

*OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN*

# **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

**[HANSARD]**

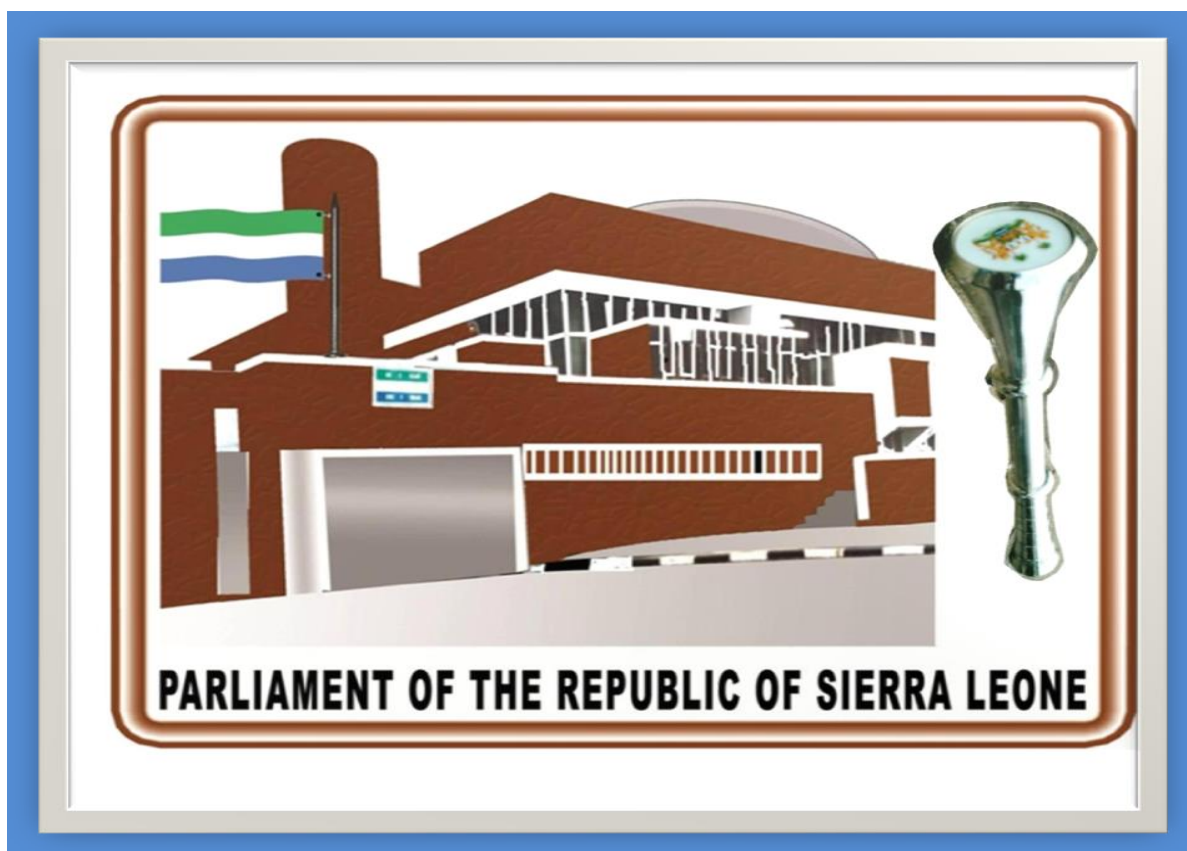
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**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**

**THIRD SESSION –FIRST MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY, 25<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2020**

*SESSION – 2020/2021*



*OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN*

# **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

**[HANSARD]**

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**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT**

**VOLUME: I**

**NUMBER: 2**

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House  
Held Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> November, 2020.

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*THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE*

## **Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House**

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### **THIRD SESSION – FIRST MEETING OF THE FIFTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC**

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**Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> November, 2020.**

#### **I. PRAYERS**

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

*[The House met at 10:10a.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*

**II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON TUESDAY, 24<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2020.**

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, shall we please take the records of Votes and Proceedings of the 23<sup>rd</sup> sitting held on Tuesday, 24<sup>rd</sup> November, 2020 and we shall skip Pages 1 through to 4 and start from Page 5. Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Yes.

**HON.** Page 6, Roman number 1 and line b. I read *[Interruption]*. 0:02:12

**THE SPEAKER:** Sorry, I am not with you. Line 3 *[Undertone]* but, I thought the Minister was quoting verbatim from Section 29[5] and I am sure the word 'Government' is what is contained there, but let us check. He was quoting it verbatim as written in the Constitution. I am afraid the word 'Government' is what is contained in the Constitution so what is quoted by the Minister is correct. Page 6? Page 7? Page 8? Page 9? Thank you. Can someone please move for the adoption of the record of Votes and Proceedings for parliamentary sitting held on Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> November, 2020.

**HON. ISHMAIL S. SANDY:** Mr Speaker, I so move.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any seconder?

**HON. JOSEPH WILLIAM-LAMIN:** I so second Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]*

*[Record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting held on Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> November, 2020 has been adopted]*

**III. PRESENTATION BY NaCOVERC SPOKESMAN AND DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

**MR SOLOMON JAMIRU ESQ [DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION]:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me

express deep gratitude to this House for according NaCOVERC such a rare and extraordinary privilege to say a word or two at this extremely busy week on the Appropriation Bill. This demonstrates to the nation that following a resounding approval of the President declaration of a State of Public Emergency, the House continues to jealously guard the Covid-19 response to ensure that lives are saved and the livelihood sustained. The response architecture will continue to count on the cooperation of this House for the mobilisation and consolidation of total community ownership of the fight.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, NaCOVERC is currently engaging critical layers of persons holding positions of public trust and did request this golden opportunity to meet with our elected representatives for two reasons: firstly, to remind our people through our elected representatives that even though the epi-data for the last four months has shown a general downward trend in Covid-19 cases nationwide, informing the ease of restrictions and minimum **40%** scale down of the Covid-19 workforce the outbreak is not yet over. Secondly, to note that one of the things which easily undermines the public health response is when political leaders and public officials fail to serve as role models in positively promoting the health and safety guidelines, this has been identified in risk perception surveys which if not addressed might significantly imperil the response. We may therefore, wish to consider as a theme for this short challenge "Parliamentarians as behaviour change agents". We look forward to working with the House through the Office of the Clerk of Parliament to help crystallise that behaviour change and compliance aspiration.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, perhaps a few things to consider would be first, we have two thousand four hundred and six cumulative confirmed positive cases with male infections at **54%** and female infections at **46%**. The western area continues to be the epi-centre, Western Area Urban accounting for **48%** of the total cumulative confirmed positive cases, Western Area Rural **9.5%** followed by Kenema, Port Loko and Bo Districts with **5.2%**, **4.9%** and **4.6%** respectively. In terms of tests; a total of sixty eight thousand three hundred and sixty two tests have been done nationwide including testing primary contacts and those who present with symptoms at health

facilities, surge tests and tests for inbound and outbound passengers. There are plans to ramp up diagnostic testing. Mr Speaker, we have lost seventy four souls to Covid-19; the youngest life at twenty and the eldest at eighty seven; may their memories be blessed. Mr Speaker, elderly people and those with existing medical conditions including asthma have a more compelling reason to wear face masks as they form part of the high risk category. Mr Speaker, a total of twenty nine inbound passengers have tested positive for Covid-19 and studies by Imperial College-United Kingdom show that a good number of people who had immunities has diminished. Unlike at the earlier stage of the response, most cases now are not epi-linked which substantiate solid evidence of community transmission. With the case surge in some parts of the world, we are concerned about importing not only cases, but perhaps new traits into our pool. We are working with our neighbours in finalising Standard Operating Procedures [SOPs] for safe land border reopening.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, our response to the outbreak continues to be guided by the epidemiology of the disease as well as clear scientific data. Mr Speaker, in that regard, we have made the use of face mask, hand washing, social distancing and calling 117 as the focus of our behaviour change communication and social mobilisation. Realising the difficulty in achieving social distancing in most parts of Africa and Asia, the use of face masks therefore become indispensable and the science behind Covid-19 informs us that the risk of spread indoors is significantly higher than the risk of exposure outdoors. In an effort to increase the use of face coverings in public spaces across the globe, the World Mask Week was organised from 7<sup>th</sup> August to 14<sup>th</sup> August. Also, as the world is witnessing the alarming exponential increase of infection rates across the globe especially in the United States of America and Europe as well as a surge in South Africa, Ethiopia, Morocco and Egypt, the Pandemic Action Network in collaboration with the Africa Centres for Disease Control [ACDC] and over fifty five partner organisations have declared November, 23<sup>rd</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> as Africa Masks Week to stop the spread of the virus on the continent. The ACDC Director Dr John NKengasong reminds us and I quote: **"Covid-19 is a respirator disease caused by the transfer**

**of droplets as the pandemic continues to gain momentum in Africa, we must increase compliance to the public health and safety measures so we can protect ourselves and protect our economy. We must increase mass wearing of masks as we expand testing and treatment centres."** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the most important preventive measure that has been identified within the scientific community is the universal use of face masks particular now that it has been established that one of the main forms of transmission is through inhalation of aerosolised droplets. Whilst case surge seems to be colliding with fatigue and complacency all over the world, NaCOVERC believes Parliamentarians can have a major impact on compliance with the preventive measures particularly the use of face masks in public by role modelling it for members of the public as well as helping to spread the word 'that Covid-19 is not yet over'.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as I conclude this very brief statement; when he faced the United State of America law makers on the 16<sup>th</sup> September, the Centres for Disease Control [CDC] Director Robert Redfield canvassed the use of face coverings as the most powerful public health tool the nation has against the Corona Virus and further submitted that face masks might even provide better protection against the virus than a vaccine. He stated and I quote: "***we have clear scientific evidence that they work and they are our best defence. I might even go so far as to say that this face mask is more guaranteed to protect me against Covid-19 than when I take a Covid-19 vaccine.***" The World Health Organisation and the Africa Centres for Disease Control have spoken instructively on the efficacy of face masks when properly used. Until vaccines or medicines are developed, their safety and efficacy clinically established, but also equitably distributed, our political leaders and public officials are encouraged to lead the process of sustained community masking in public as we continue to be guided by science and as the West Africa Health Organisation [WAHO] in its joint report has urged all West African States to emulate the risk communication and social mobilisation model in Sierra Leone, Senegal and the Gambia, I believe we can register a more compelling footprint if we as leaders make face masks and the proper



use of proper use of face masks, the widest and deepest social endeavour for the subsistence of the outbreak.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as I remain obliged to you, this is our respectful charge to this Honourable House and God richly bless us for our attention *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Take your seat. On behalf of the House, I cannot but thank the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and spokesperson of NaCOVERC for his presentation. He has invited Members of Parliament to be in the vanguard of demonstrating to the nation the efficacy of wearing face masks as the most effective preventive tool that there is against Covid-19. Let us start by demonstrating here and now; how many of us are with face masks? If only to demonstrate to the Minister that indeed he has come to the right place and his message has resonated long before his arrival in this House. I would like to see all of us demonstrate our face masks by wearing them now so that the Minister can leave well pleased with the Legislature.

**HON. ALUSINE KANNEH:** Mr Speaker, can we say something sir? Please.

**THE SPEAKER:** Yes you will after demonstrating your face mask. I see only a few. I do not know whether the Minister was kind enough to have brought some extra face masks with him when he was coming so that we can make them available to the Members of Parliament who in advertently left their face masks in their offices or in their homes this morning.

**MR SOLOMON JAMIRU ESQ:** Mr Speaker, I wish to assure this Honourable House that arrangement has been made and the materials will be transmitted in due course *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Because for us to be in the vanguard and to be able to cascade the message down to our constituents, we should have enough supplies to wear ourselves. Honourable Members, you have heard what the Minister has to tell us in his brief and succinct, but very important message. I do not know whether anyone has any response to make.

**HON. ALUSINE KANNEH:** Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I want to thank the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and also who is one of the Coordinators for NaCOVERC. Mr Speaker, I think I am well pleased for the aggressive response as far as the job of Covid-19 is concerned. We have been suffering from mental problems in terms of thinking about what is happening all over the world. Mr Speaker, this morning I was zooming through social media and I read something about Sierra Leone that made me very happy and I was very pleased with the Minister and the President that Sierra Leone is one of the low risk countries as of today and that Sierra Leone is the first African countries within the sub-region that has a low risk as far as Covid-19 is concerned *[Applause]*. It is a good thing for Sierra Leone, the President and the Government. Mr Speaker, this is something we want other countries to also follow because it has to do with aggressiveness and we have to be committed to make sure we eradicate the Covid-19 and the commitment goes to the presidency, to the Ministry and those in charge of those Institutions they are operating to make sure Covid-19 is eradicated. Mr Speaker, this is a good thing and there is one thing I want to say; when Covid-19 came, the President was on the air all over the place telling this nation that he will make sure Covid-19 is get rid of as soon as possible out of Sierra Leone and will make sure the death rate will be minimised and today we are seeing that. We are grateful to the President and we are grateful to the NaCOVERC team that are in charge of these operations and I believe even outside countries would be proud of Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my daughter called me few days ago and she was worried more so about me because of the status of Covid-19 and they are also suffering in Norway. The pandemic is becoming very serious in Europe as of today and Mr Speaker, today, CDC has declared Sierra Leone as a low risk country *[Applause]*. I am proud and I will report to my daughter that we are doing very well. So Mr Speaker, I will not say more, but to continue the good work, extend my regards to the President that we are happy and we are grateful. Thank you very much Mr Speaker *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** The Honourable from Koinadugu.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I must at this time use this opportunity to thank the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation for one thing I have observed that he is on top of the situation. He knows his job and most times when he goes to the television or radio stations to inform us of what is going on and how and what they are doing to ensure that we contain this pandemic to a lowest ebb in this county, I must say I am impressed by his personal performance. I am also impressed by what has been done today, we have to be true to ourselves that I deems it fit and even the leadership of Parliament, I know both sides of the aisle have been consulted or conferred with each other that Parliament needs to be informed as things go on. I am very much impressed by your initiative and your leadership as well *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on that note, I know we are overburdened with documents, but I know there are certain documents that deals with our lives directly and the lives of our people. Mr Speaker, I am just suggesting that the presentation he has made, I believe it is in writing that with your indulgence he furnish Members of Parliament with that copy so it will be one of the working documents for us and for the attention of our constituents because I believe it deals with our lives directly. Mr Speaker, if we have that one maybe we can be reminding ourselves and then it will be good for future reference as well. It is just a suggestion Sir. So once again I say thank you for your initiative and I also want to thank the leaders *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable Members as you rise to catch my eye, remember that this was really designed as a side show. I think more than one point has been made; the first point is that this House, I think the Deputy Chief Whip spoke very well on behalf of the entire House *[Applause]*. First of all he thanked the Minister for coming and he asked the Minister to convey the compliments and commendation of this House for the very proactive measures taken by the Government at the very inception of Covid-19. If today we are rated to be a low risk country, I am sure it is the results of those actions by the Government that were taken at those very critical points when Covid-19 was ravaging the rest of the world. However, Mr Minister, whilst you convey

those commendations to the Government and to His Excellency the President in particular, please let us remember that the holiday season is in the offing. December is just a few days away and therefore we ask that we do not lower our guard in any way. Covid-19 is not home grown in Sierra Leone, I think the science tells us that for Sierra Leone it was imported and brought into the country by people coming in. Therefore, since the holiday season is in the offing we should not show any complacency, we should continue to remain on our guards to ensure that all measures are put in place to continue to ensure that we remain safe in this country. Let me recognise the Honourable Member from Kenema followed by the Honourable Lady from Moyamba and I would take the Honourable Member from Karene District in that order.

**HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. I wish to toe the line to thank the Minister and spokesperson for NaCOVERC and to NaCOVERC for a job well done and of course the Government in particular, but as law makers, as the people's representatives, each and every Member of Parliament represents some portion of this country and we have been very serious with regards the outbreak that was why as a Parliament we had to invite the Minister of Health and Sanitation together with his Deputy, they came and briefed Parliament with regards the outbreak and the pandemic in general so that whilst we are briefing our people in our various constituencies at least we have some knowledge on what is happening, but we had expected that Members of Parliament should have been much more involved by NaCOVERC in the operations of fighting the Covid-19 pandemic. That notwithstanding, we have been doing our bit in our various constituencies, we have been taking our meagre resources buying hand washing materials, sensitising people and so on and so forth, but we must remember that although Sierra Leone is regarded as a low risk country, the pandemic is not over yet and until we get rid of the pandemic in the entire world, Sierra Leone is but a part of the global community, we still have to remain vigilant and to fight the Covid-19 pandemic.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, going forward as a House, we may wish to suggest to NaCOVERC that Members of Parliament are much effectively involved and Member of

Parliament should be supported to continue fighting [*Undertone*] yes, I think it is important. Mr Speaker, Members of Parliament should be supported so that we continue to fight like I earlier mentioned, we have been fighting already, but we should not be complacent because the pandemic is not declared over and therefore, we still have to be very vigilant and continue the sensitisation and keep the necessary health precautions. So that is the word I think from this House through you to NaCOVERC and the Government in general. Thank you so much [*Applause*].

**HON. VERONICA K. SESAY:** Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I want to join my colleagues who have just spoken and I am standing here on behalf of all the women in this country to say thank you to the President and to the Minister who has done a very great job. If there is any group to be happy for this low rate of this pandemic will be the women because the women face the bulk of it. In as much as we are low in percentage that means we fought it wisely, we joined the group to fight it wisely because we are the carriers, we are the care givers and everything. Even when the men are ill the women are there to pamper them, we are there to care for them so if we are getting this today, we want to say thank you and I am saying this on behalf of all the women because we are very much happy for your pro-activeness. This was a common enemy that all of us fought together, it was not about politics, it does not choose any particular politician, it was a common enemy that came to this world especially in this country and it entered late into Sierra Leone and now because of the pro-activeness, we are moving forward. So because of that unity, the oneness that we carried together has brought us here today. Mr Speaker, on behalf of all the women, I want to say thank you and bravo, keep it up, but my message to the women out there and all of us S.O2 “we di combra dem” continue to talk to your children because when they say Covid-19 is gradually leaving if you go to the beach you will see people not even taking into consideration that Covid-19 is real. Sometimes when you go to the villages or other areas they would tell you that they do not have Covid-19, but let us continue to practice the steps, let us continue with the washing of hands, let us continue with the face masks to help serve lives. Mr Speaker, I am pleading with the women of this country

because we are the vulnerable groups so let us make sure we help to save the lives of other people in this country. Thank you very much *[Applause]*.

**HON. MOHAMED BANGURA:** Mr Speaker, for me it is just a clarification I want from the Minister, him being the Public Relation Officer of NaCOVERC. Mr Speaker, NaCOVERC issued a press release that all incoming or outgoing passengers must do a Covid-19 test; that is to say, you do a Covid-19 test here, you leave the country and you do a Covid-19 test back for example in London, you come to the country and you do another Covid-19 test at the airport within twenty-four hours, I think that particular action is a burden to the general public. When you do the Covid-19 test outside the country, within seven days that Covid-19 test has to be valid. Mr Speaker, what is the point again for the passenger to do another Covid-19 test at the Lungi Airport? You did a Covid-19 test in London, you come to Sierra Leone within twenty four hours that Covid-19 test is valid. Arriving at Lungi Airport, you do another Covid-19 test again *[Undertone]* Honourable Members, please listen; when you did a Covid-19 test at Lungi they would never give you the result. I did one myself and up to this point no result, why Mr Minister? I paid for it **\$80** *[Undertone]* no!

**THE SPEAKER:** Order! I thank Honourable Members who have taken the Floor. Somehow I got the nod from the leadership to my left that the Honourable Mohamed Bangura was the one given the responsibility to respond.

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Who said?

**THE SPEAKER:** Well the nod, maybe I must have misconstrued the nod *[Undertone]* well, then I would put myself on guard, next time when I see nods coming from the front bench I would be very careful *[Undertone]* in this particular case indeed *[Undertone]* I thought I was getting a nod in the affirmative to tell me that Honourable Mohamed Bangura was going to be the sole spokesperson on this matter, but then I see so many people wanting to catch my eye again and as I said this is just a side show. Let me recognise another Honourable Lady and let us make it short and sweet.

