budget to show how it caters for the national specific target of the SDGs.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in view of this permit me to triangulate this people’s Budget, this bread and butter Budget with the National Mid-term Development Plan which epitomizes the new direction’s agenda and the SDGs national specific target to underscores the people’s centeredness of our Government and the sense of accountability displaced by our regime. In this attempt, I will however limit myself to three thematic commonalities namely; empowering youth, women and the disadvantaged, developing the Agricultural sector, and improving educational and skills training. All of these resonate to the aspiration of our society.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in an attempt to address the empowerment of youths, women, and the disadvantaged this Budget has introduced a sustainable micro finance scheme the sum of **Le100bIn** allocated to facilitate the provision of resources to the people who dance for us on the street for the energy they display, for the confidence they display and for their been a Sierra Leonean and I want to assure you Honourable Members, on the other side with all sense of equity everybody is going to benefit from this particular cake.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will do justice to my contribution and I will do the Westminster Practice. The realization of this particular initiative will go a long way in reducing poverty...

HON. SALLIEU O. SESAY: Points of Order

THE SPEAKER: What is your Order?

HON. SALLIEU O. SESAY: I stand on S.O [34] the Honourable Member, is reading directly from the note, he should not do that.

TH SPEAKER: I have not observed him reading from any prepared text, he is been looking down wards but that is not tantamount to reading; yes you will be looking down ward but don't read.

HON. ISHIMAI S. SANDI: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to inform this House that the provision of **Le1bln** to this particular women and youths goes the long way in addressing S.O [2] "*The grun dry*" we are all crying about. I know when this is provided, it's certainly going to be the rain to soak the ground and is going to be the yeast in the flour and definitely is going to be the butter for the bread.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Budget goes a long way in fulfilling they leave no one behind mantra of the SDG because definitely everybody is going to benefit from this Budget, regardless of your party and regardless of your region.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will now come to the area of Agriculture; this Budget is one of the most beautiful Budget post independent especially in the area of Agriculture. Like my senior colleague was saying, with reference to the Maputo declaration although he was saying "Magbutu".....The Maputo declarations provide 10% allocation of the national Budget to the Ministry of Agriculture.

With the leave of Mr Speaker, let me read it aloud; this particular Budget has done so much justice to the Ministry of Agriculture and they have allocated **Le348.8Bln** to the implementation of the National Agricultural Transformation Program which is a laudable one. In continuation to that **Le61.6bln** is allocated for the establishment of Chiefdom youth farm and the Military farm. At the end of the day we are estimating the production of fifteen thousand metric tons of rice. Such an allocation, such a situation and such a strategic cannot be named any other name but "Bread and butter". I will go further quoting the allocations of **Le2.0bln** for the rehabilitation of Musaya livestock

station. **Le500mln** is allocated to the financing and establishment of the District farm service centre to facilitate mechanise farming.

Colleague on the other side, do justices to yourself and do justices to this nation and applaud this particular Budget because it has all what it takes to be characterise or to be look with that kindness of fairness and become the "Bread and butter Budget".

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this coupled with the suitable Agricultural policies put in place will definitely goes a long a way in granting this country. The capacity to feed ourselves and feeding yourself is simply bread and butter. Let me tell you one thing, in the wake of all these beautiful things we have started seeing people who trust in this administration, people who like or who believe in the ideal climate especially in the area of Agriculture.

Coming to invest in our Agricultural sector, just imagine **\$275mln** deal in the area of rice production and at the end of the day we have been expecting 1.6 metric tons of rice for the people of Sierra Leone, how can you call that? Join me colleague call it bread and butter. This particular venture will go a long a way in addressing target one of the SDG.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will come to the area of skills training. This Government has shown so much passion for the development of the middle level man power and the segment of our population that is engage in this particular bracket is the youths. Imagine within a period of eighteen month, we are establishing sixteen Government trade centre, as I am speaking Government trade centre Pujehun is now existing and functioning, Government trade centre Bo is also functioning equally, Makeni, Karena is going to benefit, Port loko is going to benefit, Falaba is going to benefit, and at the end of the day our youths are going to be empowered. At the end of the day, there is going to be money in the pocket of people, and at the end crime rate is going to reduce.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in conclusion all I will say, if at all it is a benediction, I will say this particular Budget is nothing but "bread and butter" and if you observe I

want my colleagues on the other side to join us in pushing the facilitation of this Budget if at all you are interested in the betterment of our people. I thank you very much.