**HON. EMILIA L. TONGI:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker and thank you very much Honourable Minister. Mr Speaker, I would like to let you know that I am from the boundaries between Liberia and Guinea where actually the war started and Corona Virus started. I was flabbergasted by the way the people in my constituency and the areas took Corona Virus as one of the worse enemy on earth. This accolade goes to each and every one of the Members of Parliament. We fought this war together, but I fought it harder than you can ever imagine. Mr Speaker, I am from the boundary where Guineans and Liberians kept on coming in and out. Mr Speaker, Guinea was higher in number, Liberia was also so we were at the boundaries fighting this Covid-19 and thank God we overcame it. Mr Speaker, we in the Kissy areas are like forgotten because they thought as usual when catastrophe *[Interruption]*.

**HON. AARON A. KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, Point of Order Sir.

**THE SPEAKER:** Yes.

**HON. AARON A. KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, I want to draw the House to S.O 63[4] Sir. Mr Speaker, much as we have this issue that we are discussing which is very much important, the S.O 63 is very clear; when once we are debating the Budget there should not be any other matter to be brought to this Well when the Budget debate is on-going *[Applause]*. So I am calling the attention of the House that we adhere strictly to that provision on the Standing Order Sir. Mr Speaker, this is very important and we can schedule a whole day for us to discuss on the issue of Covid-19. I thank you *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I want to thank the Honourable Member for reminding the House about the injunction contained in S.O 63[4] and this is precisely why I kept referring to this particular item as a side show. So let us try to bring this particular matter to a close.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA *[LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS]*:** Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Yes Leader of Government Business.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** That provision is a flexible provision and it is not a mandatory provision. Mr Speaker, it is very clear otherwise you can read the provision. It is not mandatory that we should not carry any other item on the Order Paper. It is a flexible clause, a flexible provision and I stand by it, but I can accommodate what you have said and I can understand. You have to regulate the time, we agreed together with the Leader of Opposition that it is only thirty minutes, you are the presiding officer Sir; we cannot circumvent the law because you have mismanaged the time. Mr Speaker, let us manage the time and we want people to speak in terms of the Budget. Thank you very much for bringing up that clause, but it is not a mandatory clause.

**HON. AARON A. KOROMA:** Yes! Mr Speaker, I know it is not mandatory that is why we have S.O 81. Should such a situation arise we should suspend the Standing Orders so that we can encourage any other issue, but when once that provision is not suspended, I think we should adhere to that Mr Speaker *[Applause]*.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Honourable Member from Tonkolili, you do not need to suspend it because there is a provision for us to accommodate other items on the Order Paper, if you read that provision to the last line there is 'may'. You are my man and I do not want us to talk on the opposite sides, but you said no other item, it was emphatic. I said it is a flexible provision, there is a 'may'. Mr Speaker, you have to manage the time please.

**THE SPEAKER:** In managing the time as indeed you have requested me to do, let me emphasise that no extraneous matter should be brought into this discussion. Let us address precisely the matter before this House as enunciated and delivered by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. So Madam, I know you were cut short, but I will allow you one minute to speak to the issue before the House now.

**HON. EMILIA L. TONGI:** I was speaking to the issue actually.

**THE SPEAKER:** No, but then you started by meandering your way all the way to the border areas.



**HON. EMILIA L. TONGI:** Oaky. Well actually, I have lost my way *[Laughter]*. I want to thank the Minister for informing us on this particular issue and the news is very encouraging for Sierra Leone because we fought it ourselves. Mr Speaker, I hope we will continue fighting for the betterment of Sierra Leone and on behalf of my own people that I am representing, I want to thank the Government. Thank you *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** This time is one minute per speaker.

**HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS:** Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I want to say thank you to the Deputy Minister, the Government and all of us for fighting Covid-19 and praise God we are where we are today, but Mr Speaker, two things came up; one from you and one from Honourable Daniel Brima Koroma that the Minister should at least help us with the information that he has just read because those information are very useful that we can take our constituencies, I think every District got a radio stations. These are information's that we need to disseminate to the local people. Secondly, like you said we always need to tell people that December is a festive season, we should not forget some of those laws because this is festive season. So I want to support your suggestion and also support the one from Honourable Daniel Brima Koroma that we should get this information so that we can disseminate them in our various constituencies and tell them that not because we are now in low risk that is why we should leave things unattended. Mr Speaker, this is a festive season and we should not forget the fact that Covid-19 is real.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable Member from Kenema you have the Floor.

**HON. HAFIJU M. KANJA:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. I express thanks and appreciation to the Government more especially to NaCOVERC for the method they are using in the fight against the Corona Virus; by explaining the mode of transmission, the diagnosis, the treatment and the preventive measures they applied in the fight against Covid-19. Mr Minister, at the initial stage of the outbreak, NaCOVERC by then was Emergency Operations Centre [EOC] and they involved the Defence Committees in Parliament into the fight wherein we were regularly engage with monitoring of the cross borders activities and the monitoring of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces

[RSLAF] personnel deployed at the border. Now we are coming to face the holiday period, we will be expecting more cross border activities and as at now we have been rated as the lowest in the world and we would not be expecting more cases. So I am recommending that the Defence Committees be involved again to monitor the activities of cross border. I thank you *[Applause]*.

**HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH *[LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION]*:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I just want to thank the Deputy Minister for making his time this morning even though a lot of a time has gone which we would have needed for the Budget, but it is important and timely. We are not being asked to respect the masks just because of laws or otherwise but because for our own safety as well; we need to protect ourselves, so we want to thank him very much for making the time and we want to assure he that we will continue to be champions in our own right. Whilst we thank the Executive; starting from the President downwards for making all this effort including NaCOVERC outfit, we want to also specifically thank this House for being very proactive since the inception; we have always been very active *[Applause]*. I will not say we take the lead, but the records are there, we were the first to called the Minister as the Chairman of the Finance Committees said and since then we have done our best as a House so we want to assure the Minister and his team that we will continue to work with them because the health and wellbeing of each and every Sierra Leonean means a lot to us. So I want to give you that assurance whilst we want to thank you again once more for coming this morning *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Leader of the Opposition. You want to say a word?

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Just want to say thanks to everybody. Mr Speaker, I want to say thank you to the opposition party especially the All People's Congress [APC] for bringing us to speed on the State of Emergency. You are very magnanimous for us to have that one done. Mr Speaker, today the result we are seeing is as a result of the State of Emergency that was also passed in this House of Parliament. Mr Speaker, I want to thank you for your leadership for bringing the Minister to explain to us about Covid-19. So we thank you all and we will continue to cooperate. Mr Speaker, the

Oversight Committee is at work so let us meet with them and give them support. Thank you very much may God bless us all *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much Leader of the Government Business. I think on behalf of the entire House we want to say once again Mr Minister, you may go with the confidence that you enjoyed the trust and unflinching commitment of this House in our national fight against Covid-19. We applaud all the efforts so far undertaken by Government and be rest assured that we will continue to give you our maximum support as we move forward, but let me also end by re-echoing what has already been stated that since the festive season is in the offing and we naturally expect a good number of visitors to come to assure us, we should not lower our guard in anyway what so ever and for those of us without face masks or other instruments required to pass the message down, to let it cascade to our constituents, I think the Minister gave a nod of his readiness to be of assistance in that regard. So Mr Minister, I think your visit is not only welcome one, but a very good one in terms of outcome and convey to Excellency the President and the Government that you all continue to enjoy the good will and solidarity of the entire House in our common fight against this common enemy. Thank you *[Applause]*.

#### **IV. BILL**

##### **THE APPROPRIATION ACT, 2021**

Being an Act to authorise expenditure from the Consolidated Fund for the services of Sierra Leone for the year 2021 and for other related matters.

##### SECOND READING

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

THE DEBATE CONTINUES

**THE SPEAKER:** Let me make two quick announcements; first we want to welcome the students of St. Frances Secondary School Makeni who are here on a visit and to

observer Proceedings in Parliament *[Applause]*. We hope your visit will prove to be a very rewarding one and we also hope that you will not copy the bad examples of some of your colleagues who think spying is a right *[Applause]*. There is no magic to studying hard for your examinations. You have to be dedicated, determine and to work hard; forget about joining your colleagues who will want to encourage you to spy in order to pass examinations. All the Members here are here not because they spied in their school days, but they worked hard *[Applause]*. Having said that, today is the thirty and last allotted day for this debate and I am sure you will all understand if we keep it short; so five minutes. I want to be able to accommodate as many Members as possible so we will cut our interventions down to five minutes and not more. I will start with Honourable Member from Kambia to have the Floor; do not miss the chance now *[Laughter]*. You rose obviously in the expectation of catching my eye and I have done you the honour, why rejected *[Undertone]* but you could not have spoken tomorrow because today is the last day *[Laughter]*.

**HON. DR KANDEH K. YUMKELLA *[LEADER OF NGC]*:** With your permission Sir, can I defer for an hour Sir? I was still organising my thoughts Honourable Speaker. I just wanted you to know that I intend to speak today Sir. I crave your indulgence Sir, an hour from now.

**THE SPEAKER:** I take note without commitment *[Laughter]*.

**HON. DR KANDEH K. YUMKELLA:** Alright! We were trained at Christ the King College [CKC] to be ready at any time.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**HON. DR. KANDEH K. YUMKALLA:** Alright! Honourable Speaker, it is CKC and not St. Paul's or St. Michael's *[Laughter]*. Honourable Speaker, colleagues Members of Parliament, we want to thank the Minister of Finance and his team for a wonderful presentation and good documentation. Let me first of all state that in a way I envy the Ministry of Finance because they can come here with a documents and their technical teams, yet Parliament does not have the same capacity to have a solid Budget Office,

solid research, so we can really go deeper in to your document; so one of the points I want to make I know we discussed it before. Mr Speaker, we need the capacity in Parliament to do the analysis, we are speaking here just base on what some of us have studied. We need a Budget Office and the research entity that can go toe to toe. We have a unit, but do not have the capability yet to go deeper into Budget analysis. Mr Speaker, we want to point out that we need that capability. My colleagues should know that it is not everything *[Undertone]* do you have any document from the Budget Office? Come on! We are making a comment you think we are criticising Government or ourselves, but we are making a point here that Madam Minister need to give us *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I think the Honourable Member is right *[Applause]*. It is our intention to have a Parliamentary Budget Office that is operationalised at the highest level, to a level of being able to analyse the Budget and make that analysis available to Members of Parliament *[Undertone]* we have not yet reached that point *[Applause]*.

**HON. DR. KANDEH K. YUMKELLA:** We have not reached it yet. Some of us did a tour to Ghana; they got **\$5,000** from the World Bank to support the Parliament Economical analysis that is where we want to go *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** It is a process, we building towards it. In an incremental way we get there later.

**HON. DR KANDEH K. YUMKELLA:** We will get there. So we are making the point that a cemetery; I know the Honourable Minister understand what I mean in the Economic, there is a cemetery of information, you have more information *[Interruption]*.

**HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA:** Mr Speaker, can I say a word or two?

**THE SPEAKER:** On this one?

**HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA:** On this one. There is a Budget Office in Parliament and they did a wonderful job by even improving on the questionnaire we send to the Ministries Department and Agencies [MDAs].

**THE SPEAKER:** No! On this Budget, have they done any analysis? The result of which was made available to Members of Parliament?

**HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA:** The Budget process start with the presentation, the questionnaires of the MDAs on the very Budget so I am just saying they have been doing a wonderful job.

**THE SPEAKER:** That is not in dispute.

**HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA:** Okay!

**THE SPEAKER:** What the Honourable Member is saying is before now there ought to have been some analysis done by that Office and the result of it should have made available to Members has a guard.

**HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA:** I agreed with you, but there is a Budget Office and I am sure they will improve on their workings in Parliament.

**THE SPEAKER:** This is why it is true then to admit that we do have the makings of a Budget Office that is not fully operationalised. Member, you have the Floor.

**HON. DR KANDEH K. YUMKELLA:** Those of us who studied Economics to a higher level know what we mean by the support Members of Parliament need to be able to be in the same level to debate a Budget with Ministry of Finance. It is not a new problem, we had the same problem when I was a Minister as well that Finance comes well prepared with all the backing from International Monetary Fund [IMF], the World Bank and the rest of us do not have the same opportunity. Madam Ministry, please when you are negotiating with the Bank help us in Parliament get resources so we can strengthen our Budget and research entity so we can help you manage the economy better; that is the point we are making *[Applause]*. Second point I want to make is that we take note and I do agree with Honourable Member from Kenema when he praised NaCOVERC; all of us deserve that recognition that our country indeed is rated amongst the lowest that has Covid-19 incidence and therefore save to travel; credit to everybody, credit to by-partisanship and I know the Honourable Minister of Finance cover that in his document here as well. The Minister of Finance also has shown in a number of sections in this

Budget that we still have the Covid-19 over hang and you listen to British Broadcasting Corporation [BBC], Cable News Network [CCN] other countries and everybody is worried about what is going to be happen the first half of next year giving the fact that Covid-19 still exist second wave, third wave, which begs the question; why do you want to spend so much? If you look at your document you have already mentioned on page 5 that you expect a contraction of our economy by **2.8%** instead of **3.1%** that is paragraph 14. If you are expecting a contraction, if you also said in other part of this document that your revenues will declined, you have stated that very clear, why do you want to spend so much? Infect, it is interesting that in this document there is no paragraph on the mining sector; zero paragraph on the mining sector which means our main source of revenues *[Undertone]* we are not confidence we are going to get the revenues. Prudence in management and therefore as emphasised in your document that fiscal prudence is going to be critical, that fiscal consolidation is going to be important, why do you want to hire more people? Why do you want to make a lot of promises we have in this document? I think the nation is ready to understand that things have to slowdown and why is this important; for us as we observed over the last several years is not only the last three, but even with previous Government sometimes we spend what we do not have, we introduce more programs. So what do we do and we see the evidence now as it was in the past, we pay some sectors quickly while we delay others. We appropriate money here; we all assume that the Ministry or Parliament will get the allocations here, they either get **50%** or **40%** of it by the way and that is what our Budget Office can do for us. Show us the trends, how much was budgeted? How much was giving over five years so we come here and debate. Honourable Foday Mario Kamara tried to make that point yesterday, if MDAs has already budgeted and they made targets, they have agreed with President they are going to achieve some deliverable if you give them their money that only **30%** and you give it late they cannot perform. So if our economy is going to contracts one would assume that we say okay we considerate, we make sure we pay Teachers on time, we make sure we do not have strikes in the University; if we promise them a **100%** salary increase we can do it. So we do not higher more, we do not spend more, we take care

of what they responsibility is now otherwise it will be S.O 2 'cut here put here' [Applause]. It also means you cannot have longer term prosperity and you cannot have longer term wealth creation because we are not investing well, for example in Agriculture. The Chairman of the Agriculture Committee made the point. If the mining sectors are not doing as well at it should then maybe we should be putting our whole lot money of Agriculture than we do now, but we cannot because we are making more and more commitment. Honourable Christopha Keikura Vandy from Bo gave us good numbers yesterday; seven thousand Teachers hired and he gave us a wonderful breakdown, it begs the question, what is hiring? Getting a pin-code already means hiring? Are they paid already? When will they paid? So for me if we are seeing so many problems in the Education sector, I will say yes the **21%** of the Gross Domestic Product [GDP] going to education is good, but it is not good enough because there are many more problems in that sector; this is why is why I caution the Government. There is a time that you pull back because the nation knows that the economy is going to contracts, that we have problems therefore we cannot buy more vehicles yet, times are hard we consolidate so we can invest in the future. So I take a few other sections of the Budget so that was two general comments; we need capacity in Parliament to help us analysis economic policy and the Budget. Second; that I do not see enough physical prudence here, I believe this is too populist, we are spending money we do not have yet. Mr Speaker, Secondly, on page 15 paragraph 57, the Government note the challenges with the State Owned Enterprises [SOEs] and we want to commend the Government for making our two Banks profitable again which is an excellence job; we want to congratulate you on that. However, the Government note in paragraph 57, I quote' **"how every some State-Owned Enterprises continue to pose significant fiscal risks to the nation Budget due to weak governance, poor financial performance, poor investment decisions as well as substantial arrears to supplies."** It continues again in paragraph 68 to state and I quote; **"from June 2016 to June 2020, Government had provided bailout and operational cost support including external debt service payment on behalf of SOEs amounting to Le5.4Bln."** Now when you look at the numbers; you have in paragraph 68, **Le5.4Bln**



for bailout to SOEs, **Le1.89Bln** owned in taxes loss it means these SOEs are costing Government **Le6.93Bln** just think about it and that is why we keep saying we need to rationalise some of these SOEs if they are not fit for purpose already we kill some of them. This amount of money; **Le6.93Bln** which we use to subsidised them year in year out when they are supposed to generating revenues for the Government is making us not able to invest in Education, Heathy and Agriculture, but we keep them *[Undertone]* no, I still have time.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I go to agriculture. Mr Speaker, we commend the Government for some of what we seen in paragraph 75 onwards, we particularly commend them for the attention paid to the rice value chain and the new program which is **\$30Mln** and plus that is coming to the country now to support the rice value chain. This is important because in a survey done last March, I happen to be on the zoom called when the results were present by Afro-barometer and the panellist was the World Bank representative and the IMF representative. The number one problem identified in March by citizens was hunger. So I commend Government for paying attention to the rice value chain, we see a lot of proposals there to privatise fertiliser, to privatise other input supplies; we pray that this is done well. We pray that the program is not politicised because it is a lot of money and hopeful Tomabom and Kambia will start feeding the nation even better now, but it depends on how the program will be implemented *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, we will be willing, those of us who are Members of Parliament from those areas; Bonthe and Kambia to support and checking on the implementation that it is done properly. We welcome in paragraph 81 the idea of establishing an Agriculture Bank which is a very good idea and again, it will work if it is not politicised *[Undertone]* even when we commend the Government we are criticised; no problem.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, now on Fisheries. Mr Speaker, we say a lot of intentions in fisheries and indeed we heard over the radio that His Excellency the President Dr Julius Maada Bio launch some speed boats to help us patrol our waters, but I have to say since my constituency is among the top five fishery grounds in this

country we have not seen any major project in our areas in three years *[Undertone]* okay my **Ndamia** from Pujehun, teach us how to manage it *[Laughter]*. Mr Speaker, Paragraph 99 and 100 as the son of a Chief, we commend the Government for trying to improve the conditions of services of Paramount Chiefs and local authority *[Applause]*. They were very helpful also in fighting Corona so I believe that is a good effort.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in paragraph 124; I want to agree with Honourable Rebecca Yei Kamara from Kono and also Honourable Kanu from Western Area; we underfund Social Welfare and Gender and every year is the same problem *[Applause]*. We believe that we should do more for our womenfolk and in fact, this is why some of us are proposing a Bill where we locate **30%** of elective positions for women *[Applause]*. We know from development practice and Mr Speaker, I repeat; the Honourable Veronica Kadie Sesay and I are on the same vein on this; **30%** of political offices for women *[Applause]*. That is what is helping Rwanda progress; **50%** of their Parliament are women; Demarsin-Israel and other significant number so we want to commend, we want to advocate that when women sit at the decision making point they in fact ensure that the women's issues are covered.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I now moves on to education. We want our colleagues to understand that we are very pleased that in the last one month we have seen here about four or five Ministers and in all the instances the questions we have raised the Ministers have be able to addressed adequately. So I believe that people should understand that some of us asked questions, but we also make suggestions. Mr Speaker, when we have continuous failure rate in our education system we are worried. It is not only the percentage of our GDP that goes to education that matters; it is important, but it is not sufficient. There are deeper cultural administrative management sectors governance issue that is killing our education. Mr Speaker, I am happy that Honourable Abdul said we should declare an education emergency; well that is what I suggested during the Presidential Debate. We knew already that the education system was bad. What we are seeing now is more evidence that our society, the same way we dealt with Covid-19 not from political stand point, but all of need to look at the

education sectors; I am not talking about free education, but I am talking about the education sector. There is a deeper problem; **4%** failure compare to Gambia is bad for us and also some people argue it is because we are stopping the cheating; it is deeper than that. Mr Speaker, I will just say to support Honourable Ibrahim Ben Kargbo moved the other day we need to devote not one day, this is not about political point scoring, this is we as the people's representative looking closely at what is happening in education in Sierra Leone *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in closing, imagine that you go to a hospital the doctor checking you, you know clearly that he or she cheated in the university to become medical doctor. The Nurse they called to do your vital, you also know that he or she cheated in Nursing School, would you want them really to check you? So it is happening in medicine, in engineering, in economic, half-baked economist trying to pretend they know economics so we say education is the real problem that yes Mr Speaker, we hope it is not one day you devote more time that we look at our education sector. Thank you very much *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable for his contribution to the debate. I just want to make it clear that it does not matter where you sit *[Laughter]*. My sight is good enough and I can see all of you *[Applause]*. The Honourable Member with spectacles at the very back.