Suspension of S.O5 [2]

THE SPEAKER: I am really beginning to take the light in the Honourable Member's presentation. I can just imagine his sermon on Sunday, I hope before too long all of us will be invited to his church. Thank you very much for your contribution. I now call on the Honourable Abdul K. Kamara constituency 059 and then he will be followed by the Honourable Abdul M. Conteh.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as young MPs in this Parliament, it beholds us to be the conscience of the people and the conscience of this nation because whatever we do here, we are surely going to rip. Sincerity and integrity is what is missing in some of the debate we present in this House. Corruption has been the music in this nation for the last nineteen months. Fighting corruption is a daily and more talked about than even "our father" and the "Alfathiah" in churches and mosques. Mr Speaker, we have a situation today in this nation in which a senior member of this Government is accused of corruption and he is still sitting in the office. I am appealing for such situation...

HON. HINDOLO M. GEVAO: Mr Speaker, permit me to rise on this issue. When we use the word accuse in legal terminology and we are on national camera...

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, when you caught your colleague midstream is difficult for me as Speaker to know what he is going to talk about. Allow him to land and then we will know what to do.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Thank you Mr Speaker. I referred this House to page 4 paragraphs 16. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you permit me I will read on the statement of the economy and financial policy that talk on corruptions, I believe you can read it because I don't have time.

Mr Speaker, when we talk about corruption as an integral problem to our society for integrity sake and for people who uphold national offices, if you are accused or your

name has become a national debate it beholds you to allow the process to go through. There is an example in this nation, when we heard the case of Kemo Sesay and the cocaine saga and he was tried and he was not found guilty, he was reinstated to another Ministry.

If we are serious about fighting corruption as a nation, the current media war that has led to arrest of journalist, that led to so much cry around the country behold the person to step aside to allow the investigation to go on.

Mr Speaker, as a young person sometimes it baffles me when we have been used for election purposes and after elections we are been reduce to a point of only brushing of roads, we talk about washing of cars, we talk about farms, we are been reduce to a point of just mere workers.

I bet my life on this Mr speaker, not even one single Honourable Member, in this House wants to reduce his or her child to that level. The money allocated for brushing of side roads, the money allocated for car wash, the money allocated for youths in Agriculture, if used correctly it will yield dividend. We have many young people with sound WASSCE that are capable of being medical doctors in this country, why not invest that money on them, we are here to talk as the conscience of this nation.

Mr Speaker, over the years what we struggle with in Sierra Leone as also Western Area is the issue of cholera, I am not speaking to people who are not willing to listen, I am talking to those who sent me here and I will continue to be the conscience of this nation. Mr Speaker, when you see the money allocated to Guma Valley water Company which is **Le 3bln**. I ask myself the question "What do we expect from such a viable institution that provides water on daily basis for this nation"? Is not about when we praise the Budget, for me I am not happy with the President.

As Members of Parliament, we are supposed to be the conscience of this nation, let's bring out issues that will help the President in addressing the daily affairs of this state. We say we are going to diversify the economy, we are going to invest in the tourism sector, we are going to invest in the Agricultural sector, when you look at the allocation

to these sectors you will know that we are playing with words and not putting realities to really diversify the economy. Every year we talked about debt burden, let me refer this House to the Minister of Finance when making his statement his is so sincere to say "By June 2019 of which he has been a Minister for more than one years the debt burden has been increase" but ironically he is telling this House that his has spent so much money in paying those debts. But I ask myself the question, if I have to pay somebody **Le1thou** and I keep paying and over one year the money goes to **Le2thou** the question is that, are you paying the debts you met or you are paying the debts you incurred? And still the debts bills keep increasing.

Are we sincere to our conscience? Our people are losing the credibility and confidence they have in us as elected Members of Parliament, when we come here to look at Budget like this and praise it because it's our party, we are not doing injustice to this nation, why are they paying us as Members of Parliament? We will continue no matter how small we are in this nation; we will speak for the ordinary people because we have gone through their ranks.

Coming to the health sector, look at the money allocated to the health sector, consider hard to reach areas where your constituent are coming from instead of advocating for more money to be allocated to those health sectors, you are here clapping for poor allocation done to Ministries and Agencies that deserve not even to exist.