**HON. JAMES O. THOLLEY:** Mr Speaker, I am at the very back.

**THE SPEAKER:** No, I think he knows himself. The Honourable Member with the mauve tie and I think he is a Member from Port Loko.

**HON. DR UNPHA S. G. KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, I am from Western Urban, but I am originally from Koya in Port Loko District. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will like to thank the Minister and the Ministry of Finance for this package of a Budget for the creation of human capital development and jobs. Mr Speaker, as I went through this Budget I was grimly reminded of the words of Nelson Mandela that '**indeed poverty is manmade and that poverty could be eradicated and overcome by human**

**beings.'** With that grim reminder, I was humbly grounded as I peruse for clarity and taking the words of Albert Einstein who said that **"the value of an education is not just the mere learning of many facts, but it is the ability to use those information's to think."** With that said Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will like to draw the attention of this House to snippets in the Budget because of time *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Who is my time keeper?

**HON. DR UNPHA S. G. KOROMA:** As we grapple with the challenges of Covid-19 and the economic crisis that ensued, I am forced to wonder how the mentally ill, the people with disability and the homeless Sierra Leoneans are living day by day. To be candid, in the case of disable; page 37 paragraph 175 highlighted then under cluster 5. Mr Speaker, if I can bring you to page 37, on that page it state that empowering woman and children and persons with disability was given **Le4Bln** out of the Budget. However, only **Le3Bln** was given to Gender and Children programme and **Le1Bln** to Children Commission, but not a single Leone want to people that are disable. Mr Speaker, for crying out loud, the problems of disable should be a problem for this Government and every successful Government if we are to be a country that takes care of our own *[Applause]*. If you drive down State Avenue towards the Cotton Tree which is by the way a national land mark, you cannot help but notice the clear and present threat that the presence posed by motorist and the disable people themselves. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, they are out there begging for their livelihood, these individuals should be worth of the State and they should be committed to institutions. The Budget has on page 33, number 50 a caption for social protection, but caption alone will not save us from this demise if not exceed in our actions. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, please permit me to read paragraph 150 vibrating and it read and I will take it in the meddle; **"...with the out brake of Covid-19, Government thought it fit to protect the most valuable of our population and it is therefore committed to scaling up expenditure on social protection."** From my calculation, the most valuable of our population is the disable, the mentally challenged as well as the ones

that are physical challenge and also the destitute. Mr Speaker, it further went on to state on paragraph 151 that **“Word Bank, in the German Bank which is KFW and IDB will dispose 81.1Bln to NaCSA for the implementation of various protection projects including social safety.”** As we all know NaCSA was found in 1996 when it was the Minister of National Reconstruction and Resettlement then later on became a Commission, but the net project and commitment during deployment project by this program has indicated that Government has given **9.7Bln**; putting their money where their mouth is and an additional **2.9Bln** from the recurrent Budget. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, please let us challenge NaCSA with the Ministry of Finance who has as their Financial Secretary a member of the board of NaCSA as well as the Ministry of Labour and Security which has a Permanent Secretary a member of the board to put pressure on NaCSA to see what they can do about the mentally ill, the disabled and the people that are physically challenge. Why am I saying this? We can remember some months back, we do not want to see what happen in Makeni to respect itself, wherein people went with moneys for people that are disable or people that are challenge and they started sharing it to different people. We need structures around the mentally ill, we need structures around the disabled and we need social welfare also to be on board when it comes to taking care of these people. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have an archaic law in this country which is the 1902 Lunacy Act and this has to do with mentally challenge people. The name itself is derogatory if you ask me; like I said it is in 1902 and we are in the year 2020 and we are still dealing with an Act that contravene all temporally practices in human rights and it norms. I think we in this House need to revisit that Act, repeal some of those pages, amend it and make it fit for purpose *[Applause]*. We want this Government to prove to be a superior Government, a Government that is modest in its words, but exceeding in its action and enough of its rhetoric.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it was Thomas Edison, an American inventor who once said; **“opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and it looks like work.”** Mr Speaker, I am saying this because for far too

long in this country we have neglected the mentally-ill; most recently, we are reminded of the challenge that we have when it comes to mentally-ill people. Mr Speaker, the fact may be challenged, but we are informed about a young man that took his life and for some of us that are health practitioners we know issues about depression; depression is also mental health and mental health does not just stop at somebody we think is lunatic, but there are other issues like anxiety, disorder; they are all mental health that we as a nation need to address *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** And on that note?

**HON. DR UNPHA S. G. KOROMA:** And on that note Mr Speaker, I want to appreciate the **11%** that the Ministry of Finance gives to the Ministry of Health and Sanitation, but it would surprise you to note that out of that **11%** not a single amount was given to the mentally-ill and this brings us to the fact that the Act needs to be reviewed and the people that are mentally-ill in this country need to be taken care of by the State and we need structures around it so that we can stop seeing beggars along the streets on wheel-chairs begging us for money because we have the Honourable Member of Parliament number plate *[Applause]*. To round up Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we need more commitment towards mental-illness and disability. We need this Government to invest into agriculture, do more research and put moneys into Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute [SLARI] if agriculture should be our bread basket. Mr Speaker, in this Budget, the Freetown City Council which is a home for all of us in this Well also should be taken into account. Mr Speaker, the Freetown City Council has a mandate to make the city a better place for us and the Government should serve as a cushion, serve as an augmented body to ensure that Freetown City Council gets the money they need to transform Freetown *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, finally, if we have to fight the drug epidemic in this country, more has to be done for drug enforcement because part of the mental illness in this country has to do with drugs dependency and drugs misused. Mr Speaker, Drug Enforcement Agency do not even have an official vehicle to boast of let alone enough personnel's to ensure that they have the people to fight drug abuse and drug misuse in this country which is part of the mental illness in

this country. Mr Speaker, because of time, I have so much to say, but to give other Members the chance to contribute to this debate. I thank you for giving me the Floor *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution to the debate. The Honourable Peter Musa Moigua from Kenema has the Floor.

**HON. PETER M. MOIGUA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will like to add my voice to this debate by thanking the Minister and his team for putting together the economic pathway or the fiscal proposal for the 2021 Financial Year. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to appreciate the team members for putting this document together which stated to be a very good economic recovery system. Mr Speaker, this document before us will act as an engine to the economic recovery and it will act as leverage for us to see Sierra Leone coming back as it was.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my duty this morning is not to focus on the micro or macro-economic variables; I will leave that with the Economist to delve on it, but my issue here is to see how connected the Sustainable Development Goals [SDGs] and the Mid-term National Development Goals are. Mr Speaker, in that, I will like to zoom in my contribution to the connection between the Mid-term Development Plan and the SDGs. By extension, it also goes to the Africa 2063 vision.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I heard an Honourable Member talking about leaving disability behind. When you look at the SDG number five and the Medium Term Cluster number five you will see that these two catered for the improvement of women, children and disability and it stands to be one of the golden principles of the SDGs and with the saying '**leaving no one behind**'. Mr Speaker, with that, I will take you to paragraph 122 and 123; Mr Speaker, I read; **"To justify that, this Government has left no person with disability behind."**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, at the end of October, 2020, with Government and donor partners funding, thirty eight thousand and eighty three extremely poor household including people living with disability were provided with cash transfer; **92%**

of those beneficiaries were female due to Covid-19 outbreak. The enrolment for an additional thirty five thousand beneficiaries is on-going as payment in the early year of 2021; the issue of talking about leaving persons with disability behind is factored in this Budget. Mr Speaker, the Honourable Member from Kambia was talking about the unavailability of resources to fund the programme set in this particular Budget and at the same time complicating himself that the Government is underspending in Gender and Social Welfare. Mr Speaker, I wonder where we are going if Members are blaming the Government of not having enough fund to spend and you are advocating for an underspent in Gender and Social Welfare then that stands to be confusing. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you want to see the reality of this Budget, you need to give a feedback of the performance and evaluation of the 2020 Budget. In the 2020 Budget, one hundred and twelve out of one hundred and fifty nine commitments was completed which shows that **70%** of the Budget was achieved *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, in that same 2020 Budget; that is the Supplementary Budget, we had twenty five out of twenty eight commitments achieved which stand for **89%** of the delivery rate *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, if we are looking at the present Budget and even when you are at a college level or at school level, I think we want to take the precedent of our pass grades in the Millennium Challenge Corporation [MCC] and our pass rate in the fight against corruption wherein this Government is increasing in percentage.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what interest me in this Budget is that it addresses the issue of livelihood, addressing the issue of decent job, decent work, addressing the issue of standard of living. Mr Speaker, I want to say that most countries in this world are now deviating in assessing the progress of the Budget talking about Gross Domestic Product [GDP], talking about expenditure control and talking about revenue strength. Mr Speaker, my people in Yegbema which is Langurama, Small Bo, Niawa and Kandu-Liappiama do not understand these languages. This Budget is speaking exactly what our people down there do understand; the Budget talks about job creation, it talks about rise in minimum of wages, support pay equity, it talks about providing pay leave and sick leave, it talks about establishing work schedule, it talks about the expansion of



Medicare and also invest in affordable high quality childcare and education *[Applause]*. This is what the people want to hear, it is not a matter of talking about the aged; Fayol principles wherein people just talk about fourteen principles of Fayol and one of that is subordination of individual interest to the general good and that is what this Budget is speaking to. Mr Speaker, in this Budget, the Government is addressing Sierra Leoneans and not colours; red, green etc, it caters for everybody in this country.

**THE SPEAKER:** And with that?

**HON. PETER M. MOIGUA:** And with that *[Laughter]*. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, for one to know that this Budget is a very good Budget you will see that the accuracy of income projection, you will see the accuracy of expenditure categories, but let me just come to the area of creating jobs especially *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Are you restarting?

**HON. PETER M. MOIGUA:** No! I am still going please Mr Speaker.

**HE SPEAKER:** No!

**HON. PETER M. MOIGUA:** Mr Speaker, in conclusion, let me just say something about the area of job creation. Mr Speaker, in Cluster one of the Medium-term Development Goal about Fisheries, Agriculture and Tourism; people were talking about Government doing well in agriculture, but one thing we need to realise is that we should help the Private Sector in building up the effort of Government. Mr Speaker, in other countries like Ghana and Kenya, we have seen Retirees from World Bank, United Nation and other areas coming to invest in those areas, but in Sierra Leone, we have our own that do not even have a backyard garden but yet still they stand to criticise Government *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in conclusion, I want Mr Minister to address the issue of water system for my people because there was a motion laid in this Well about the water system in Blama and up till now that has not been addressed. I would also want the other three chiefdoms in my area to benefit from the rural electrification that is Kandu Liappiama, Niawa and Langurama. I thank you *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution to the debate. I will give the Floor to the Honourable John Charles Conteh from Bombali.

**HON. JOHN C. CONTEH:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my own debate today will be different from the normal ways. Mr Speaker, let me go straight to the Budget. Mr Speaker, I want to start by congratulating the Minister and his team for putting this document together. This is a very good document, but as an Opposition, we are here to look at it critically and see how best we can proffer solution for the implementation of this Budget. Let me go to the theme which is 'Economic recovery for job creation and human capital development'. Mr Speaker, of course, this Budget from the theme is geared towards providing jobs for the youths, providing jobs for our people and also human capital development. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you take a look at the Supplementary Budget that was presented to us in this Well of Parliament which is 'Saving Lives and Livelihood' and if you take a look at the Budget presented in paragraph three, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am pleased to report to this Honourable House that **"in the midst of Covid-19 and all its accompanying challenges, <sup>1</sup>/<sub>12</sub> of the one fifty nine commitments in the original 2020 Budget are either being completed or on track"**, also for the same for the Supplementary Budget which says; **"twenty five of twenty eight commitments in the Supplementary Budget have been completed are on track for delivery"** and they rate it at **89%**. From the look of things Mr Speaker, from the Supplementary Budget presented here and the original one, I think this is misleading, it is not **89%** of all what you have highlighted that you will do and that you have completed. But let me take you further and let me justify further; if I take you to the Appropriation Schedule two; you have several Directorate under the Office of the Chief Minister. Mr Speaker, there is also an office under the Office of the Chief Minister which is the Director of Service Delivery and there is now another establishment under the Office of the President which is Monitoring and Evaluation Unit has been established under the Office of the President. This has been the clarion call of people of this country and even donors in trying to justify the Office

of the Chief Minister and now you are creating another office which is called Monitoring and Evaluation Unit under the Office of the President. If you take a look at the Chief Minister's Office, we used to have the Chief of Staff and now you have coined it to the Chief Minister's Office. The Chief Minister's Office is responsible for monitoring and evaluation of all service projects and even donor projects within the country under MDAs and report directly to the President, but today you are now creating another new office which is reporting directly to the President. So now you have justified the means that yes there is no need for the Office of the Chief Minister that is why you have created another new office *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, when you take a look at this new office created, you have Directorate of Service Delivery and service delivery is there purposely to look at all what you are now creating for reporting to the Office of the Chief Minister in turn which he will report to the President. Mr Speaker, in essence there is no need in creating the Office of the Chief Minister's Office so you have justified it now that you have a powerful office that is reporting now directly to the Office of the President so there is no need for the Office of the Chief Minister.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me take you to Mobilisation of External Resources. Mr Speaker, with your leave, I read; **"the impressive economic programs and management under President Bio's Administration has considerably restored External Resources mobilised in 2018, total resources mobilised from Financial Resources increased from \$46.3Mln in 2018 to \$438.4Mln in 2019 and \$380.7Mln between January to October this year amounting to a total of \$86.5Mln."** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when I did the breakdown, it shows that this Government have been criticising our Government of taking more loans and grants for service delivery and today when you take a look at this **\$86.5Mln** which is the total money they have secured from the International Organisation; grant alone amounted to **\$571.2Mln** and such grants like that does not just go free, it comes with interest and other benefits and if you go to the total debts which this Government has recorded is **\$294.4Mln** just in two years and when I did an

economist forecast; if we leave this Government from now to the year 2023 when they will be going out of power, they will accumulate more than **\$883.4Mln** *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me take you to paragraph 96 which reads with your leave, **"Government's priority in the road sector in the year 2021 is to complete on-going projects with the following trunk roads and expected to be completed in the year 2021; Moyamba Junction three bridges; Magbelay, MAbang and Makpakma etc."** and if you read through it you can understand, but let me justify further. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is not a secret that all what you have highlighted was a project initiated by the APC Government led by Dr Ernest Bai Koroma *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, if today we are talking about completion, it is good, but what shocks me most is that this Government is leaving very good economic viable roads; if you talk about the road leading from Kamakuwa to Makeni, it is an economic viable road because that is the shortest road to Guinea, that road needs to be completed, we left money for that road, but all what you have highlighted there is nothing mentioned about Makeni to Kamakuwa road, it is very important, it is an economic viable road because if we are talking about economic viable roads that road should be looked at because there was moneys left for that, we only left the road at my town which is Gbendembu. So, please Madam Minister, next time when you are coming *[Interruption]*.

**HON. ALUSINE KANNEH:** Mr Speaker, I am sorry to interrupt the Honourable Member.

**THE SPEAKER:** Is that your allotted seat?

**HON. ALUSINE KANNEH:** Yes Mr Speaker, *[Undertone]* because of Covid-19 we thought it fit to rearrange our seating positions.

**THE SPEAKER:** Is that your allotted seat?

**HON. ALUSINE KANNEH:** Yes Sir! I am right here.

**THE SPEAKER:** But I keep seeing you on the other end *[Laughter]*.

**HON. ALUSINE KANNEH:** Yes Mr Speaker, but leadership communicate with one another.

**THE SPEAKER:** How?

**HON. ALUSINE KANNEH:** Mr Speaker, we communicate with one another even with the Speaker and that is the normal thing.

*Suspension of S.O 5[2]*

**HON. JOHN C. CONTEH:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I know the reason for them to deliberately up to now are leaving that road out because there hailed the former Flag-bearer of our Party Dr Samura Kamara *[Undertone]* it is deliberate, but let us go further Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, if you take a look at paragraph 100 and with your leave I read; **"In the year 2021 in order to strengthen our health infrastructure, Government will support from developmental partners to invest...."** *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I have always known you to be very considerate.

**HON. JOHN C. CONTEH:** Obviously Mr Speaker. I will today again.

**THE SPEAKER:** I have always and today is no exception.

**HON. JOHN C. CONTEH:** Okay Mr Speaker!

**THE SPEAKER:** So bear in mind some of your colleagues also want the Floor

**HON. JOHN C. CONTEH:** No problem Mr Speaker! I will try to round up Sir.

**THE SPEAKER:** So you have one minute.

**HON. JOHN C. CONTEH:** No please just make it two minutes let me round up.

**THE SPEAKER:** One!

**HON. JOHN C. CONTEH:** Okay Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, yesterday an Honourable Member was talking about the Ambulance system that they introduced the 'Ambulance system', it's no gainsay if you ask the Paramount Chief, the Ambulance system was launched by Dr Ernest Bai Koroma and it was distributed to all

Chiefdoms *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, in one of the sittings I made mentioned of this because Madam Minister once said that they are going to create Cancer Radiotherapy and Diagnostic Centre in this country. Mr Speaker, she is still confusing us today again by telling us that they are creating Cancer Diagnostic Centre and she has now curtailed it down to Radiotherapy and not Cancer Diagnostic Centre so we do not know what she is saying, but I will advise her to be very consistent *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** And on that note?

**HON. JOHN C. CONTEH:** And on that Mr Speaker, let me just take you to the last one. Mr Speaker, this Government is saying that they have created enormous benefits under the Ministry of Health and Sanitation and they have launched so many programmes; one of the programmes they are bragging about was that they have launched the Health Finance Strategy. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Health Finance Strategy was launched under the former regime which is under the Directorate of Policy Planning and Information *[Applause]*. It was there and it is a programme that is going on and they are saying also that they have piloted the Performance Based Financing Scheme which was also launched under the Directorate of Policy Planning and Information under the Ministry of Health and Sanitation and that policy is the PBO. It was implemented towards health improvement of health centres and also improves health outcome on medical personnel and nurses. Today, if they are claiming that they have launched and they have piloted, I am telling them that we have already landed those programmes *[Laughter]*. I thank you Mr Speaker *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. I was particularly delighted to note that you have spoken for Port Loko as well *[Laughter]*.

**HON. JOHN C. CONTEH:** I am from Bombali Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** I know you are from Bombali, but the manner in which you have presented your case, you almost sounded like somebody I knew from Port Loko *[Laughter]*.

**HON. ALUSINE KANNEH:** Mr Speaker, please make sure that Members abide by the five minutes giving to them.

**THE SPEAKER:** I now recognise the Honourable Member from Bonthe.

**HON. MOSES B. JORKIE:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** After the Member from Bonthe, I would recognise the Honourable Aaron Aruna Koroma and you will be next.

**HON. MOSES B. JORKIE:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to inform this House that this is a very nice Budget being presented to the House by the Ministry of Finance; thank you very much Mr Minister and your team for this particular and wonderful Budget. Mr Speaker, I listened and I do enjoy with Honourable Members when they actually debate programmes or whatever that is embedded into this document, we do enjoy you but when you go out of it believe you me that means you are not talking about the Budget. Mr Speaker, the Honourable Member who have just spoken about the health system spoke well because he is a Member of the Health Committee, but actually whatever that was implemented by the former Government, the Government of Retired Brigadier Julius Maada Bio is now continuing where the former Government stopped. If ever, you have actually started a particular programme and this Government is actually continuing with it, I think it is a laudable idea; if we had left out that particular programme that you are speaking of I wonder how you will feel! But thank you very much Madam Minister and your team.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Health department is what I am going to talk on a little bit. Mr Speaker, the first aspect I am going to talk on is the training aspect of the Health Professionals in the country. Firstly, I am going to start with the Pathologist. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we only have one Pathologist in this country and that is Dr Simeon Owizz Koroma; he is an old man now and Mr Speaker, assuming that man dies today or tomorrow, who is going to replace him? So if actually we are planning to bring on board people to be trained, I really want this Ministry and also the Ministry of Health and Sanitation to consider this department very seriously; at least we need four

or five Pathologists in this country because if there are cases around the country, when Dr Simeon Owizz Koroma is in the South and there is problem in the North or East it will be very difficult for him and Mr Speaker, at times Dr Simeon Owizz Koroma has no time to rest; so this particular aspect is very much needed and we also need to pay keen attention to. Mr Speaker, we also want to applaud the people and the Government of this country because the Government is extremely doing well towards the health system. Let us consider the Maternity Mortality, the Infant Mortality. In the year 2013, we very well know that the Maternity Mortality was one thousand one hundred and sixty five per one hundred thousand life birth; that one has drastically reduced to seven hundred and ninety six which is a very laudable idea *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, we need to actually tap on the back of the Government and everybody is seeing that this Government is actually doing well towards the health issue. Let us come to National Medical Supplies Agency [NMSA], the free healthcare and drug distribution was also initiated by the former Government. When the Sierra Leone People's Party [SLPP] came into power, we said we will continue with the programme and yet today we are continuing with it and in fact, it is more robust than before *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, in every three months that is quarterly, NMSA takes drug to the District for distribution *[Undertone]* NMSA, if you do not know I will show you the meaning. As I am speaking to you now, it is on progress. Mr Speaker, there is one big problem which they reported to me that the Budget allocated to them considering last year to this one has been sliced down that you really need to consider that one seriously because when they go, they cater for all the people, they also invite Stakeholders from the Districts and provide transport as well as feeding for them thereby they have to spend a lot. Thank God that this Government took this particular health issues from the former Government according to the Abuja Declaration they left it from **6.5%** now we are talking about **11%** so we need only **4%** more*[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, I was hoping that this particular year we would have added at least **1%** to that **11%** in order to get **12%** but to my dismay it still stands the same so I really want you to consider that one seriously because we have added other problems like next year coming we are going to have another intake of health workers up to one thousand and there are a lot. Mr



Speaker, if actually they are going to recruit another one thousand health workers which they need to be paid, then where are we going to get the money to pay those workers if actually nothing is being added to this particular percentage? So please Madam Minister, you need to take care of that very seriously. Mr Speaker, there is a problem in the healthcare free drugs distribution; when we take drugs to the District or to the centres that is meant to last for three months or a quarter, you will realise that at times it is only lasted for one month or two months then there is a drug stock out because there is no cost recovery drugs at the centres so when the health workers or the in charges do is that they have to resort to the use of this particular free healthcare drugs to the other categories who are not supposed to benefit from these drug; as a result of that you will realise that there is a quick stock out of drugs in the health centres so therefore, to alleviate that problem I hope we need to do something robust towards the cost recovery drugs so that this problem will be minimised.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, an Honourable Member was talking about the road leading to Kamakwei was not mentioned and they have viable areas which I could not remember the way he was explaining it [*Undertone*] Kamalo; this Government is currently undertaking feasibility studies and detailing engineering design for the construction of **2,685km**; all the villages or the areas mentioned you will realise that Bonthe is not including where the President is coming from. Mr Speaker, I am coming from a rich agricultural area and all my chiefdoms I am covering are endowed with bowling land, now all the roads leading there is not mentioned in this particular document and if you are saying that because that man was a Flag-bearer and therefore the road leading to his town is left out what does that mean? What about the current President we have on the ground [*Undertone*] okay! It is not mentioned and we actually need to consider the road leading from Koribondo to Tumabum because we very well know that in this country everybody is talking of Tumabum and the road leading to Tumabum is in a very much deplorable condition so if actually we can consider them in this feasibility studies then that is very much fine and also a road leading to Banda Kemoh to Senjehun is another area where we have vast land of bowling land

*[Undertone]* okay! Mr Speaker, that road also is very much bad. Mr Speaker, I also want those in charge to consider that particular road *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** And with that?

**HON. MOSES B. JORKIE:** Mr Speaker, with that, even the road leading from the Tihun itself where the President comes from to Talia Yobeco and by now it is very difficult for you to go there. I also want you to consider that particular road because it is very much good *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with that, let me conclude my statement with the free quality education more so the school feeding programme. If I can listen well to my elder brother the Honourable from Bombali who said that the school feeding programme is not visible, I want to let him know that the school feeding programme is visible. When you go to my area there is school feeding programme going on there, but they are not just implementing on this school feeding programme to every school, but selected impoverish areas so if your area is not being mentioned probably your area is not that much compared to the ones we have in our areas *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** On that note?

**HON. MOSES B. JORKIE:** Mr Speaker, with that, I want to say a big thank you to the Ministry for putting this document together and also to Mr Speaker for catching your eyes. Thank you *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. The Honourable Aaron Aruna Koroma, you have the Floor. I am looking to see if there is a Paramount Chief wanting to catch my eye.

**HON. AARON A. KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, having listened to the previous speaker in his submission will lead me to this saying that says; 'if nakedness promises you cloth, then ask it name' *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, if the President cannot develop his very home, if the President cannot rehabilitate or construct the roads that lead to his communities, I am sure this is enough reason for all other areas to lose hope in this particular Government *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Honourable Member from Moyamba, Taiama to be specific and also the Honourable

Member from Bo who is the Chairman of Energy Committee and few other Members  
*[Interruption]*.

**HON. MOSES B. JORKIE:** Mr Speaker, Point of Order! The Honourable Member is misquoting me *[Laughter]*. I did not say the President is not developing his home, but I said the road from where the President lives to Tarlia Yorbeco *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I do not think that comment will get into you. Honourable Member, I would implore you just to dismiss.

**HON. MOSES B. JORKIE:** Yes and there is a reason why *[Interruption]* Mr Speaker, please allow me to land.

**THE SPEAKER:** Dismiss that comment altogether, totally irrelevant especially coming from the Honourable Member who is Aaron Aruna Koroma.

**HON. MOSES B. JORKIE:** Yes Mr Speaker.

**HON. AARON A. KOROMA:** And who is very well much well informed. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank the Honourable Member for confirming that 'when nakedness promises you cloth, you should ask its name' that indeed, the President cannot rehabilitate or construct the roads leading to his community then all other districts should lose hope *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** He did not say so.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Point of Order!

**THE SPEAKER:** He did not say that *[Laughter]*.

**HON. AARON A. KOROMA:** But he mentioned the situation on the roads leading to the President's home; that they are left abandoned *[Interruption]*.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Speaker, Point of Order! The President's name shall not be used to influence the House. Please let us understand the way the point is coming.

**HON. AARON A. KOROMA:** Noted sir. Now going forward. Mr Speaker, like I said; the Honourable Member from Tiama, the Honourable Member from Bo and maybe another Member from Moyamba attempted to debunk the Right Honourable Chairman of the Agriculture Committee who happens to be a Member from the Makeni City. Mr Speaker, when the Honourable Member was making his submission, he did disclose to us how the inflation is not reflecting on the prices of basic commodities in the market. The Honourable Member also exposed to us how the exchange rate being mentioned in this document is not reflective of what is happening in the market and Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, to confirm that submission that is why our competitiveness as a nation, there is a report normally done by the World Economic Forum. They assess the country based on all of those indicators; your fiscal policies, your exchange rate and all of it, they assess them. To really affirm or to confirm his submission, that is why in the year 2018 before this Government took over power, we were rated one hundred and thirty out of one hundred and forty. To confirm that indeed the inflation and the other indicators are not reflective of what is being presented, we are now rated one hundred and thirty over one hundred and forty *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I know you would be very much shocked because in the year 2019, the Minister in his submission mentioned about the Corruption Perceptions Index [CPI] Report and I want to read because he deliberately did not mentioned that provision this year, but Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, paragraph 2 of the 2019 Budget says; **"The implementation of structural reforms also weaken in recent years resulting in the deteriorating of our ranking in the World Bank country policy; an Institutional assessment which is called the CPI from a medium to relative weak performer with adverse implications and the like."**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Report the Minister made reference to in the year 2019 showed dramatic improvements in a whole lot of indicators being used by the World Bank to mention our CPI rating. Mr Speaker, during that report we increased; like the structural policy, we were zero. Mr Speaker, for the policies on social inclusion,

we increase that to **0.3%**. Mr Speaker, for public sector management, it was increased to **0.4%** and for the overall CPI rating that rating was increased to **0.1%**. Mr Speaker, what is now most unfortunate, I was expecting the Minister to have made mention of the year 2020 CPI report now. Mr Speaker, the 2020 CPI report showed the abysmal failure of this Government and show clear confirmation that all what the Honourable Member was saying was so much correct. Mr Speaker, when you look at the ratings and with your leave let me read that CPI Report which is now saying that we have dropped by **0.3%**. Mr Speaker, the structural policies we were **0%** now we are minus **0.2%**. Mr Speaker, on the policies for social inclusion, we increased that to **0.3%** now we are minus **0.2%**. Mr Speaker, for public sector management, it was **0.4%** in the year 2019 and now in 2020 the public sector is now **0.1%**. Mr Speaker, the overall performance of the CPI; our country instead of maintaining it at the **0.4%** which was an increase, it has now reduced to minus **0.2%**. Mr Speaker, this draws me to the saying in our Temene Language there is a saying that; 'Toma threaten ban –kala, baypi in-diyeh finor, in-weih finor' S.O 2. How would people know that you have money when you cannot feed well and you cannot put on good cloths? Mr Speaker, the people are suffering in this country *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Honourable Member again mentioned about the Teachers; that seven thousand Teachers have been recruited. Mr Speaker, I want to be very much evidence based in my submission. I agree that he said seven thousand Teachers were recruited. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to confirm to this House that as I speak, before we handed over Government in 2018, the payroll of the Teachers was thirty one thousand. As I speak today Mr Speaker, we have about thirty three Thousand Teachers. So if you are saying that we have recruited seven thousand Teachers; that one is erroneous *[Applause]*. It is very possible that he only confirmed that there are Teachers who have been given Pin Codes and those Pin Codes are been used as phone numbers, but they are not receiving any salaries; that is the situation *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me also talk on what the Honourable Dr Kandeh Kolleh Yumkella said; he commended the Government *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** That is your last point.

**HON. AARON A. KOROMA:** The Honourable Dr Kandeh Kolleh Yumkella commended the Government for the performance of the Rokel Commercial Bank and the Sierra Leone Commercial Bank. Mr Speaker, it is on record that the former President Dr Ernest Bai Koroma is now undergoing an investigation simply because he gave incentives to revitalise those institutions that is why they are making profit today. So if there is any credit that credit should be given to the erstwhile President *[Applause]*.

**HON. MOHAMED B. SHAW:** Mr Speaker, Point of Order *[Undertone]* he is my Chairman, but Point of Order!

**THE SPEAKER:** What is your Point of Order?

**HON. MOHAMED B. SHAW:** S.O 32; the issue surrounding the investigation about the Vice President's misappropriation of public funds or abuse of office has nothing to do with the Budget and that should not be mentioned here because it is under investigation. That is my Point of Order Mr Speaker. With all due respect to the Honourable Member that matter should not be brought into this Budget debate.

**THE SPEAKER:** Cite me the S.O!

**HON. MOHAMED B. SHAW:** S.O 32[6].

**THE SPEAKER:** Read 32[6]!

**HON. MOHAMED B. SHAW:** Mr Speaker, I am screening my screen.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Speaker, I beg for us to continue the debate please.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**HON. MOHAMED B. SHAW:** Mr Speaker, please I am reading S.O 32[6].

**THE SPEAKER:** No! Your Leader is asking for me to ignore your Point of Order which I am disposed to do *[Laughter]*.

**HON. MOHAMED B. SHAW:** I accept Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Because it is totally inappropriate and inapplicable.

**HON. AARON A. KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, they say the wisest of all is he who knows what to overlook. Mr Speaker, I will overlook him because I am a wise man so I would not make reference to his submission. Mr Speaker, now to Local Government;

**THE SPEAKER:** No! On that note!

**HON. AARON A. KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, on that note, I accept. Mr Speaker, as Chairman of Local Government, according to Section 20 of the Local Government Act, the Local Government is the bridge between the central Government and the local people in terms of development and so therefore, consideration in terms of resource allocation to District Councils is very important. Mr Speaker, the pattern we have noticed of late and I find that very unfortunately. Mr Speaker, how can you allocate **Le794Bln** to the Health sector and then you only transfer **Le 36Bln** to Councils, where we have about one thousand four hundred PHUs? **99%** of our constituents are left unattended in the Health facilities when just about **1%** of the Budget is being sent to Councils to service our people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Member, let me talk on education because it is very important *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** No!

**HON. AARON A. KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, this is very important *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** No Honourable Aaron!

**HON. AARON A. KOROMA:** On that note Mr Speaker, much as I commend the Government for increase the remunerations or incentives to Chairman and Mayors, Mr Speaker, let me make this on record that the Paramount Chief here sited can bear me witness that they started paying them their salaries five years ago and besides, what is happening now Mr Speaker, it is like robbing Peter and pay Paul. The allocations to Councils have been reduced by over **70%**; they reduced the allocations to Councils to

increase their salaries instead of focusing on exact service delivery for which Section 20 of the Local Government statutes were created *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, on that note?

**HON. AARON A. KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Member, on the final note now *[Laughter]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** No!

**HON. AARON A. KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, we want this Budget to speak the language that the Tonkolili people also understand. The Honourable Member from Kenema said that the Budget speaks to the language that his people understand which is Mende. Mr Speaker, we also want the Budget to speak the Language our Temne people in Tonkolili also understand. It is unfortunately that no mention of road was made in this Budget. We would love to see that the Mile 19 to Robole Road and the Bo and Yele road being included in national Budget because we are very important in the development of this country. Thank you very much *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution and for speaking for the rest of them on that line *[Laughter]*. I give the Floor to the Honourable Paramount Chief Kangbai Joe Macavoray.

**HON. PROF P.C KANGBAI JOE MACAVORAY:** Mr Speaker, Members of Parliament, first of all I want to make a clarification here; no Paramount Chief has ever received any salaries rather we have been receiving stipends *[Applause]*. Initially, we used to receive **Le2Mln** *[Interruption]*.

**HON. AARON A. KOROMA:** Point of Order Mr Speaker *[Undertone]* I am protected according to S.O 32.

**THE SPEAKER:** I want decorum. The Honourable Paramount Chief has the Floor.

**HON. PROF P.C KANGBAI JOE MACAVORAY:** I am quite sure salaries are different from stipends. When you receive salary you pay Income Tax, but we have not been paying Income Tax on those stipends and fortunately for us, what we used to receive



has been increased by this current Government and for which we are very grateful *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Members of Parliament, there are one hundred and ninety Chiefdoms in this country. We are grateful that Government is going to give every Chiefdom Council a vehicle in the year 2021 *[Applause]*. That is a mile stone in our lives. I am happy to survive this period for me to see those vehicles coming to us *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, I have looked through this allocation, but there is nothing mentioned as a grant or subvention to Chiefdoms. Please let us be getting monies for our Chiefdoms so that we would be able to run the Chiefdoms amicably. The Chiefdoms only rely on Local Tax which we collect annually and in fact, **40%** of that is paid to the District Councils and the remaining is distributed accordingly. In terms of security, out of the one hundred and ninety Chiefdoms, we have Class A, Class B and Class C Chiefdoms. Class A has eight Chiefdom Police, Class B has five and Class C has three. It is very difficult for us to maintain security in our Chiefdoms with that number of police particularly in my own Chiefdom which is a Class A Chiefdom. We are also asking Government to increase the number of Chiefdom Police Force in our Chiefdoms. There are a lot of frustrations in the Chiefdoms because the Chiefdom functionaries have not been pin coded. It is of late that it has begun and when that process is complete, please Mr Minister let the Chiefdom functionaries get their salaries as soon as possible so that they can also be empowered like us. Let us also endeavour to elect the Paramount Chiefs as quickly as possible because in respect of the Chieftaincy Act of 2009, Paramount Chiefs are supposed to be elected within a year on the demise of the previous ones; so that will help the situation *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Member, in terms of education; previously, they used to give remote allowances to Teachers. So if we do not see Teachers in the rural areas it is because the Teachers are in the bigger towns. If you come to Freetown here, you have a lot of Teachers in the schools; you go to Kenema, Makeni, Bo and the others; if you go to my village in Tikonkoh there is a school from Class one [1] to Class six [6] with a population of about four hundred pupils, we only have two Teachers there and only one

is qualified with forty years teaching experience. So it is better we try to deploy Teachers to those areas so that we can avoid children failing examinations.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Member, in terms of Agriculture, the rural areas are very viable in Agriculture, but fertilisers and lack of Agricultural Extension Officers are making our people not to be very active in Agriculture and therefore the production is very poor. So I am pleading with the Ministry concern with Agriculture to ensure that Agricultural Officers go to our Chiefdoms and Government has erected over one hundred and fifty Agricultural Business Centres [ABCs]. These ABCs are not functioning, so they need motivation for us to be getting fertilisers and the like so that Agricultural Officers and Agricultural people in the Chiefdoms could understand the importance of Agriculture. On that note, I want to thank you for giving me audience *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Paramount Chief and I want to thank him especially for respecting the time limit, I thank you. I will now give the Floor to the Honourable Member from Kono, Honourable Emerson Saa Lamina and he would be followed by the Honourable Festus Mohamed Lansana.