Where is our conscience as Elected Members? Before the 2018 election, we complain as citizens that wage bill is so expensive, a wage bill that drag our economy development down. But today we continue to fail the people, what we campaign with as tools, we come to power and do the worst, yet still we enjoy whilst the innocent and the silence of the people.

There will come a day in this nation when the people of this country will come out and not only speak but take to the street because you are failing them on a daily basis.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when we talk about the ambulance distributions, the essence of this ambulances been stopped was for us as a nation to have a policy guard

that shows how ambulances are to be distributed, a frame work that determined how to be use those ambulances.

Recently in Sierra Leone, they bought buses and we send those buses to local councils and we gave them task to pay the drivers, which was an irony. The system is so poor; did they engage the local councils? You only send burden to them that is not factor in their own yearly Budget. I am talking for the conscience of the people and I don't care who is not happy but let say the truth. Can you tell us how these ambulances were distributed? When some Chiefdom has more and some do not even have, some have to share one ambulance between two Chiefdoms. I am not interested in playing politics, but I will tell you I am speaking the minds of the people.

Mr Speaker, in 2012 this very Parliament of Sierra Leone enacted the Red Cross Bill and we as Honourable Members passed it into to law, because when we have national disasters Red Cross Society is always there to give relief to the people of Sierra Leone. Red Cross was a burden to the state and the state needs to give at least some amount of money.

Mr Minister, have you ever thought of allocating money to the Red Cross Society? But yet still we have the ambience to allocate so much money to the office of the Chief Minister. Sometimes when some of us have the ambience to debate, the Speaker will feel relax and tempted to give me more time because he is only enjoying because I am speaking the mind of his own people.

Mr Speaker, I have no problem in the recruitment of more police officers and because this is for security matters. When we have the opportunity to go to oversight, we are exposed to the realities on the ground. The Chairman of internal affairs would tell you when we went to these police stations; the police officers are nothing but men wearing clothes in uniforms. Our institutions are so empty, but yet still every year we talk about employing more police officers. Up to last year, I want to tell the Chief Immigration Officer at the Immigration department of Sierra Leone that Immigration officers are complaining that their regional offices are not receiving remittance from the Head Offices.

Mr Speaker, it was a shame when we went for oversight on the educational sector, I am not giving you report, but I am giving you the ambience to understand the reality that sometimes what we approve in this House is not reflecting to the people.

We went to Bo, we spent so much money in buying books, and we shouted here we are succeeding as a nation, the free Education is working. I am boastful to say when I went to the North Mr Speaker, you will like the free education, and the books met the children on time. Even Bo school that shared boarder with the other school did not get their books up to October why. I leave that with the conscience of the Chairman who is very close to you to address that.

Mr Speaker, why am I saying this, is not like the dudes do not want to supply the books, but the chain upon which these learning materials will reach the children is so porous, we are saying these because we continue to beat the conscience of the people. Mr Speaker, if I have to buy books for my children in September when school reopen and you give me books in October, November what is the efficiency of the free quality Education?

Some of us are saying this not because we want to make political gains but we want our tax payer's money which are sent for our brothers in the villages where our auntie's cannot afford to gain what we are doing for them here. I care not to make political gains but I care about making more voice for the voiceless, they are not here to speak for themselves. I want to tell you Mr Speaker, the situation is terrible on the ground *[Applause]*, and this Budget is talking about Billions and Trillion of Leones.

Mr Speaker, if Members of Parliament are sincere to their conscience, they have gone to various oversights, let them be clear to their conscience to tell us if what is here or what was there last year is reflecting to the lives of the ordinary people. We are talking about reflective Budget that reflects the ordinary people in their villages. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution to the Debate, he tried to self-regulate, and he has succeeded. I will now give the Floor to the Honourable Abdul Marray Conteh.

HON. ABDUL S.M. CONTEH: Thank you very much Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am Honourable Marray Sulaiman Conteh representing Constituency 130 Western Area Urban. This Constituency comprises Olorshoro, Murray town, Cole farm, Aberdeen road, and Wilkinson road, Thompson Bay, Cockle Bay and Maphegbeh...

THE SPEAKER: May I assume that this is your maiden speech?

HON. ABDUL S.M. CONTEH: Yes Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, will you please acknowledge *[Applause]*. Thank you.

HON. ABDUL S.M. CONTEH: Me Speaker, I just want to remind this Honourable House that I am the second Marray Conteh in this Parliament and I will surely not be the last and that name stands for integrity, discipline, hard work and good values. I am here to represent the humble and resilient people of constituency 130 and I will surely do that to the best of my ability. Honourable AKK, my Kambia brother spoke about conscience, he spoke about integrity and integrity is a basic honesty and I think these are things we all have to adopt as Honourable Members who are here to make meaningful contribution to national development.

We have seen Budgets in this Parliament for the past 11 to 12 years. What we got from this Budget... *[Interruptions]*.

THE SPEAKER: Order! Order! Let us allow the Honourable Member, and particularly let's take cognisance of the fact that he is making his maiden speech. Remember you were once in that situation and you received certain courtesies; please extend the same to the Honourable Member.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: In extending to courtesy Mr Speaker, I just want to guide on S.O 32[16] that next time don't refer to any Member by name, that will not be acceptable as you just did, refer to them by District.

HON. ABDUL S.M. CONTEH: Thank you, noted.

THE SPEAKER: That is lesson number one, he is a new man after all I remember in 1982 when I took the Floor for my maiden speech, I too made few mistakes, so we should be indulgent go ahead young man.

HON. ABDUL S.M. CONTEH: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. For the past 10 to 11 years we have seen Budgets in this Parliament, Budgets that over promised and underperformed. As a result of this Budget that will find ourselves where we are today and we are failing to exercise the required patient to bounce back.

Sierra Leone has a lot of potential, but I think we have to do justices to that potential by serving with our conscience. Let me go to the thematic areas that I am going to look at, I will start with Education, as its sustainable investment and as a responsible Government, we have decided to embark on Education because it is one of the best Anti-poverty mechanisms.

Sierra Leone as a Country lack a middle level man power, but with expansion of Technical Vocational and Educational training at some pointing time would provide the required skills that will help our youths to make meaningful contribution to the development of this Country *[Applause]*. We categorise our youths not all of them have the same Calibre to learn, so we cater for everybody in our society, that is why this Budget is a good one, is the people's centred Budget. I want to encourage this Honourable House, to ensure that we follow up through implementation and ensure that we really monitor otherwise we will fall shut. We will never fall shut of good ideas in this Country, but sometimes we fall shut in implementation and I think this is what will make this Budget different from the others because I think we have to unite under that common vision for development as a Nation to ensure that we succeed and bounce back to better economic recovery.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am going to look at social protection, please allow me to look at page 36 paragraph 190. I will specifically focus on the youth development project **Le30Bln** is allocated to youth entrepreneurship, **Le21Bln** for the establishment of youth farms and **Le3.4 Bln** for youths in fisheries and **Le2Bln** for car wash project. We are as a Government making the necessary strives to empower the new generation of game changers for this Country. Youths have been used and misused, but the time is now for them to occupy their right place in the political development of this country and we can give the credit to the responsible leadership to the Sierra Leone People's party *[Applause]*.

My colleague on the other side talked about allocating more money to some of the Ministries, he has a point on that but the truth of the matter is as a responsible Government we have to make wise choices, we have to make choices that won't land our people into trouble because it is the people centred budget. I want to believe that if we support this Budget at this particular point in time, sometime next year we would be making that major allocation that will see us through as a nation.

Clause 23 under Governance and Accountability for result Mr Speaker, please allow me to look at page 38 paragraphs 206, under paragraph 206 I will specifically focus on the **Le12Bln** as support to the Military of food production. It's high time we engage the military in the war of food security, there were times that we have looked too far for the solutions that can make the difference.

Mr Speaker, we have to pay attention to what is made in Sierra Leone, Local content empowering the military to grow food that can be consumed by the military themselves, the correctional centres, and the police is a good step in the right direction as far as promotion of local content is concern. I have to make the smooth transition to the small office with big impact, which is the office of local content itself. There is no way you can talk about diversifying the economy when you ignore local content, with a very small allocation at the moment. If you look at annex 2b, roman figure 21 very small money is allocated to the local content department, we have to be serious about economic

diversification and I believe it is time for us as Member of Parliament to put the national interest forward and to serve in the interest of our people and do the needful.