**HON. EMERSON S. LAMINA [LEADER OF C4C]:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I find it very difficult to contain 202 paragraphs in a shortest possible time. Mr Speaker, that notwithstanding, I want to dissect the whole debate into two general factors; firstly, human development capacity building and secondly, poverty related interventions. The whole debate can be summarised in these two sectors.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Member, I find out that the Budget is poverty related. Poverty related in that Government spends more on sectors like Agriculture, Health and Sanitation, Education and in turn they receive little or recover little or nothing from those sectors. Mr Speaker, it is high time we began to synchronise the intervention of donors as well as Government of Sierra Leone and for the very sectors that do receive funds from our consolidated funds. When we begin to have donor programme, donor mapping for those particular sectors then we also look very meticulously on those very sectors that receive funds from the consolidated fund, it will go a long way for us to

benefit and Government can also be encouraged to invest again on Public Private Partnership [PPP] and also encourage direct foreign investment; it will go a long way.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, few sectors that fall across poverty related including Infrastructure, Health, Education and Agriculture and also a Human development capacity; talking of the Wage Bill that will target the security sectors including Army, Police, Fire Force, Office of National Security [ONS] etc. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we realise that developing the capacities of those particular sector forces is laudable. Between 1991 and 2001, the almost eleven years interregnum would not have been experienced had we got sectors like ONS with high moral, operation of the CHISEC, DISEC and PROSEC even at national level it would not have actually happened. For Government to intervene in the salary structure of those security forces is really commendable.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have heard a lot of colleagues bemoaning education sector; the appalling and results that we recently had. I want to encourage all of us that we use the Japanese circle whereby we the very law makers will take responsibility, the parents will take responsibility, the Teachers will take responsibility, the Ministry will also take responsibility by bringing few things we forgot to realise; they are the rapidity of spy over the years. I remember very well at a consultative Leadership Conference at the Bank Complex in 2016, the late Minister of Education Minkailu Bah did emphasise that examination malpractice is worse than the Ebola that we had at that particular moment *[Applause]*. So we realised many of our sectors and many of the very education stakeholders were disappointed. It will surprise you Mr Speaker from research that we used to have coordinators. These coordinators would coordinate anti-social activities from the very pupils; 'give me money I will coordinate grades for you'. At the recently concluded examination, they were disappointed because the West Africa Examination Council [WAEC] actually employed conference marking; a Teacher will come mark for the whole day, leave everything there, go home and come the next day because of the application of the conference marking that is why we have appalling results and it is a warning shot for us to understand. We also realise that

reading culture has died out; reading culture is slowly creeping away like a morning dew. Pupils used to read in those days; now reading culture is dying out because of Whatsapp, Mercury and also the love for European Premiership Games; all of these things have eaten up the reading culture of our Pupils. We need to rekindle the reading culture of our education.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we also need to understand again that Tourism sector, I will touch on it a little. We notice that Government spent a lot to actually resuscitate hotel proprietors; that is very laudable. I wish they would have done likewise for the Mining sector also. Mr Speaker, Tourism has a huge potential. We notice that Bonth Island and other touristic centres were featured. I want to call upon the Minister in charge of Tourism to look at Kono this time around *[Applause]*. Waima is a very nice Touristic centre. Waima is twelve miles away from Koidu City. We had the intervention of the SOFA boys in 1896 when they intervened to capture Kono District under the enclave of Guinea and there was a brave British Soldier in a person of Captain Lendi. Captain Lendi and four others died at Waima; their grave lies there at Waima which could be used for a very nice touristic centre. We call upon the Minister of Tourism to look at it very important for the sake of Captain Lendi whose grave lies nice.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to look at the Mining sector. If Government can spend a lot to resuscitate Tourism then let us look at the Mining. When I look at the very vote here in 402 and 403, I realise the creature having money to that of its creator; I am talking of National Mineral Agency [NMA]. NMA is scoring **Le2.8Bln** to that of the very Mining sector which is in charge of policy scoring **Le1.3Bln** that is very appalling; I notice this is a very miss match from the very vote and few reasons that must be responsible for that. Why is it that the Mining sector is not only failing to grow, but it is shrinking? Mr Speaker, this is a call for concern. I call upon the House to look at the Mining sector as an alarming call for concern. It is not only growing low, but is also shrinking and the Mining is supposed to be the bread basket. Mr Speaker, I must not shy away to tell you that Mining used to contribute **24%** to our GDP. Surprisingly, it now only contributes **1.6%**; can you imagine that? That is alarming!

**THE SPEAKER:** Can you say that again? That is very important!

**HON. EMERSON S. LAMINA:** Yes, very important! Mr Speaker, between the years of 2017 to 2018, the Mining Sector used to contribute **24%** to our GDP. As I speak to you today, I have been reliably informed from National Revenue Authority [NRA] that the Mining sector only produces now **1.6%** to our GDP. Can you imagine? It is alarming! And the total Gross Domestic Budget that mining sector contributes to our domestic revenue is just about **11%**; this is worrisome.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we need to look at few things [*Undertone*]. Mr Speaker, am I protected?

**THE SPEAKER:** Yes, you are fully protected!

**HON. EMERSON S. LAMINA:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, we need to look at the very Mining Stakeholders; who are they?

- The Chairperson for the Minerals Advisory Board;
- The Minister of Mines and Mineral Resources; and
- The Director General of NMA.

They need to come before this House and answer few questions [*Applause*]. Mr Speaker, the law is very clear in Section 52 and 53 of the Mines and Minerals Act; you either employ termination or suspension. I will rather go for the latter; suspend them, no; the reason why they have falter concerning the Laws, but terminating them, even though at the annoyance of the very Mines and Minerals Committee some four weeks ago, the NMA and the Minister of Mines and Mineral Resources were called upon to stay a little, not to cancel those Mining Companies. To my dismay, I understand just yesterday that they have already terminated instead of suspending; terminated about twenty three Mining Companies. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is very important because I begin to imagine how many tyres those Mining Companies operating would have bought, how many fuel they would have procured, how many contract; I am talking of the Local Content Policy they would have capacitated? All of these things; the goods and services they would have imported if they were actually

operating and today, they are no more. So if you begin to consider the Pay as you Earn [PAYE], all of those things. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is high time we called upon the very Mining Stakeholders to proffer a solution to this House *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to reference page 24, paragraph 999. I want to applaud the President Julius Maada Bio led Government for his swift intervention to Local Government. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Local Government is referred to as the sub national governance system. If the local governance today is okay then the Central Government can have a little or no worries. I implore and applaud the Bio led Government for having in view one hundred and ninety vehicles for Paramount Chiefs, twenty two vehicles for Local Councils and three Motor Bikes for each Local Council; this is plausible; very important! Building the capacity of our locals is very important and if you also look very beautiful, if they synergise; if there is a nexus between the Chiefdom governance and the Local governance, I see that they have been at variance for quite a long time. So, even though the Government would have a very good intension from Central Government to release those cash, it will not affect the Chiefdom Council much because the Chiefdom Development Plan is not friendly to that of the Local Councils. So it is the responsibility of the Minister of Local Government to synergise the Chiefdom Governance Plan to that of the Local Governance Plan *[Applause]*. Section 88 in the Local Government Act [LGA] state that Local Councils are incumbent to review their development plans as and when necessary. So I want to call upon the Minister to synergise those two *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, remuneration or rather the award salaries to those Paramount Chiefs is commendable. I would tell you for free that I was a former Mayor. Throughout my Mayorship I did not receive much; just stipend. I would now not call the stipend I used to receive. For us to hear now that Mayors and Chairmen are receiving salaries is commendable *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Ministry of Finance is projecting **Le9.21Trl** and I see that **Le9.21Trl; 6.42** coming from our locally generated revenue, I must commend them because it shows that they have the capacity to release this, but I also

see a challenge from page 30 paragraph 129; a challenge for the projected one. It is a challenge because at the Local Council, the revenue that we do waste on annual bases is so alarming. It will surprise you that because of certain laws, the Mining as a Ministry is not devolved. When the 2004 decentralisation process was established, Mining as a sector was not devolved to Local Council and because it was devolved we realised that Mining Agreements with the Government of Sierra Leone hardly adhere to the Laws of Local Councils. So, Local Councils receive little or nothing from Mining Companies *[Applause]*. During my tenure as a Mayor, I took a litigation battle against Mining Company. It did not see the light of day because you will notice that agreements between Government of Sierra Leone and those Mining Companies are so powerful and strong than that of the very Act that goes through the House of Parliament *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is but important we begin to synergise those Laws *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member!

**HON. EMERSON S. LAMINA:** Yes Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** You have raised certain very important issues regarding the Mining sector and with particular regard to the NMA and the Ministry. Would you like to give notice since you are also the Chairperson of the Mines and Minerals Committee that this Parliament set aside a special date to address this very thorny issue that you have raised?

**HON. EMERSON S. LAMINA:** Mr Speaker, before summarising I would consider doing that. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, even as I summarise, I specifically want to look at Kono as a District. Mr Speaker, paragraph 98; access to safe drinking water and improved sanitation for Koidu New Sembehun City Council [KNSCC], the City where I am serving as a Member of Parliament will be a beneficiary. KNSCC and its environs will be beneficiaries to a pipe born water. This is also commendable for the Bio led Government *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, page 23 Paragraph 97 very importantly that the Koidu Kamiador Road is being featured in 2021 Budget *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, you might not know the importance of this road. Just a little; this road is a forty-seven miles

stretch between Koidu City and Kamiador and it will link about seven Chiefdoms as beneficiaries by the time it is completed and it connects also to the heart land towns of Guinea Republic. It would woo traders from Ivory Coast, Mali, as well as Guinea. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the road is very important because the Chiefdoms with high agricultural prowess will benefit and they will be encouraged to do more of Agriculture. Mr Speaker, the Government having this good will to construct the road between Koidu City and Kaniador is laudable. At the end of the day, it will be connected to Korwadu and Kardu which with a just small bilateral ties the Guinea and Sierra Leone Governments will come together to do a bridge. Mr Speaker, with your leave, this good gesture of construction of roads between Koidu City and Kardu will be sandwiched and more fine if five major bridges are also targeted. With your leave, Mr Speaker, what are these roads or the bridges? Look at this; between Kwakor and Mbafinteh Gbenseh, seventeen metre bridge to be constructed; Kassikoya to Yengema Sandor, sixty metre to be constructed; Yeakuma, Kamara Chiefdom to Yardu Sandor, eighty one metres to be constructed; Peima Kamaya to Bakidu Sandor, seventy three metres to be constructed; Bampedu Sandor to Tarma Forest seventy five metres to be constructed *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, by the time this major bridges that serve as main connectivity within Kono District are completed, I am telling you, we will be focused.

**THE SPEAKER:** And with that?

**HON. EMERSON S. LAMINA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I summarise with that by commending our Donor Partners for hugely intervening into the 2021 Budget; European Union [EU] inclusive, United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], African Bank etc. Mr Speaker, I summarise by also commending the ACC for hitting the very first thirteen target indicators ever since the MCC was initiated. This is the very first time we have hit thirteen indicators; it is plausible, it is a laudable venture and I hope before long, we will reach there. I thank you very much Mr Speaker *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution to the debate. I will now take only two more speakers before we wind up the debate. I now give the Floor to the Honourable Festus Mohamed Lansana *[Undertone]* I would have loved to



call the Honourable Lahai Marah, but I have some serious issues especially when there is a time limitation.

**HON. JAMES O. THOLLEY:** Mr Speaker, please do not give us cause to complaint about our sitting arrangement here because we at the back have never been recognised and that is a cause of concern.

**THE SPEAKER:** Who is the person?

**HON. JAMES O. THOLLEY:** Mr Speaker, I am James Ozan Tholley from the back seat.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, please take your seats. I will give the Floor to the Honourable Festus Mohamed Lansana, whiles he is speaking I would be thinking about what to do next.

**HON. FESTUS M. LANSANA:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I really wanted to disappoint some people today, but I have to make some few corrections then I leave the economy and move to the Tertiary and Higher Education Committee which I am chairing.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start by commending my learned student from Tonkolili, Mile 91 to be specific. He gave us big figures as far as the payroll was concerned at the time when they were in power, but I want to draw his attention that in as much as his figures were correct at that time, but he failed to realise that some of them and in fact most of them were either ghost Teachers or some of them were using other peoples' certificates [*Applause*]. So there was mismatch between their names on the certificates and their actual Birth Certificates so that led us to these correct figures. So please Aaron Aruna Koroma who is the Honourable Member from Tonkolili I want to give you the correct figure because you used to be one of my best students when you were in University [*Laughter*]. In 2018 we had twenty nine thousand and five total Teachers on the payroll and in that same year when we came to power, we discovered that two thousand two hundred and two were either ghost Teachers or they were retirees. In 2019 they also continued the payroll cleaning and seven hundred and seventy nine were subtracted. Mr Speaker, in the year 2020, the payroll cleaning

continued and we discovered seven hundred and sixty one ghost Teacher with a total of three thousand three hundred and forty two either ghost Teachers or those that were mismatched; so if you subtract that one from twenty nine thousand you will be left with twenty six thousand, so if you add the seven thousand that they are talking about then you will get the correct figure which is thirty three thousand three hundred and fifty six *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, I also want to bring the attention of my colleague who is from Bombali; I happened to be one of the Consultants during the APC regime at the Ministry of Health and Sanitation in the department of DPPI and as a Senior Health Economist, we put together the Performance Based Financing [PBF] for the Health Sector, but that PBF had a caveat which he refused to bring to this House and in that caveat they had to conduct an assessment that was called 'Sara Assessment' in every quarter wherein we look at the availability of the various instruments and the personnel, so based on the Sara surveys that were conducted most of the PBF came to a halt and in fact, the DPPI was reduced to DPI, so that was how the PBF was held. So when we came to power in 2018, we had to revive the DPPI that is the department so that was why the DPPI came back into being. Mr Speaker, we know that Government is continuity, but even though we want to continue we have to be subjected to the rules and regulations which we did.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to make some other correction about the CPI. Mr Speaker, my learned student was also talking about the CPI, but he knows that the CPI is measured using all those indicators he was talking about, but from the simple economics we did in secondary school, we all agreed that all of those are subjected to what we called 'Ceteris Paribus', meaning all other things being equal and we know that as far as the year 2020 is concern most of the things did not remain constant; in fact, almost all things did not remain constant so that led to the drop in the CPI *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me take you through the Ministry of Tertiary and Higher Education Committee. Mr Speaker, people have been focusing more on the free quality education, but I want to draw your attention also to the fact that this Government is also catering for the Tertiary and Higher Education Committee which has

to absorb all of those students that we hope after five years they would be promoted to the Tertiary Education. Mr Speaker, what the Government has done here, with your leave, I will refer you to annex two of the Budget; **'The Government has increased the allocation to the Tertiary Education Ministry from 28Bln in 2018 to projected 42Bln in 2021'** so almost there is an increase of about **1.6%** in the allocation, but what interest me most as Chairman of this Committee is that some Budget lines have been factored into this particular Ministry's Budget. Mr Speaker, before this time there was no provision for payment or refund of forms that you buy when you want to enter into Tertiary Institutions. Now Government has made provision for those who want to enter the Tertiary Institutions that once you buy forms they will refund those funds. If you go back to that page, we started from zero allocation, now Government is budgeting for up to **4.4Bln** for those who want to enter into the University; you only need to pay for your forms and Government will reimburse you once you get admission into the University. There is also this aspect of Student's Loan Scheme; we are trying to move fast; in fact, the Secretariat is almost completed at the Brookfield's Hotel for that particular Secretariat handling the Loan Scheme. We are gradually moving to a situation wherein we have to forget about the grant-in-aid, once you are able to adhere to the *[Undertone]* that is the best practice in most of the Universities out there. Then at the end of the day Government want to desist from giving you grant-in-aid and for you to be more responsible by going through the student scheme. Mr Speaker, the advantage about the student scheme is that it does not only caters for your tuition; it is also caters for your books, your feeding and everything that concerns education. So come 2021, this particular Secretariat would be functional so at the end of the day we have to move from grant-in-aid or SLG as we used to call it; for example, this year Government gives up to two thousand and seventy four grant-in-aid. At the same time, they were able to support three hundred and eighty four International students who maybe are not going to pay back or some may not even come back, but if you apply the students scheme, most of them just have to come back because they have singed obligation and most of these are going to be backed by collateral and in fact, the good thing about the student scheme is that job

security is paramount because the Government can only recoup whatever they have given to you if you are employed; so that is a very good thing about this project *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on the Budget also, we have what we called the support to the 'barefoot's solar', all of us know about the barefoot's solar training school at Konta and they have been there for four to five years in one place and now Government wants to ensure that it is extended to almost all the Districts so they have made provision in the Budget and gradually, they are going to start extending the barefoot's solar project to the other District headquarters especially the regional headquarter towns because Government wants to ensure that the rural electrification is active and we can only do that if we can provide more of the trained staff especially in the solar engineering to help out and they are talking about illiterate or semi-illiterate; some people did not even darken the doors of schools; these are the people they are going to train and almost **100%** are women because this Government is catering for women *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, one thing I want to draw to the attention of Madam Minister is that we are still having problem with Limkokwing University. You know that Government is continuity, in as much as our predecessors went into some unrealistic agreement with the Limkokwing University, but when we came to power you all will agree with me that we have looked at the contract, we know where the flaws were, we have decided to correct the flaws but that notwithstanding, the students who are supposed to graduate have been out there for almost one academic year and up till now they could not because their fees have not been paid *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, we are talking about **33Bln** arrears *[Undertone]* it is non-political; we are talking about **33Bln** arrears, so when Government came they were magnanimous a bit to pay some amount of those arrears. Mr Speaker, I want to implore the Minister on behalf of the students out there to ensure that the Ministry foot the bill even if pay so portions of the bill I believe it would be of help to the students so that they will go back to University to

complete their courses so that they would graduate from the University and we will then follow our own normal system of grant-in-aid.

**THE SPEAKER:** And on that note?

**HON. FESTUS M. LANSANA:** And on that note, I want to conclude my debate by appealing to the Government, taking from the bite of my learned Leader who also happens to be my very good student in the University who is the Leader of Coalition for Change [C4C] for you to also consider the Tongo, the Mano Junction and Kono road, I know he wanted to mentioned that but time was not on his favour. Mr Speaker, the Mano Junction and Kono road via Bumpah is also a very important road because if you look at the cost benefit analyses and whenever you want to do roads you should take into consideration the cost benefit analyses, either it is linking to market or it has other minerals or other resources that you can tap that will be very beneficial to the Government and I am sure the Mano Junction via Tongo to Kono road is very viable in terms of minerals and also other resources and it can also linked the Kono and the Kenema District together and those two markets can integrate. Mr Speaker, all of us know what market integration means, so I do not want to delve into that too much.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, lastly, my learned colleague from Western Area via Koya was talking about disabilities not catered for. Mr Speaker, page 29 paragraph 1, 2 and 3; with your leave I read; **“Through the National Commission for Social Action, the Government in collaboration with partners to provide cash transfers to seventy three thousand extremely poor vulnerable households including persons living with disability ‘PWDs’. Furthermore, micro-grants and production skills development will be provided for five thousand persons with disability including albinos, household heads of refugees, vulnerable communities etc.”** that is just from the NaCSA side. If you also look at the Budget, the Annex, Government is providing apart from what NaCSA is providing, NaCSA might get it from the donors, but Government has allocated in the Budget in Annex 4, line 305 **Le1,755Bln** to persons with disability. So on that note, I want to crave your

indulgence for us to know that this Budget is really realistic and for all of us to accept and approve it. I thank you very much *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. Let me first of all make an appeal and an apology combine. I apologise to all Honourable Members who were not able to catch my eyes on this occasion. In consultation with the leadership of the two parties, it is being agreed that next year we will....

**HON. JAMES O. THOLLEY:** Mr Speaker, with your wish we can catch your eyes.

**HON. ABU KEMOKAI:** And we can reduce the time to two minute.

**THE SPEAKER:** No! You are not respecting the time this is the point *[Undertone]* no matter what I do you are not respecting the time.

**HON. ABU KEMOKAI:** We will now respect the time Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** I am sorry.

**HON. JAMES O. THOLLEY:** Mr Speaker, we have suppressed the days allocated for the debate to three, so we should be giving an opportunity to debate.

**HON. ABU KEMOKAI:** Mr Speaker, please give us at least two minutes.

**THE SPEAKER:** I will advise you wait for next year's Budget.

**HON. ABU KEMOKAI:** Mr Speaker, we can summarise within two minutes.

**THE SPEAKER:** I will take only one more speaker.

**HON. ABU KEMOKAI:** Mr Speaker, can I be recognise please?

**THE SPEAKER:** If I had the opportunity I would like to entertain all of you, but unfortunately I do not.

**HON. ABU KEMOKAI:** I would summarise within three minutes.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, on that note *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Wait a minute.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, on that note, let us discourage this suspension of S.Os on the next debate. If it is five days let it be.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, I recognise your plight; I know you want the opportunity to speak, but all of you cannot speak at this time. I will now take one Honourable Member before we conclude the debate and that person is *[Undertone]* Order! The Honourable Member I am going to call is an Honourable who is not one of my favourite, but out of necessity I will give the Honourable the Floor on the understanding that he does not exceed five minutes. I will ensure that the microphone is taking away from him if he attempts to exceed the five minutes. The Honourable Lahai Marah has the Floor for five minutes and not a second more.