Mr Speaker, my intention is to keep it short and simple because the Budget is a good one and I believe when we maintain the spirit of the Bo declaration, we would achieve more as a Parliament and by the end of the day we would say “duchy” decorum “epropatiamurray” it is honour to serve thy father land. Thank you very much
[Applause].

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his brilliant contribution to the debate. I thank him all the more for regulating himself within the time limit and indeed him for shadow this contribution by the reminding us of his pedigree for whom I have the greatest respect, his late father served as an officer in ECOMOG in Liberia which was my own brain child. I thank you for your contribution. I now invite the Honourable Komba Kamanda, if he is here to be the next speaker, he would be followed by the Honourable Abdul Latiff Sesay.

HON. KOMBA M. KAMANDA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today is one of the big day in the life of this country mama Sierra Leone, whenever we are gather here to talk something about the nation’s Budget for 2020. Sierra Leoneans home and abroad are eager to know what will be the faith of this country by 2020.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I need to appreciate you for making me add my voice to this Budget Debate of 2020. The Finance team, the CSO’s and the MDA’s who took their time, resources and energy to put this Bill together for the betterment of this country, I think is a good job done by the Finance Minister and team. Thank you very much.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in the position where I am, I cannot say this Budget is not good or is not in the best interest of the nation. My concern is the implementation of the Budget as a nation, as a Citizen of this country I consider the following as a challenge: One, we as a nation, do we even have reserve on our own? We as a nation, how long are we prepared for the loan repayment? We as a nation, how are we going

to support the NRA and the other Agencies who are responsible to raise finances and resources for this country, how are we going to support them so that our target for 2020 can be achieved these are my concern.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me just go into paragraph 151 which talks about labour base public work. If this Budget can capture our youths down there or up there in the village or Chiefdom level by engaging our youths on road maintenance, I think is a good idea.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if this Budget can make a provision for some of the youths to learn the operations of those machines for example; the grader, the excavator etc. at the end of the day they will not be considered as left out youths but they will be considered as trained and qualified youths. They should not just be engaged on labour but they should be engaged on technical jobs as well.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, business is everywhere, if this Budget has focus on small scale business for our men and women, I think is good but over the years financial institutions like Micro Credit has been getting challenges with our people. What more over when it is been labelled Government micro finance project, the Government need to be questioned the selection and if possible Government should identify implementing partners so that those funds will not be taken away by our people saying that S.O [2] "Na wi gormet money" As I earlier stated, for us to succeed in this Budget, we have to mobilize resources, if this Budget can start the mobilization of resources at the local level, I think it's will be nice, it needs some technicalities to raise funds.

We need to sensitize the people at Chiefdom level, with sensitization at the Chiefdom level, I think we can make it, but without it we will find it very difficult to mobilize funds at our Chiefdom levels.

To encourage the bread and butter issue, I think someone borrows it and that is JJ Saffa from Sam sumana, "One District one factory". I think with Human Capital Development it will be an easy work over for the "Paopa Government". Thank you very much *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Are you done? I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution and I thank you more particularly for observing the time limit. I now give the Floor to the Honourable Dr IB Kamara, he will be followed by the Honourable Benjamin Turay and he will be the last speaker for the day.

HON. IBRAHIM B. KAMARA: Thank you Mr Speaker. This is just to correct my comrade; his is from the University of Cape Town, the best in Africa.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Madam Minister, I would like to thank you and your team for putting this Budget and fiscal strategies statement in particular where I will concentrate my intervention.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will start from the statement of the economic and Financial policies focusing on the theme "Fiscal Consolidation for Human Capital Development". I will use an approach that depart a little bit from gimmick to a little more professionalism focusing on the documents that we have been presented with. Consolidating the fix cost for human development, Madam Minister, I will like to put it to you that human development I see a lot of focus on education living out the other components of human development.

Human development if I can reference the United Nation Human Development index comprises the economic growth, education and health and as a result, you cannot just focus on Education and think you are doing Human development. There are complimentary services that also needs to be delivered especially the Health sector, we need the health services wherever there is a school, we need a health post or a clinic depending on the population that is been served by the school. But the most importantly Mr Speaker, and Madam Minister, I will like you to consider the supply of drinkable water as an integrated ingredient of health services.

We have a lot of deficiencies in our water supply systems, we allocate a lot of money to Guma Valley Water supply and other water supply Agencies for the rural areas but all we see are water wells and boreholes. We need reticulated water supply systems and these are not difficult to provide, rural water supply is very deficient in this country and

you cannot develop human capital without reliable supply of drinkable water. I will just like to admonish that you also include water supply services as part of the priorities of the human development program. Of course the economic growth components of the human development index is not new and indeed even from the Presidential address he talked about economic diversification but economic diversification of course require strategies that are met to address industries where we have competitive and comparative advantages in the country.

Unfortunately, we still have industries where we have competitive and comparative advantages that are either been closed or are on the decline. So, I think if you want to admonish growth which is also a component of the human development index, then we need to address the issue of economic diversification very seriously.

Mr Speaker, Madam Minister, Honourable Members, I see a bubble in the frescoes, we are in the process of creating Agencies and Commissions endlessly, we are in the process of converting Departments and Units of Ministries in to Agencies and Commissions and even Ministries. We have a lot of Agencies that even more than Ministries, and this is contributing to ballooning the wage bill. You cannot consolidate your fiscals when you are continually increasing your wage bill through the creation of these Agencies. I will like to referred you specifically, if you look at the fiscal strategy statement for 2020 on page 23 where we talked about the wages commissions, I am aware that we did pass it here in the previous Budget but I will also like to reminds us that we have the Human Resource Management Office, we have the Public Service Commission, and now we are creating a Wages Commission, similarly we have an Environmental Protection Agency, then we created a National Protected Area Authority. These are Organisation or Institutions with duplicated functions, and I am hoping that the Wages Commissions will actually come in to rationalization, some of these Agencies instead of us perpetrating them to existence *[Applause]* otherwise are wage bill will never calm down.

Mr Speaker, before I live the wage bill area, when the Minister was presenting the fiscal strategy statement he mentioned "The creation of an Investment Authority", but I am

also aware that we have the Sierra Leone Investment and Export Promotion Agency [SLIEPA], so are we creating another Investment Agency to duplicate the functions of a department inside [SLIEPA]? I will just like to admonish that in the interest of consolidating fiscals policy, let there be a rationalisation of some of these institution. This session of Parliament about a week ago we passed an Act to perpetuate the existence of NaCSA which was original created.

Mr Speaker, as a project to serve a specific purpose within a specific period of time, we have a number of Agencies that were created to serve for a specific period of time, but indeed political economist tell us that the interest group will always be there to perpetrate their interest and they will always bring justification for some of these Agencies to continue in existence when they are not supposed to be existing anymore. But it is up to us and the authorities especially the Executives to rationalise some of these Agencies, we have a very good number of them and I will just advice that we have a rationalisation.

In the Budget Mr Speaker, I saw a Department of Corporative it is still in existence but I am not aware of Corporative Organisation in existence. We have Farmers Organisation, we have Farmers' Fields Schools which have been facilitated by the Ministry of Agriculture, but corporative I don't know whether they are Farmers Cooperatives or maybe credit cooperatives, and so on and so forth, but we have a department that is existing within the Ministry of Trade and Industry. I will leave that Mr Chairman but the fact is that these Agencies and Commissions some of them need not be there anymore. I will leave it to the Executive to do a rationalisation to see which ones can be strengthen and which one can be abolish for the good of this Country.

Mr Speaker, just to look at the bigger picture, when the Minister was presenting he was very hasting to address the issue of the Secondary criteria in Microeconomic Convergent. In requirement in the ECOWAS Commissions for the Economic Union that is been proposed, he mentioned specifically on the Budget Deficit Commitment or the debt criteria for convergent, more specifically this was on page 3 of the fiscal strategy statement, but his focus was on the secondary criteria of convergent where as in the

ECOWAS convergent strategy, we have the Primary and the Secondary criteria. There are four primary criteria which are actually more important than the secondary ones; I am not sure how far we are doing in terms of these primary criteria of convergent, which deal with the Budget Deficit, the Inflation rate, the Bank Financing of Budget services and gross external reserve. The last two I think we may be doing well, but the first two I think, we still have challenges that we need to address there, and there is general thought of the economic union that is coming with the new currency. The Eco based on these criteria, maybe the Minister will be kind enough to tell us, how far are we, although there has been several date stipulated for the economic union since in 2003 or 2005 if I am not mistaking and then five or seven of these date have already passed, I am not sure...