**HON. LAHAI MARAH:** Thank you Mr Speaker for giving me the opportunity. Mr Speaker, I am going to surprise you this time around by saying that this particular Budget is a sincere one and Mr Speaker, by also commending the Minister of Finance for presenting an honest Budget *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, in paragraph 7, page 3, the Minister accepted that they have failed because of Covid-19 *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, the Minister said in paragraph 7 that we have contraction in the economy and so they have failed. Mr Speaker, he said that they have failed in revenue mobilisation, they have failed in the exportation of raw materials; they cannot export. Mr Speaker, as a country we are in a bad economic situation. Mr Speaker, the Minister admitted and because of that I want to say the Minister is very much sincere *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, you said that when the Session started that Parliament should not be business as usual. Mr Speaker, if that is the case, Parliament not being business as usual we should not allow any Minister to disrespect this Parliament *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, on that note, I want to prove to you that the Ministry of Finance has disrespected Parliament by expending beyond what was allocated to them. Mr Speaker, I want your attention because this is very much important. Mr Speaker, we cannot continue to allow the Ministry of Finance to continue disrespecting Parliament, we cannot allow the Ministry of Finance to continue abusing the Constitution and so therefore Mr Speaker, the Constitution in Section 111 Sub-Section 3 and Section 112 has been abused by the

Ministry of Finance. Mr Speaker, in this Budget, you have three years; you have the actual, another half actual, I call it half actual because it has not been completed this 2020 and then you have the 2021 Budget. Mr Speaker, the one that we have the authority to analysis is the 2019 Budget. Mr Speaker, during the 2019 Appropriation Act for example the Ministry of Political Affairs under heading number 105 we gave them **Le2.12Bln** and Mr Speaker, they expended **Le5.4Bln**. Mr Speaker, the Office of the Chief Minister expended beyond what was given to them. Mr Speaker, again, the Minister of Local Government expended beyond what was given to them. Above all Mr Speaker, we gave the Office of the President **Le31.8Bln** and they ended up spending **Le78.5Bln**. Mr Speaker, in the 2019 appropriation Act we approved *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, are you taking those figures from the document in front of us?

**HON. LAHAI MARAH:** Sure Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Would you kindly refer to the page?

**HON. LAHAI MARAH:** Yes Mr Speaker.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Speaker, to shorten the matter let him go to the Public Financial Management Act; there is contingency expenditure to the President.

**HON. LAHAI MARAH:** Mr Speaker, I am not talking of contingency expenditure.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** No! Go there.

**HON. LAHAI MARAH:** Mr Speaker, I am kindly referring to what was approved in this Well. Mr Speaker, we approved **Le31.8Bln** to the Office of the President and they ended up spending **Le78.5Bln**. Mr Speaker, that is an affront to the dignity of Parliament, that is a contempt of Parliament and Mr Speaker, you said earlier that this Parliament should not be business as usual and if this Parliament is not going to be business as usual, we should hold the Ministry of Finance responsible by not allowing this Budget to go on today, but for them to be investigated *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, the Ministry of Finance was given **Le58Bln** and they ended up spending **Le64Bln**. Mr



Speaker, the Financial Secretary was given **Le17Bln** and he ended up spending **Le39Bln**. Mr Speaker, I am on a record today and if you read the Constitution of Sierra Leone in Section 111 Sub-Section 3 and Section 112 and Mr Speaker, I will read it for the attention of the general public. Mr Speaker, Section 111 Sub-Section 3 state that **"No money shall be redrawn from the consolidated funds except by authority of Parliament"** and Mr Speaker, if the Ministry went ahead expending monies that were not allocated to them that is an abuse of the Constitution *[Applause]*.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Speaker Point of Order!

**THE SPEAKER:** Yes!

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** I refer the Honourable Member to the Public Financial Management Act 2016 that was passed by their Administration of this House to Section 39 Sub-Section 1 *[Undertone]* no, **"the State Budget may include an unallocated head of expenditure to set aside the Consolidated Fund to meet an unspecified need or purpose."** Mr Speaker, there was a reason why they did that, they are aware of the provision in the Constitution. This very Act gave the Minister of Finance to do this expenditure, now there is another *[Undertone]* let me come, I have not finished yet. Mr Speaker, let us not talk against our Act, let us talk to the Bill. Section 361 pursuant to Section 116 of the Constitution, **"the Minister shall establish a contingency fund, the amount of which shall not exceed at any time 2% of the non EIR presented in the main estimate of the present financial year."** Mr Speaker, it means he have given us figures for example **Le5Bln** or **Le2Bln**, you need to put it in percentage terms if we have exceeded the percentage giving in the Public Financial Management Act that is what you are presenting.

**HON. LAHAI MARAH:** Thank you very much My Leader. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to put it to the Honourable Leader that in the Budget we have figures for contingency fund and Mr Speaker, what is more frustrating in 2019, we did not allocate any money from miscellaneous and in 2019 they expended huge money on miscellaneous which we did not give them *[Applause]*.

**HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA:** Mr Speaker, Point of Order.

**THE SPEAKER:** Okay hold it there. What is your Point of Order?

**HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA:** Mr Speaker, the Honourable Member from Koinadugu is deviating. We are looking at Budget proposal for 2020 and he is talking about 2019 *[Undertone]* I am coming, no; it is very wrong. Mr Speaker, what we have before us here is Budget proposal for the year 2021. If he feels so strongly about Institutions using monies that were not approved, I think that will be dealt with probably in various Committees; there is the Finance Committee and there is the Transparency Committee. This is not the place where you will begin to say that people have expended money more than it was approved, let us deal with the Budget before us. Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

**HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH:** Mr Speaker, I rise on a Point of Order.

**THE SPEAKER:** Yes!

**HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH:** Mr Speaker, we have agreed to make progress. You cannot debate without making comparative analysis. I agree with the Leader, what we should be talking about is facts and if he believes he is speaking on facts, there is nothing stopping him from making comparative analysis; nothing absolutely.

**HON. LAHAI MARAH:** Mr Speaker, I am debating on the 2020 Budget that is for 2021. Mr Speaker, in that Budget, you have three years; you have the 2019, 2020 and 2021 *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, in the 2019, these are actuals that are included in this particular Budget and that is what I am debating to. Mr Speaker, all what I am stating here are correct, I am ready to give evidences and I am ready to give you the figures. Mr Speaker, you can have the 2019 Budget then we compare the 2019 Budget to that of this particular Budget wherein you have actuals. Mr Speaker, I want to submit again that in this budgetary profile, please Mr Speaker, note this particular statement, a figure for 134 has been omitted that is for National Electoral Commission [NEC]; it is not within the Budget profile. Mr Speaker, we cannot continue with an incomplete Budget

and I want to submit that this Budget is an incomplete Budget because the profile does not capture for NEC.

**HON. WUYATTA B. SONGA:** Mr Speaker, the Honourable Member has debated more than ten minutes and some of us would like to debate as well *[Undertone]* it is unfair in this Well that we cannot debate.

**HON. LAHAI MARAH:** Mr Speaker, let me therefore submit.

**THE SPEAKER:** No, I will not allow you now. You have exceeded your time.

**HON. LAHAI MARAH:** Mr Speaker, let me therefore submit.

**THE SPEAKER:** You have exceeded your time.

**HON. LAHAI MARAH:** Mr Speaker, let me there for submit that Section 111 Sub-Section 2 *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, you have exceeded your time.

**HON. WUYATTA B. SONGA:** Thank you Mr Speaker.

**HON. LAHAI MARAH:** Mr Speaker, Section 111 Sub-Section 2 *[Undertone]* Mr Speaker, I also want to submit that the Ministry of Finance have committed contempt of Parliament and Mr Speaker, I also want to make it clear that *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Lahai Marah, take your seat. The next time I receive any representations about you, I will really give it the serious consideration it deserves. I am sorry to say this.

**HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO:** The fact that Honourable Lahai Marah is an elected Member of this Parliament. Thank you Sir.

**THE SPEAKER:** The debate continues. I will now recognise the Leader of the Opposition *[Undertone]* we are winding up the debate.

**HON. WUYATTA B. SONGA:** Mr Speaker, I believe this is unfair for this whole debate because a single female did not speak neither from the Opposition side or this side of the aisle *[Undertone]* we did not have a single female for this debate; it is unfair. Mr

Speaker, we are sent here by our people to represent them. We would have to add our voice to the debate.

**HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, any further suspension of the S.Os from five to three days will be resisted *[Undertone]* these are some of the problems.

**HON. DR KANDEH K. YUMKELLA:** Mr Speaker, I move that we add one more day to the debate. Any seconder *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** No, Honourable Member from Kambia. I think we have arrived at a convenient point to take a break for lunch for one hour, we shall resume at 2.30p.m and when we resume we would be winding-up the debate. The Leader of the Opposition would be my first speaker and followed by the Leader of Government Business.

*[The House was adjourned for lunch at 1:30p.m]*

*[The House resumed at 2:45p.m]*

**THE SPEAKER:** Before we resume the debate Honourable Members, I have an announcement to make. You will all recall that we reported to you some time ago that we had a very honoured guest from the Parliament of France who paid us a visit and I was privileged after the courtesy call paid to me to accompany him to His Excellency the President where we had very fruitful discussions all leading towards the possibility of reopening or re-establishing diplomatic missions between our two countries; France and Sierra Leone. On the side of the French National Assembly, they have already constituted a Franco-Sierra Leone Parliamentary Friendship Caucus working towards that end as well as working towards improving and strengthening relations between our two countries. In return, we gave an undertaking to establish a similar caucus in our Parliament. To that end, we have established a Sierra Leone-France Parliamentary Friendship Caucus that will consist of the following Members:

➤ Hon. Ibrahim Ben Kargbo	Chairman
➤ Hon. Dickson M. Rogers	Deputy Chairman
➤ Hon. Nenneh Lebbie	Member
➤ Hon. Festus M. Lansana	Member
➤ Hon. Alpha Foday Madie Jabbie	Member
➤ Hon. Francis A. Kaisamba	Member
➤ Hon. Foday Mario Conteh	Member
➤ Hon. Abdul Titus Kamara	Member
➤ Hon. Emerson S. Lamina	Member
➤ Hon. Emilia Lolloh Tongi	Member
➤ Hon. Hassan A. Sesay	Member
➤ Hon. Daniel B. Koroma	Member
➤ Hon. Cecilia Mabinty Bangura	Member
➤ Hon. Haja Miatta Amara	Member
➤ Hon. P.C. Bai Shebora Sehba Gbreh III	Member

That is the composition of our own caucus *[Applause]*. Could somebody please move?

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** I move that the list pronounced by Mr Speaker be adopted by the House.

**THE SPEAKER:** Any seconder?

**HON. ISHMAIL S. SANDY:** Mr Speaker, I so second

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]*

**THE SPEAKER:** We shall now continue the debate and I would like to take this opportunity to start the winding up of the debate by inviting the Leader of the Opposition to take the Floor.

**HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank you very much for the opportunity and also ask that you protect my back from Honourable Abdul Latif Sesay otherwise, my submission would be greatly disrupted. Honourable Abdul Latif Sesay, I hope I am protected

*[Undertone]* thank you *[Laughter]*. Mr Speaker, I want to thank the Deputy Minister from the Ministry of Finance for always making herself available in facing Parliament. We all know that facing Parliament is not an easy task; Ministers do not like this House not because they do not like us as people, but because the House itself is very intimidating *[Applause]*. So the Minister has been brave in it all these years, it shows the confidence she has in herself and the fact that she believes in listening and attending to issues as and when they arise; whether they are criticism or not,. So Madam Minister, we want to thank you very much for that *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Honourable Mohamed Festus Lansana is not here, but I specifically paid tribute to him when we were discussing the Finance Bill; I am sure you joined in that as well. Again, today he is not here, but he was very calm but as always very detailed. He cleverly acknowledged a lot of things his student spoke about, but also came up with alternatives. So that is also confirming that this House as we have said over and over, we are neither perfect nor excellent, but we have people in this House that could be of use to the Administration of the State. That is why when we make statements, we should not be looked at as people who are against the Executive or other branches of Government. We are here to compliment the efforts of Government; we would never be perfect Mr Speaker, but whenever we speak and there are sense in it please those to whom issues are addressed to should be patient enough to look at those issues and see if there is sense for them to accommodate them in their day-to-day activities. Mr Speaker, a lot has been said even though many more Members of Parliament want to speak, but the issues; be whether it is agriculture or land *[Undertone]* the Honourable Member from Koribondo, I would be speaking for him so do not mind them *[Laughter]* you would have more opportunity so do not worry. We apologise for cutting the days short, we do not want to blame ourselves, but we have pleaded with the Ministry of Finance to assist us; we know it is at times challenging putting these documents together, but for next year, let them do their best in ensuring that they come earlier than now so that we would have a lot of time to play with; so we are kindly pleading with you Honourable Members *[Undertone]* thank you. Honourable

Abdul Latif Sesay, I hope you heard me loud and clear. Mr Speaker, as I was saying, whether it is in education or agriculture, infrastructure or the judiciary, a lot has been said; so our duties as Leaders definitely we would be expected to bring in one or two new things if we have them, but also for the Leader of Government Business even before the Minister, he is expected to spend a lot of time clarifying a lot of issues; that is expected of him. I would not follow that line because that is not my responsibility; my responsibility is to create more chaos *[Laughter]* not for you today so do not worry.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on infrastructure, some of us said during the last debate on the Presidential Address that we have heard a lot from that side reminding us about expensive roads or other expensive infrastructural projects. Mr Speaker, we have said it and I will repeat that again today, probably with recent examples as well because we are still asking for the new roads that are under construction. We agreed that you want to build roads with cheaper cost, but saying it and doing it might not be the same. So that brings me to the new terminal proposed for Lungi. Since we are dealing with the Budget Mr Speaker, it is important that we discuss this. I heard the *[Undertone]* I am not talking about defence so please wait for now. Mr Speaker, we heard the man in charge of infrastructure in the Office of the President over the media few weeks ago making us believe that the relevant agreement will eventually come to Parliament even though it would be coming if at all after the sod had been turned, but Mr Speaker, that is not my area of interest as I said we are dealing with the Budget. Mr Speaker, the challenge with Lungi has little or nothing to do with a new terminal. The challenge with Lungi is access *[Undertone]* is it 3 o'clock? Sorry sir.

*Suspension of S.O 5[2]*

**THE SPEAKER:** You may continue Leader of the Opposition.

**HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH:** Thank you Mr Speaker. So as I was saying Mr Speaker, my interest on the Lungi Terminal Project has nothing much to do with anything outside that of the Budget. The challenge with Lungi is access as I said earlier, so even if we have the best terminal in the world, access would still be a challenge *[Undertone]* Honourable Member, I know you do not have the opportunity to speak, but please next

time you will *[Laughter]*. Mr Speaker, the current terminal we have at the Lungi Airport is underutilised *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the terminal we have currently under operation is underutilised; so what we should do is to look for an airport that would be accessible more so when the cost; we agree it is not a loan, but it is also not a grant *[Applause]*. So definitely, there are going to be financial implications to the State; whether it is going to be by way of duty waivers on materials, severally other compounding financial burdens *[Undertone]* that is also a challenge. As at present, we are receiving moneys from the Airport, but with that investment until we see the agreement Madam Minister. Normally, I am not an Accountant, but they have something they refer to as IAS37 for you the experts, 'contingent liability' that itself is a burden and our Constitution is very clear in Section 110, 'whenever we enter into an agreement that has financial burden, this Parliament must give its nod.' So before we talk about construction, we should first get clearance from this House *[Applause]*. We cannot spend very close to **\$300Mln** by way of investment *[Undertone]* that is it, it is a BOT, but there is definitely a financial burden, there is no free BOT Mr Speaker. I do not want to go into the other details; I want to focus on the implication it is going to get on the Budget. The revenue we are getting from the airport now, if that happens definitely it is going to dwindle on the side of Government because the investors; its build, operate and then you transfer *[Undertone]* we can build as a Government. So Mr Speaker, it is an area this House should look into because we want to help Government to succeed, you were here when all of us supported the Finance Bill because we are still waiting for the President to sign it, I do not want to venture in saying the Finance Act, but you were here. Mr Speaker, with your permission, I want to refer this House to page 23, paragraph 96; the area on Infrastructure, but not to waste up the time of the House, I will just refer colleagues there Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Agriculture, again, we have gone slightly below what is required of us from the Maputo Protocol, but again, when we discussed the Presidential Address the last time we applauded the current Minister even though he is not on desk on the effort he has made so far since assuming office. We hope that he



would come back very soon because he has been doing a very good job in the Ministry even though the players he was working with are still in the Ministry, but his leadership was confirmed by His Excellency's statement that he was delivering and Members of this House also acknowledged the changes he brought to the Ministry when he took over. So we hope that those that are occupying the office for now or that are acting would follow because we cannot joke with agriculture, it is not something we would play with, Government is putting a lot of money; even though as I said, we are yet again to reach the **10%** but with what is going in we need to focus greatly on the Ministry of Agriculture. We are talking about the women folks, over **70%** of those engaged in farming are women, so it is one way we can protect them. Fertilisers have been provided; other farming machinery and inputs as well as seedlings have been provided but if they are not monitored well or they do not reach the targeted beneficiaries, it would be moneys going down the drain and I am sure that is not what the Ministry is looking forward to nor the Government to a larger extent. We have been told by the Ministry of Agriculture that there has been increase in rice production; those from Samu are raising their shoulders high in this Chamber as part of the contributors to the increase in rice production. So again, this is probably for the Chair of the Committee on Trade and Industry she is just walking in, she is also a strong woman that is supporting women. Value addition; let us support our farmers to add value to the rice they grow so that it would be our first call before we go for imported rice because then we know what we are eating. Mr Speaker, value addition is necessary; if we spend so much money in Agriculture supporting the farmers and value is not added we would just be wasting our resources again; let us make our farming products attractive to the markets *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, as I said I would not be going into detail on most of these issues because they have been discussed.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move on to education. Mr Speaker, schools of thought would never be the same, but we still believe that the change from 6-3-4-4 to the 6-3-3-4 system has affected the results this time round greatly and I would tell you why *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we were one of the last of the

WAEC countries to implement this system of education, I am sure you remember during the days of the National Provisional Ruling Council [NPRC], we were one of the last, the 6-3-3-4-system but then, after a professional investigation by academics and technocrats who are in the educational sector, Government then was advised to add one more year to the school and that was added and there were differences in the results. In Ghana, they are still practicing the 6-3-4-4 system that is why their results are better than us, but we have moved away so like the Leader of the NGC was alluding *[Undertone]* Mr Speaker, the system that they met in 2018 was 6-3-4-4; six years primary, three years Junior Secondary, four years Senior Secondary and four years at the University. When I was in school, I spent seven years in Secondary school, five years from 1 to 5 and then did two years in sixth form and the difference showed when we went to the University; some of us were critics to this system *[Undertone]* no, it was not just optional. Mr Speaker, the option then under our system, there is no way you will go to the University with the General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level [GCE O'level] and go to first year; first, you will go to preliminary and not first year *[Applause]*. That was why some of us were not in support of the change, but then under the NPRC they thought it wise and we accepted it, but when we identified the challenge again, we decided to add one year and the value showed, but now what has happened Mr Speaker, these results we saw this year is the first test of the change in system because you prepared at least two years for those public examinations at least two years; that is why this is the first test of the new system and the system has shown its failure so soon *[Applause]*. This is the first test *[Undertone]* Madam listen, this is not political. Mr Speaker, at this point I can sit and I am satisfied. We cannot politicise education; all of us are in support *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Members, it does not matter whether any of us has been through the crucible of tertiary education or not, what does matter is we have agreed yesterday or a day before when this matter came to the Floor that we should not politicise this issue *[Applause]*. We graduated it and we elevated it to the level of a national concern to the extent that we also agreed that at an opportune moment

*[Undertone]* order! We also agreed that at an opportune moment, this House will invite the Minister of Basic Education to come and have a conversation with us on this crucial issue focussing particularly on the results of WASCE this year and the factors that contributed to the abysmal performance of our pupils. I can easily identify with what the Leader of the Opposition is saying; I am sure Ibrahim Ben Kargbo will too. In our days, we had to spend two years in form six; Lower Six and Upper Six *[Applause]*. It is only a few exceptions that spent one year traversing lower and upper because we felt we were wasting time *[Undertone]* true. Some of us spent only a year in those days at the St. Edwards School and went for the A'levels, but times have changed so let us please pay heed to what the Honourable Member is saying. This is a crucial national issue let us not politicise it and let us listen attentively to what each and every person is saying on this matter. We have not come to any definitive conclusion on it, whilst we await the arrival of the Supervising Minister. I have already on your behalf spoken to the Minister myself and he is more than agreeable to coming to the House to have this conversation that we have asked for. So please continue *[Applause]*.

**HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I will give you the reassurance that I will not, I do not know about the others, I repeat; politicise education because I believe that the gold we have even though people are saying today that when we were told that 'learning is better than silver and gold' we were doubtful, but some of us still believe that because with education our resources would be meaningful. The greatest resource we could have as a nation is our human resource; when we have a good human resource we have all the resources *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, we have supported the Government's agenda on the free and quality education and that is why we will not keep quiet until we attain the standard the President is looking forward to *[Applause]*. I will not say much again on Education, I will take the queue from you; we will be expecting the Minister, we would going to get frank conversations because it is not for me or the Minister seated there or yourself, it is for Sierra Leone and the people of Sierra Leone. Our children are going to school and for the President to declare 'education' as his prime focus it shows the importance and

premium he lays on education so what can be do; rather than to support him, we have to. Mr Speaker, on education, I would just wrap up because I do not want to go into the other things I wanted to talk about any more. On the Limkokwing, I want to join others before me like the Honourable Mohamed Festus Lansana to plead with the President through the Minister to reconsider at least to clean up the backlogs and the arrears *[Interruption]*

**THE SPEAKER:** This is the Well of Parliament *[Undertone]* there are various ways of channelling your handbills without doing what you have just done.

**HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH:** Madam Minister, I am just pleading with you *[Interruption]*.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Honourable Leader, just a minute. That is a passionate plea you made in connection with my colleague from Kenema. I cannot be seated here and looked at you without saying anything; that is a complete undermining the plea that the Leader of the Opposition wanted to make. We should not politicise education at all, whether it was strong yesterday, we cannot do the wrong thing today; what we would do to support the system, to support the children or the students in that particular University, we are here today talking eloquently because we are carefully and well educated; let us spread that message to everybody and to every Sierra Leonean. Mr Speaker, I am sorry for that they did, I hope the Honourable Leader of the Opposition do not take that one as a serious matter; so they were not able to speak before you wrap up so they are frustrated. I plead on their behalf. Thank you *[Applause]*.

**HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH:** Thank you very much. I accepted.

**THE SPEAKER:** I attribute it to youthful exuberance *[Laughter]*.

**HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH:** Mr Speaker, I am sure it is coming from Port Loko District.

**THE SPEAKER:** No *[Undertone]* I can assure you because you cannot see your back.

**HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH:** True Sir.

**THE SPEAKER:** I am in a better place, I have a more vantage position to see; the Honourable Member from Karene District for example did not join them, but I cannot say the same thing for the Honourable Member from Lungi *[Laughter]*.

**HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH:** Mr Speaker you know, the first thing I asked for before I started to speak was for me to be protected from the back, but it seems my back is exposed Mr Speaker

**THE SPEAKER:** The Honourable from Port Loko is worse.

**HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH:** My back is not protected.

**THE SPEAKER:** Now, I am beginning to understand why you specifically....

**HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH:** Because Honourable Abdul Latif Sesay has been threatening me *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** No! Now I understand why you asked Honourable Abdul Latif Sesay.

**HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH:** Yes.

**THE SPEAKER:** Whether your back was well protected *[Laughter]*.

**HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH:** Yes, thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, again, Madam Minister, I was just pleading with the President through your good self and the Ministry like my colleagues before. We know that there might be challenges or there might had been challenges in the past, but for the interest and benefit of the kids, please look into the matter and at least close it once so you clean up and then we move forward; let us do not allow them in the middle *[Applause]*. Madam Minister, a lot of conversation has also gone on the Wage Bill. Some of us believe even though the Minister by way of an undertone from his side said the Wage Bill is natural to increase; that every year there are increases in salaries, percentage increase so naturally the Wage Bill will increase, but what the Minister did not tell us, we now have new Ministries; the Ministry of Development was not there in the past, it was merged with the Ministry of Finance. There was no Ministry of Environment, Social Welfare was

joined with Gender now they have been separated and there have been other new Institutions created, but that is not the challenge *[Applause]*. There are Institutions; MDAs where we had in the past *[Undertone]* Mr Speaker, please control these boys because I need your protection please. They are reminding me about the Forest Guards and they spoke about it already *[Laughter]*. Mr Speaker, I need your protection please. Madam Minister, the other issue here is we hope that the Ministry of Finance *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Let me help you.

**HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH:** Yes Sir!

**THE SPEAKER:** I have received communication from certain quarters that I will be consulted when the time comes for the allocation of symbols and I will be consulted as an impartial neutral figure to give testament to your behaviour and your performance *[Laughter]*.

**HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, as I was saying to Madam Minister on the Wage Bill, I do not want to repeat what I have mentioned already; the new Institutions etc. I accept what the Minister said that partly, but that is just partly Madam Minister, it cannot be holistic. There are certain Institutions I can call them now, but I do not need to, but the Ministry of Finance must be on top in monitoring employment in all of these MDAs because you are in charge of the purse. They are Institutions when by 2018 they had two hundred employees now they have over five or six hundred; where they underemployed in the Institution or are they creating jobs for the boys and girls? Because those things will cause a burden on the Budget and Government also needs money for infrastructural development. We were used in the last ten years to fund road construction partly with local funds, but that is not happening now because we are challenged and there is a strain on the purse so make sure you do audit on these Institutions to ensure that the recruitment they are undertaking are not just the numbers they want, but they are relevant and needed by the Institutions; it is very important *[Applause]*. The Leader of the C4C talked on the mining industry, so I would not say more, but I want to agree with him; all he said I

agree with him on records without going beyond *[Undertone]* no, but you know he is your coach co-leader *[Laughter]*. Mr Speaker, we have been encouraged by the Leader of Government Business for the Committees that would be dealing with the Sub-Appropriation Committees to do a thorough jobs. The Leader of Government Business has encouraged the Chairman of the Committee on Finance to ensure that whoever that is going to Chair those Committees that Chairman and Members must make sure they do a thorough job otherwise, we will not blame the Ministries, we would blame ourselves; and we do not want to blame the Ministry for something that we should be doing *[Applause]*. So Mr Chairman, our eyes are on you and your team.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, again, 'Revenue Mobilisation', a lot has been said on revenue mobilisation, we assure you that we will do our part in ensuring that the required revenue is been mobilised, but going back to the decentralisation the Leader of the C4C and others spoke about, I think it was the Chairman. The Councils must enjoy the benefit of their act, if they cannot raise revenue, they cannot mobilise revenue then Government will just be taking from the central fund and sending it to them when they have the capacity to raise revenue within *[Applause]*. It is the local revenue mobilisation that should be an incentive for Government to continue supporting some of these Councils. The Councils were not created to serve as a burden to Central Government, they should be a cushion, well I do not know whether it is because of the way the Executive has been dealing with Local Councils since the year 2004 because I am not a Local Government expert, but definitely, we need to give room and space to Councils to make sure that they raise revenue to the best extent they could without causing hardship. I still remember in this year, there has been a lot of to and fro between the Freetown City Council and the Ministry of Local Government. I am sure when it is good they should collaborate and work together. We do not like to pay tax; no citizen like to pay tax, we are not going to hide that, but we have to pay taxes; taxation is not something palatable, we want to have a better city. I still remember the days of Wusu Sannoh when he was Mayor of Bo, he did a fantastic job because he has space and up to date I always mentioned his name whenever I talks about Local Governance

Administration. He did very well in Bo and I am sure the Honourable Saa Emerson Lamina knows that *[Laughter]*. He brought in a lot of innovations and those innovative ideas he brought forward were supported and Bo by then was envy until other cities started copying what he was doing. So again, when we have good ideas let us bring them on board, they might not be a **100%** let us take what is good and leave the rest, but we must make sure that we give space to those Councils to mobilise revenue otherwise, we will be causing more burden on Central Government; we want to support the Budget *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, an Honourable Member spoke on the two Commercial Banks; the National Grand Coalition [NGC] Leader spoke about this morning so I will not go there, but then the child was not just born today, the child was born yesterday that is all I will say *[Applause]*. The COI came out with it, Momodu Kargbo had to answer questions on that because NASSIT and others gave a bail-out and it was official so the Banks are now making profit and they are paying back *[Undertone]* no not Zenith Bank, but Sierra Leone Commercial Bank and Rokel Commercial Bank; not your Bank where I keep some money in your constituency *[Laughter]*. Mr Speaker, I have some money in his Bank so make sure my money is safe *[Undertone]* anyway, it is not up to your salary so if it is not you will give me back *[Laughter]*. Mr Speaker, we were reminded on the target of Madam Minister that is **9.2Tln**, it is huge, but it is achievable but maybe when you are responding you will also tell us so the public will not think that if you do not meet your target of **9.2Tln** then they are expecting you to spend something in addition to the **9.2Tln** next year because this year you had a target on your last year's Budget for this year and I am sure what we heard it was confirmed that they were unable to meet their target, but not their fault, it is because of Covid-19 so these things should come out. So again, at least the public should know Mr Tassima Jah who is the Director of Budget in the Ministry of Finance, he should assist the Ministry as Director of Budget, we need to hear his voice *[Laughter]* because the Honourable Matthew Sahr Nyuma always enjoys quoting popular reggae musicians because he always believes in it **"he who feels it knows**



it.” Mr Speaker, that is why I would want to remind those in charge of our Budget that we should not do it the ‘Buju-Banton’ way who once said that **“the politicians will always tell you that the economy is getting better, but man still suffer”** *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, so we should not tell the people that the economy is getting better when bread and butter is not on the table; it must be translated to bread and butter. Mr Speaker, the Budget definitely is a good one on paper and we would support the Ministry to make it a good one in reality, but we have to follow up and Mr Speaker, we want them to know that we have the Chairman who is in charge of the Committee on Finance and I am pleading to them not to shut their doors on him because when we are challenged, we will ask him to explain here and he will not give us any excuse because we would be monitoring the implementation of this Budget and the Chairman must be on top. So Tassima Jah, when you see the Chairman in your office, he is not going there to ask you for anything personal, but it is because this House would be expecting him to follow the implementation of this Budget because when we are challenged, we would face him. As I said, there are many things in this document, but they have been talked on *[Undertone]* no, I do not want to hear his undertone because his undertone is too much, but a lot of things have been discussed and I am sure you would be responding to the best of your ability when the time comes. There are many things I could talk on, but I do not like repeating others. Mr Speaker, again before I sit, I want to commend the Minister and again apologise to the Members of Parliament who have not been able to make their submissions, but assured them that the Budget is an annual document; Bills will be coming, Agreement will come *[Undertone]* no Mr Leader, not just the Appropriation; during the course of 2021 Bills will come, Agreement will come, different documents will come to this House, the President will be delivering his Address next year, we would tie this document to his address so do not feel defeated, there is always time for you to talk *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** And the debate will be televised *[Laughter]* do not leave that behind.

**HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH:** I know, we have agreed on that. Mr Speaker, we need also to make it very clear that Mr Speaker was not in support of the three days since

the inception, but again, he had no choice then but to endorse that is why we have pleaded with Ministry of Finance *[Undertone]* Honourable Abdul Latif Sesay is charged. That was why we pleaded with the Ministry of Finance; we are pleading again today, *[Undertone]* no kemokai, you know when I say something it happens. Mr Speaker, that is why I and the Leader of Government Business have pleaded with the Ministry of Finance to do their best in ensuring that next year God willing the Budget comes to this House earlier than they did so that we will have enough time to play with. Normally, this House, whenever we are going to December, it is always like this so by extension the Leader of Government Business will tell his Ministers to be bringing their documents earlier because next time we will not interfere with the Budget when debate is going on.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Noted sir!

**HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH:** Thank you very much sir and on that note Mr Speaker, I thank you *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Leader of the Opposition for his contribution to the debate and more especially for avoiding repeating what previous speakers had said before him. Now is the turn of the Leader of Government Business and he has assured me he is going to be very brief this time.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Speaker, well, I do not know if I can assure you that I am going to be brief, but I will try to do so that we can go and do other business. Thank you very much Leader of Opposition for giving us your own side of the Budget story and bringing out issues that are very pertinent to the progress of Sierra Leone. Madam Minister, thank you for coming and thank you for being with us since this morning and since we started on Monday. Again, we moved the motion to shorten the debate using the provisions in the Standing Orders, I think we disadvantaged our colleagues; I join the Leader of the Opposition to apologise. Next time the Honourable Abdul Latif Sesay, it will be as long as you would like it, we will give you one hour to talk *[Laughter]*. Budget debate is a process, there is going to be agreement and other

agreements to come to support the Budget, but let me now start looking at the Budget proper.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you can only talk about revenue mobilisation, talking about what the Honourable Leader said that they support the Budget, but the implementation; how are you going to implement the Budget? Is by cash, how much domestic revenues have you mobilised with the external revenues you get from donors? That is very key, so we listed a whole lot of things in the present Finance Act, we are talking about revenue mobilisation and in the projection made by the Ministry of Finance for the year 2023, they said: they hope to hit a target of **20%** of domestic revenue mobilisation and in the Fiscal Strategy Statement [FSS] for 2021 to 2023, we summarised that one because you said if you want this Budget to work you have to look at the revenue mobilisation so how are you going to help do the revenue mobilisation? It has to do with the Finance Act we passed; we gave tax-waivers, but we levied charges on certain entities; those variables that would help us woe the Budget process or the Budget implementation which the Honourable Leader was talking about, we have to be very serious about that one, we should not take our Budget and put it on donors, let us drive our Budget to certain limit by mobilising domestic revenue so I support you on the revenue mobilisation from the Local Councils that we need to see how best you can co-operate *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, in that light, in 2017, we see a steady increase in the revenue mobilisation of GDP; in 2017 it was **12.3%** of GDP and in 2018 it was **13.7%** of GDP and in 2019 it was **14.8%** of GDP, it is very clear, but Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as I said we need to face the present reality, what is the present reality? This Budget has gone through it, they have elucidated on it by talking about the Covid-19 pandemic; so in this strategy paper we have to very honest and realistic; they said the projection they made if there is going to be this pandemic for some time, the domestic revenue will clutch down to **13.0%** of GDP that is a big crisis for us. If we have started increasing our domestic revenue and projection is going towards **20%** of GDP in 2023 and just around the corner we see a U-turn getting down to **13.0%** is a point of concern Madam Minister, it is a reality because that is

happening all over world, that starts because of the pandemic; that is a realistic statement.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when they started, they gave us one hundred and fifty nine commitments in the 2019 Budget and what happen in that commitment we were able to do one hundred and twelve [*Undertone*] check page 1, just go to the bottom page. Mr Speaker, a hundred and twelve is a very good commitment because what you do? You look at your passing mark, if I have given commitment to this Honourable House because you read the Budget here and you are now reported that you only did one hundred and twelve of that commitment that is a kudos to you and in the same 2019, there was a Supplementary Budget, 2020 was Supplementary Budget and you said you made another commitment which is twenty eight commitments [*Undertone*] thank you very much; he read so much and he was not able to speak so he is giving me the support from my back [*Laughter*]. Mr Speaker, the reason why I am bringing out this is because I want to be very honest with the Budget. Mr Speaker, as I progress in trying to give out the analysis of the Budget you will see why I am bringing out all these indicators; as Honourable Leader said, I have to explain so we can understand. I have said here that this place is not a platform wherein you will just come, give us document and we concord; we have to look at it irrespective of the side of the aisle we belong. I respect the view of my colleagues from either side of the aisle. Mr Speaker, twenty eight commitments was given to us and twenty five of that was achieved. They did not achieve all, but most or some of them are in the progress to achieve with the date given to us; that is why it is spelt out in page 1 that one hundred and twelve some achieved, twenty eight and twenty five yet to be achieved within record time, all of them he gave record time for them; thank you very much. That is to say, if you check the statistics for the 2020 Supplementary Budget, it is **89%** achieved that is what is in the Budget, but Mr Speaker, that is really good, that shows we have some amount of fiscal decency, but what you said are achievable at certain levels. Mr Speaker, as Sierra Leoneans let us take a look at the Covid-19 pandemic. Mr Speaker, when we heard about the pandemic, any responsible administration would bring in

measures to mitigate the pandemic not to reverse development and other human capital things that we have put in place for the good of the nation. Mr Speaker, I said it today when the Spokesman came to present the development so far; Mr Speaker, I want to say thank you to all of the Members in House that we were able to give the latitude to His Excellency the President so that we can get what we call 'the State of Emergency' so we can operate. So what you did for us to mitigate some of this problems we have; you started with what we call 'the quick action economic response programs' that is very key and it helped us a lot and as I move along you will see the progress why they brought in the 'quick pad'. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you go to page 2, I will not intend to read all of them, but just for the edification of the public, I will refer to them as I move along. The Quick Action Economic Recovery program on page 2 under Paragraph 4, I read bullet 3; **"Government has designed the National Micro-Finance program which they called 'Munafa' and nationwide consultations with relevant stakeholders to have been completed. Requests for expression for interest to financial services providers have the issues and the necessary administrative arrangements are being put in place, we hope to start providing credit for this fund in 2021."** 4<sup>th</sup> bullets **"in addition, Government provided safety nets support to two thousand three hundred and sixty eight workers in the tourism and hospitality industry, where each worker received Le1,800Mln"**; you can look at them over and over because there are lot of bullet points that under the quick action *[Undertone]* yes, they are all from the recovery programs, but the other one that is very important in page 3, bullet 5 under paragraph 5, **"provided Life Insurance Policy for Eleven thousand and thirty-nine healthcare workers engaged in the fight against Covid-19."** Mr Speaker, I do not want to bore you with all of them, there is a tax relaxation under NRA in terms of fuel, rice and I will read that deliberately; **"the National Revenue Authority differ taxes due for the importation of essential commodities especially for rice, fuel and other basic food stuffs as at the end of August 2020, an amount of Le86.9Bln has been deferred."**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is good for us to give recommendation and to say thank you for doing that; it has to do with the ordinary men and women, it has to do with the front-line workers, has to do with the rapid response program, how do we mitigate so that our gains in the previous year's cannot be water-down because of Covid-19 that is what we say the quick response program, but let us look at the global trend which is in page 11. Mr Speaker, we expect the global trend to contract for the projection they did which the document; I refer you to page 4, the global trend, you will realise that **4.4%** projected will be contracted of the GDP that is the effect we are talking about and we are going to compare our own economy to the Sub-Sahara Africa; why do we need to do that? Because what we have done is that we are going to see if there is going to be an upward trend in line with the quick pad or a downward trend in line with the quick pad. When we talk about the macro-economic and budgetary performance; we would come to that very soon, but for now, we are looking at how do we compare the sub-region and in the sub-region, it is very interesting; they projected to contract the GDP, to contract by **3.0%** but what has happened, it is very interesting and in paragraph 11 of page 4, they said in the recovery there will be a change in increment to **3.1%**, but let us rollout those ones constant for the sake of argument; Mr Speaker, let us go now to forward our argument under the Macro-economic and Budgetary Performance 2020, we want to see what you have given us in the aspect of the recovery program; in the Quick Action Program if you have any effect of what you have done that is an assessment. Page 14, the Macro and Budgetary Performance in 2020, you projected to have a GDP to be contracted at the rate of **3.1%** that is the projection you made. A very interesting analysis you did, but when you introduced the quick pad to mitigate some these actions so in the process of manufacturing industry, in the process of construction and agriculture, you brought all of these things so that we cannot be affected much by this impact of Covid-19 so it was viewed that this will have impact on the macro aspect of the economy and if you go further you would realise that we achieved something. Mr Speaker, when you went back during the analysis, they were able to see that the contraction rate of GDP reduced to **2.8%** so if you go to paragraph 14, page 5 you will see it very clearly. Based on preliminary data available