THE SPEAKER: I can assure you Honourable Member, as the former CEO of ECOWAS is long overdue.

HON. IBRAHIM B. KAMARA: Indeed Mr Speaker is long overdue. I am not sure whether this 2020 date will also take us there. I will like to dwell a little bit on recent economic development in the country. The base of any economy forecast is on the history and the current performance of the economy. If you are to listen Honourable Members, you will gain have a little ideas. Absolute figure do not make any sense in economics, to tell me you are putting **Le2Bln, Le11Bln** it doesn't make sense to me. All economic figures that make sense have a base and they are relatives, you either call them per capital or being percentages or relatives to previous figures *[Applause]* don't say you have invested **Le10Bln, Le20Bln** or whatever it doesn't make sense.

So, I will just advice let us be a little more professional, these are professional papers written by an economist except, if you want to say...

Why I am bringing this point is that if you look at page 5 of the financial strategy statement for 2020 there is no mentioned of the economic performance in 2019. At least, we need the first or second quarter statistic of 2019, because it is done except if we are saying the statistical agency we have in the Statistic Sierra Leone or the Bank of Sierra Leone are not capable enough to give up recent up to date statistic of the

economics activities and they should do so and that can be utilised to base our forecast for 2020. We cannot use 2018 and 2017 without referencing the beginning of 2019 so that we can make a more progress.

I will just like to referred you to table 2.2.3 of page 10 of the financial strategy statement, in that table if you look at the figure which is on page 11, you will see that we have a striking economy at best, our grants are declining and there is a significant variation in the outstanding debt between... look at the tables these tables are using three difference models for economic forecasting, they have a Sierra Leone model, they have IMF model and a model use for the physical strategy statement. These are three different model and all of us are giving us three different forecasts of the economy variables, which one should we believe? You compared then we are in the area of "papoanomics", which is giving right to the bitter kola economy which my comrade was talking about earlier [*Applause*] otherwise we need to have a basic model which is reliable and tested for predicting economic variables is based on that. We plan what we want to do in the future.

Mr Speaker, to wrap-up I will like to admonish that in the fiscal strategy statement, I was also looking for a strategy for attracting investment. Madam Minister, I think we have very small economic and open one to the International Community and we cannot do without the International Trade, we need foreign direct investment and we need a strategy to attract that.

Finally Mr Speaker, I will like to admonish the use of technology, yesterday we passed a Bill on the use of technology for economic transaction. Technology is very important for our financial sector can benefit a lot. We still carry a lot of cash to do economic transaction, while as with the advent of technology we need to be moving around with a card instead of moving around with pocket full of cash. In economics that will reduce the transactions cost and increase the velocity of circulation of money and thereby creating economic growth. I thank you very much Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for another brilliant contribution. I am particularly impressed by the warning that he is giving to us, to be aware of Agencies

that have a propensity to self-perpetuate and prolong the existence not necessarily for the public good. Thank you. My last speaker for today is the Honourable Benjamin Turay.

HON. BENJAMIN TURAY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, of this House we still say thanks to our Ministry of Finance and also our President for a well efficient and lovely Budget they have given to us as a nation. Mr Speaker...

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, may we acknowledge another maiden speech, go ahead.

HON. BENJAMIN TURAY: Thank you sir. When you go through the Budget, you will see the Budget tackle all aspects of life, all Government Institutions which I believe with the implementation of this Budget come 2020 Sierra Leone is going to become close to the world, Sierra Leone is going to be compare with Ghana, Uganda and Kenya which this type of Budget we have *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Member, my colleague over there was talking about "a little Budget or a little account that we have in this nation", when you look at the debts that the passed regime left with this current Government it really frustrating, it really killing our educational system.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Member, every week this Government is paying **Le1.5bln**. If we have this money in our coffer, in our banks, how generate, how income, how betterment we be in this nation. When you look at the countdown of the Budget Mr Speaker...

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members allowed the Honourable to makes his contribution.

HON. BENJAMIN TURAY: Thank you sir. Mr Speaker, Honourable Member, this Government is really fighting what we call educational development, what we call a better education for our yet unborn children. When you look at the Budget that have been fixed up you will know that this Government is really serious about education and

is really believe that something good will happen in this nation. Mr Speaker, I also want to take...

THE SPEAKER: Order! Order! Allow the Honourable Member.

HON. BENJAMIN TURAY: Mr Speaker, I also want to take a look at the Budget allocated for the Ministry of Water Resources which I do believe the Government is really serious in terms of fighting what we called sexual penetration against our girls children, because in this particular case when this Ministry will implement this Budget in this nation I do believe that things will be put in place and will get a better water supply in our nation. Thank you Mr Speaker. *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. At least with all the distractions he was still able to make his contribution, well done. I am sure the Honourable Member, did better than some of us in our maiden speeches. With that, we come to the end of today's debate; we now listen to few announcements before we take an adjournment.

ANNOUNCEMENT

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: Mr Speaker, I stand on S.O [23]. Yesterday we had an unfortunate situation, after Parliamentary Proceedings. We were going down towards State Avenue myself, Honourable Dr Unpha, and Honourable Kassegbama. We use one vehicle, we were all together and we passed the first checkpoint going down towards the second checkpoint, but the glass of the vehicle was up, so we never knew that the national anthem was on, and we were playing music in the vehicle. We drove a little bit, we came down, but later on we realised that the national anthem was on and we stop immediately, as soon we stop, we wait for the national anthem to finish.

We decided to continue, as we were going down to the second checkpoint, a soldier by the name of M.S Jabba came and stop us in front of the vehicle. After we have adhere to our first mistake we made, we didn't hear the national anthem playing, and later on when we heard the national anthem and we also stop, and the very M.S Jabba saw us. So when approaching the checkpoint, he came in front of the vehicle and stops us, and

said; we should pack the vehicle. Okay, we didn't argue him, we stood a little bit, and we came down and said; "officer we didn't hear the national anthem". But he continue to refuse by saying "No, you will not move again just pack there", I said officer; we are Members of Parliament, "He said no" there were journalist around and also some staff of Parliament.

That officer molested us in front of everybody, later the secretary to the President came and met us on the sight, and called us "Honourable Members, what is the problem?" and I approached him and I told him what the soldier has done to us.

THE SPEAKER: Who did?

HON. JOHN C. CONTEH: Secretary to the President, and I approach him. I spoke to him he said okay and he called the officer and he said "Leave them and let them go", and eventually secretary to the President left, so we want to go and he said "you will not go" and he didn't adhere again to the Order of the Secretary to the President.

After the SP had left, and he said; "No you will not go, let me called the Director that I am going to pack you here till tomorrow", I said why....there is a recording to proof, and one journalist has the recording.

So we had the argument and later all other officers came and said "No man, don't behave like this and these are Honourable Members". The SP ordered him to release us by saying allows these people to go and you are still disturbing them.

Mr Speaker, that man molested us yesterday and you know we are Members of Parliament, we have to maintain the dignity of this House. I can say Honourable unpha and Honourable Kassegbama can attest to this, that yesterday journalist and staff of Parliament were there. So this was the embarrassing situation we faced yesterday. I thank you

HON. DAVID A.S KASSEGBAMA: Mr Speaker, as he is saying...

THE SPEAKER: Was it the National Anthem?

HON. DAVID A.S KASSEGBAMA: I think they were bringing the flag down and we didn't know, music was playing and the glass was up.

THE SPEAKER: Okay, let not be labour the point. Please the three of you will you address the complain to me in writing and I will do something about it.

HON. DAVID A.S KASSEGBAMA: Okay, we will do that.

THE SPEAKER: Okay. With that, Madam another S.O [23]

HON. EMILIA L. TONGI: Thank you Mr Speaker. Is a concern, I stand on S.O [23]. We are finding it very difficult within the township of Freetown and the country at large because of shortage of petrol and it's an alarming issue and we want to see what is happen because it is a concerned to us.

THE SPEAKER: We have dealt with this matter earlier. Honourable Members, with that I really want to recalled my congratulation to all the Honourable Members, who took part in the debate today for the quality of the debate on the Budget. I look forward to tomorrow's debate as well with that the House stand adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

*[The House rose at 2:30 p.m. and was adjourned to Thursday, 21st of November, 2019
10: am prompt]*