for the first half of 2020, the economy is now projected to contract by **2.8%** instead of the **3.8%** so in fact, if you compare that one under the global trend to the Sub-Sahara it means we are better off because that one is **3.0%** and now we are talking about contraction at **2.8%** of GDP. So what you introduced makes some sense and brought in some sanity within the economy. So for the first assessment of the quick pad make sense to us, but let us go and examine the inflation rate. Mr Speaker, the inflation rate is still at double digit which we are still fighting on why do we need to have the inflation rate at single digit. On benchmarks, you need to have single digit inflation rate, but we are faced with a situation where we have little or no alternative to talk about the reality, but there was a downward trend in the inflation rate; from April in the year 2020, it moved from **15.7%** of GDP in September to **12.6%** that is what stated if you go to page 5, paragraph 15, but why the downward trend in the inflation rate? That is the question we ask, it is not because of margin, Mr Speaker, I think Honourable Mustapha Sellu raised it up, but why do we have the downward trend in the inflation rate when we are still at double digit, what happened? The credit facilities were rolled out by Bank of Sierra Leone, but the question I asked, were they monitored properly? But the intention was to make sure that there is availability and affordability of essential commodities in the market that is what we are looking, that is the important aspect of it, but did you monitor Madam Minister because if you go to the Market and in fact, we have to do some realistic check. Mr Speaker, an Honourable Member said that we have to check the economic stability, viz a viz the Government support cum what the price system is in the market *[Applause]*. If you do not do that it will not effect on the people; so we always looked at the effect. Mr Speaker, the Honourable Leader said that it is a good Budget, but the effect on the people is what matters because we can play on the platform the good of the ordinary man so I will explain all of these theories talking about the downward trend of the inflation comparing from this year to the next, but you have to ensure that what the money was given out in terms to facilitate the economy is still working. So in the Finance Act, there is a provision which talk about price control system *[Undertone]* that is clear, our business here is to bring out all the facts, but the business again is to allow your Ministry because we have got impediment

where our Chairman finds it very difficult to access the Ministry at times and to even try to do his oversight function that is realistic; so it is good, but there are challenges. I said we do not want to take the Budget as if it is 'hook line and sinker', we have challenges. Go to paragraph 16 under the macro-economy of the budgetary performance; we had the import rate, the export rate; let me take the export rate. Mr Speaker, there was a big challenge with the export rate. If you check the export rate you will realise that in the half year of 2019, the import rate fell drastically and the same thing happened in 2020 so why would we have the export rate fell and we are at the same level? It is because the export rate fell drastically and we are not exporting our precious minerals that is what is happening; the iron ore, the diamond, gold. In the half part of 2019 and half of 2020, the scenario is the same. So if you come to the export is the same, but in 2019 the export rate is far better than 2020 because it is far worse; that is what we call 'fiscal imbalance' we cannot accommodate that one, that is the big challenge. It is clear, Mr Speaker, and I do not want to bore Members with the readings, but you will realise that there is a complete drop for the import rate in 2020 compared to 2019 and for the export rate it is at the same level so we need to change the narrative.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is another challenge again in page 11; we called it 'trade deficit'. The trade deficit widens; both the later and the former are the same for both 2019 and 2020. The gap widens so if you are talking about trade deficit which is sacred to the economy, we should do something, but let me tell you with the projection you made which I will read; in the same paragraph 17, the second line you said and this is the first time, normally we see the trend in six month, in two month, three month but this one is rapid; **"Despite this, gross international reserves increased to nearly six month of import as at end September, 2020. This is due to the disbursement of budgetary and balance of payment supported by the IMF"**, I want to capture that one; it is not because of anything, it is about the credibility, the increment, because of the budget support from IMF and it is not only IMF, the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the ADB, I think the agreement



was passed in this very House, those support was passed through this very House and the official exchange rate of the Leones to the United States of America dollar remain relatively stable and I want to be very frank, if you will respond to that, what do you mean by 'relatively stable' because we saw a sharp increase from **9Mln** to **1Mln** and a point of reversal so we want know if we are at the same **1Mln** or are we talking about **1Mln** or one thousand and ten to a dollar? So we need to really check the official rate.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let us talk about the external mobilisation which is very key and it is what we call 'donor confidence'. If you do the mathematics around that in line 4, **"Total resources mobilise from International Financial Institutions increased from \$46.3Mln in 2018 to \$438.4Mln in 2019 and \$380.7Mln between January and October, 2020."** Let us take out the January to October *[Undertone]* thank you, it is a progressive achievement to the donors; that is external mobilisation *[Undertone]* let me come, if you take the **\$438Mln** and divide it with the **\$46Mln**, you know what the donor credibility means? It is nearly **9.46**, its nearly ten folds of what we have got compared to 2018, so it is a credible aspect of what you are doing irrespective of the challenges so donors confidence is real, but how do we do this? The bench-mark that you are going to do, 'fiscal discipline'; how you discharge your policies in line with what you are doing *[Applause]*. External source mobilisation is very key; I mentioned the African Development Bank, the European Union and the IMF. Mr Speaker, let me come to a very important one. Mr Speaker, if we want to have some comparative analysis we are now giving projection for 2020, it is good for us to make projection for 2020, but we need to do is to look at the domestic revenue mobilisation and also be realistic because we did the projection for revenue mobilisation that is pre-Covid-19 this early 2020, when you did the projection on domestic revenue for pre-Covid-19 it was **4.7%**, but let me come now to when you revise the domestic revenue mobilisation because we put in place so many factors so what happened? When you revised the domestic revenue mobilisation, we are now talking about budgetary performance in 2020. When you did the revised, you got from January to September, 2020 which amounted to **4.1Tln** *[Undertone]* what you

mobilised from January to September, 2020 that is what we mobilised in terms of domestic revenue; that is **9.9%** of GDP, so you collected **4.1Tln**, **9.9%** of GDP. So when you revised the post-Covid-19; you look at the Covid-19 scenario, looking at the quick pad or of all of what you did we will realise that there is some increment. Now you projected **4Tln** after revision, so the increment you made in revenue collection was **59Bln** and I want to thank you very much. Why am I doing the relative comparison is because pre-Covid-19 we are at low, there was a revenue deficit, but because of the pandemic you did a revise program from January to September **at 4.0Tln** but when you did the collection you got **4.1Tln** and that takes you to **9.95%** of GDP so you did well. So if you keep on the trend irrespective of Covid-19 with the quick pad with other things of what you have done, you can make more and maintain the fiscal discipline, more revenue will be added and I will toe the line with the Leader of the Opposition that we can be able to sponsor our own programs, there are Government priority programs that we carried. Mr Speaker, the domestic revenue mobilisation in the last paragraph, **"domestic revenue is projected to reach 5.37Tln for the year as a whole."** That is on paragraph 23 on the last line of page 6, I do not know if I did the mathematics correctly, but I think it is **13%** to **14%** of GDP and if you look at all the factors that we carried [*Undertone*] exactly; marginal progression.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let us look at the medium term, the budget outlook, the recovery process; it is very key to talk about recovery process. I like to talk about recovery because I want to ascertain the veracity of the Budget in terms of Covid-19 impact, so when you are pushed up to talking about the Budget outlook we are looking about the recovery process. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it will be good for us to look at the medium term outlook of the Budget in page 7, paragraph 28. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will intend to read this one deliberately and verbally [*Undertone*] go to line 5; the economy is projected to recover that is because we do not want you when we are doing our oversight or bringing you for questioning you came and talk about the recovery etc because they have given us an outlook which is a very good one so we will like to know about the recovery process. The economy is projected

to recover by **3.3%** in 2021 and grow further by an average of **3.9 %** during the period of 2022 to 2023; please take note Madam, we are going to check this one. Mr Speaker, in the economy you do not force people to say I am feeling better, you can see the chain turn around on the faces of the people, it is a physical thing and it is something that you can see; 'ceteris paribus' is a Latin phrase that generally means all other things being equal [*Undertone*] I am a science student and I am not an Economist. The recovery will be driven by an increase in agricultural activities, resumption of iron ore mining, expansion in non-iron ore mining activities and the recovery on the manufacturing construction and tourism sectors. Mr Speaker, I made reference to the tourism sector where you give enough money to maintain the industry; so this is part of the recovery process. I mentioned about the fiscal in-balance when I was talking about the micro economic performance of the Budget; talking about the export and the import. So in the recovery process, he has mentioned something so let me elucidate on that one. Mr Speaker, with your leave I read paragraph 32; **"export are projected to recover strongly in 2021 owing to the resumption of iron ore mining supported by the recovery of the Chinese economy. Imports are expected to grow at an average of 5.5% in the medium term, the increase in export FDI, inflows and disbursements of grants are expected to increase the foreign exchange reserves and stabilise the exchange rate."** So Madam Minister, these are key things; I just pity my advice and it is very key, these are commitment that you have to live up to, let us assume Covid-19 is under control, all things will remain constant with what we have and with the fiscal discipline all things put together we are able to achieve these ones and you also make use of your variables around you; the positive indicators to change this story around. So you are giving us the recovery process which is very key because in the Budget you have explained a whole lot about Covid-19, but you have proffer something to cushion it so that you can suppress the impact of Covid-19 which is a very good one.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the Wage Bill. Mr Speaker, we have to be honest; we need sanity in wages and salaries, we need conformity, we need

to have oneness, we need to see how best we can push, we need to have an understanding that we have succeeded in putting the Wage Bill and Mr Speaker, we had a meeting the last time in Committee Room One in which they presented on how to have uniformity in the Wage Bill. Mr Speaker, it is on page 30 paragraph 133; the reason why I am bringing it up is on two fronts; I want us to look at the front line workers because we have neglected them in all shape and form to certain extent; firstly, let me start with the military personnel. I read that paragraph deliberately, you have done well, but you realise that even the civil servant for example the District Officers, the Magistrates are going to the provinces, even some of the nurses in our villages, in our constituencies. The numeration compared to those in the urban centre are not the same, we need to take care of them, we need to provide the necessary resources and give it to them because it is good for us to do that, we need motivation which is very necessary and what you have started is talking about the tacos; the terms and conditions of service personnel's. Mr Speaker, let me read on page 30 the tacos because it is very key and I will read the third line, **"therefore, as part of Government commitment to improving on living conditions of our service personnel, the salaries of all military personnel will be increased by 25% yearly over a three year period effective from April 2021."** This tacos is very key, but let me tell you what we have to do, in the rank of the Military, the Police and the Prison Officers; there are ranks for example the Commander, you have the Deputy Inspector General and the big secret is that the Deputy Inspector General earns more money than the Commander you have in the rank of the Military; check the salary grade *[Undertone]* fine, that is something we have to address, that is the big security risk, all of them are doing their own sacrifice in one way or the other. The Police, the Military, the Prison Personnel, the Fire Force, but even if you want to satisfy them we have given twenty five years period so the question I will put to you; what is the line in conformity to have a uniform Wage Bill because of their different rank at the different institutions? So that is what we will do *[Undertone]* the tacos is very key so we need to do all of those things *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have refused to talk about something that is very important to us; an Honourable Member mentioned that the social protection is fundamental, we are representing the people. We should be talking about social protection at all time because the people with disability voted for us, you know what is affecting us now is societal problems, the intake of drugs, even the results we are talking about; today, the students and the pupils are at home, they are under the control of their parent. The question we ask ourselves is that were they getting tuition, are the parent paying attention to the student because some of them are involve in taking drugs, what have we done? Mr Speaker, what they have done in this Budget is to take care of the social aspect; social protection or what we call early teenage pregnancy, disability issues etc and this Budget captured all of them. Mr Speaker, I will read a specific paragraph which is paragraph 150; I will skip the NaCSA issue and I will go down to the area where an Honourable Member mentioned that only **1Bln** [*Undertone*] but let us forget about the figures because when you look at the Appropriation you can see **1Bln** but when you come to the text of the Budget you will see that there is a shoot up in the expenditure or allocated money. So let me just read for you [*Undertone*] thank you! Other factors; social protection in paragraph 152; **“in addition, Government is allocating to the Ministry of Social Welfare Le15.2Bln of which support to social protection programs, Le4.8Bln support to pilgrims.”** I will hold on to ‘pilgrims’. Madam Minister, we need to spread this one out, make it a political to ensure that this is the tax payer’s money and make it a political. I am very careful with choice of word Madam, make it a political so that because it is tax payers money and it is enshrine in this Budget, the spirit of it is to really examine the social aspect of what Members of Parliament are doing; every day you will say this is happening to all, so if we are distributing scholarships, let us try and reach out to people in different constituency and different areas [*Applause*]. Mr Speaker, Pilgrims and further **Le5.4Bln** to the Ministry of Labour and social security and another **Le4.9Bln** and an amount **1.5Bln** are allocated to devolve social welfare services. So you heard the Honourable Members talking about protection officers. Mr Speaker, you know there is too much abuse of drugs in our country, we do not need to

shy away from that because it is the reality; suppression, poverty, control, we do not have control over our kids anymore, people are escalate in the name of poverty. There is a complete distinction between discipline and poverty, you can be poor but you are discipline but some people will say; S.O 2 'bo ar nor get moni leh d pikin go dreg' with is social abuse. Mr Speaker, we should allocate funds to things that we have done; this is a very good move, I applaud you for that and I say kudos to your Ministry, but let us ensure it is allocated figures, can we make it actual *[Underdone]* depending on the policy, can we have more social workers, are we in line in working with the spirit of the allocated funds given to us, are we moving in that line? Madam Minister, if you go to 150 it is specially going for Covid-19 that is one of the clusters we have under the human development; that is under cluster one of the human development index.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, cluster two is also important for all of us, it is talking about the good governance and accountability, the level of corruption, allocated money to audit service, to the Judiciary and to Parliament. Mr Speaker, Parliament was given under this governance **Le2.1BIn** *[Undertone]* it is in the Budget here for under good governance, it is in Parliament that Honourable Member pass laws, people are accusing us for corruption, when we say we want money for us to change our conditions of service they will go over the radio and lambast us throughout the day for a cent, but you have recognise us and not only us, you have spelt out all of the structures, let us believe in strong institution to support our good governance, the rule of law, accountability, the Audit Service, the Anti-Corruption Commission, the Parliament, the Legislative Arms we are talking about, if you do not support us, you are giving us a whole lot of Budget description, that one is in paragraph 174 page 36, but I was expecting my Honourable Lady of the House; the Women President who is the mama of the House as well as our women colleagues to talk about the allocation you have given *[Undertone]* no, some already have spoken; three of you and I was expecting you to talk about the allocation for women and children that was provided in the Budget under cluster five. I do not want to elucidate on that much, but that was a very good one and I want to say thanks to you. Mama, you were not able to talk today, but on your behalf

I will speak. Thank you very much for considering the women. So when you are talking about women, I was hoping that they give the Ministry some praise, let us praise the Ministry for allocating funds for women and children. So you go to paragraph 175 to 176, cluster 5 of the Budget, but for the records an Honourable Member mentioned about the maternal death rate; for every one thousand life birth before this time we had serious issues but, we have now gone some level to **32%** has been solve, the Honourable Chairman of the Committee made mentioned about that because the indicators [*Undertone*] thank you very much for giving us those indicators. So those ones were good and that was clear, but Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to make some corrections. I have tremendous respect for ladies especially when they hold positions of trust. I always want to observe that one and respect that environment, but for the records so that the Hansard can accommodate me, I just want to talk about the fees subsidies that was given in Kono. Mr Speaker, let me read the caption; **“summary of tuition payment by level for the 2021 academic year to Koidu and New Senbehun City Kono, District Councils paid on 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2020. For school level pre- primary total number of schools is thirty one total enrolment five thousand six hundred and seventy four, amounts paid per pupil Le10,000, amount paid so far for that level Le56,740Mln, in the primary level, amount of schools is three hundred and sixty three; total enrolment is eighty four thousand six hundred and two, amount paid per pupil is Le10,000 total money is Le846,20Mln. Junior Secondary School [JSS] number of schools is ninety five, total enrolment is thirty two thousand two hundred and eighty; amount paid per pupil is Le50,000 total money is Le1,714Bln. For the Senior Secondary School [SSS] a total number of schools is thirty four, total enrolment is eight hundred eight hundred and eighty, amount pay per pupil is Le60,000, total money is Le1,132,800Bln, total amount paid so far is Le3,749,560Bln.”** Mr Speaker, for the records, I will submit that one to the Clerk’s Office to say that we have paid money for the subsidies. Mr Speaker, our colleague on the other side of the aisle from Kono was so personate about it, perhaps they did not give her the document and they did not inform her. What our constituents normally

does is to give us the problem, but failed to give us the solution; when they get the money they will not come and report that Honourable Member, S.O 2 'da tin den don pay we oh'. They will not come with the money, but they will come with problems and not a report on how their problems have been solved.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank you all, as my Honourable Leader from the Opposition said, I like using this words especially when I am talking about Budget, **"who feels it knows it"**. There is no way you are going to talk for somebody that is having the pain within and he is feeling the pain, we are representing people, no matter or irrespective of the political divide, you go to your people they do not give you colours, but they are expecting you to solve their problems and the problems are the same or they are homogenous S.O 2 'if u dae pull na dor fo porsin na APC, u dae pull na dor fo SLPP, if u dae berry porsin na NGC, u dae berry wan u constituents na C4C' that is our job description Mr Speaker *[Laughter]*. So it is clear that we are force to do things that are beyond our control *[Undertone]* it is just a hypothetical phrase *[Laughter]*. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Minister have to get good policies; chum fiscal discipline, chum implementation, I hold that word from the Leader of the Opposition Chum implementations; all of these things, we have oversight and we have to give them the latitude how they operate, we do not want to see where we will have some confrontation between our Oversight Committee with that of the Ministry of Finance and their associates. So if you do that one for us, we campaign on programs to ensure that there is good for all of us, this 'Paopa Salone go beteh' will come from these aggregate of things here before you.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Budget can be only pro-poor if proper implementations are adhere to. I want to say thanks to you for being with us since we started and not only today, but you have been with us throughout serving the nation and you are committed to your job; may the Lord bless you. To Tasima Jah; the man I have known for over twenty years from Fourah Bay College, we went to a better college together with the Honourable Leader of the Opposition *[Undertone]* well they are associate colleges and we are more senior for those colleges. Mr Speaker, I want to say



a big thank you to Tasima Jah who is the National Director of Budget for his effort in putting all of these together.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to say thank you to the Speaker for his time in seating for a very long time; Honourable Members have the leverage to go out and come in as we feel like, but when he want to go out, he only stand the House down and every Honourable Members will be on the height to say S.O 2 'wusai Mr Speaker dey go?' So I want to thank you for your patient listening to us with all of these analysis and I also want to thank you to my colleagues that were unable to speak in today's debate, I think we have done that one on your behalf and I re-apologies because we have not given you the platform for your to speak because we suspended the provision in the Standing Orders which we think we have interfere with your democratic right in the House and your representation for your people, we apologise and we will stop that one hence forth. I want to say thanks to the members of the fourth estate, though we see sometimes they are not giving professional report, but need to give balance report, we are monitoring you. Mr Speaker, let them give professional reports, when you want to do report you must report on both sides of the aisle, do not report half for Honourable Kandeh Kolleh Yumkella, but report full for Honourable Kandeh Kolleh Yumkella, full for Honourable Emerson Saa Lamina, report full for Honourable Mathew Sahr Nyuma, report full for the Leaders and all other Members because we are all important, we are only here because we are representing people, we are only here because of their supports. So if you report half way you refuse to report for the other Members, the Paramount Chiefs are here; they are credible people so please give balance report so that you can reflect the shades of this House as I said conglomerate of representation [*Applause*]. Let us have balance of our Members of Parliament. Thank you all for what you are doing, thank you for your objectivity because that is where we can always support members of the fourth estate.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will also say thanks to His Excellency the President Dr Julius Maada Bio for putting this fine thing together for us to have a Budget that we anticipate to be pro-poor, Budget that were outline to fight Covid-19 and what we have

done and credit to the Covid-19 team because we have read today by the Deputy Chief Whip and he also highlighted the achievement, the pronouncement made by CDC giving us that courage to move on as a nation. You can be small, but you can never be small in your action, a small nation can do big things and that is what we have done in Covid-19; we are rated four African countries; one of which we are among, we can travel and the health risk is very low due to Covid-19. Special thank you to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle especially Honourable Chernor Maju Bah who have been fighting in the political realm for very long time; both at Fourah Bay College and national, we will continue to collaborate, but I respect their views and those who have criticise us on this Budget I want to thank you very much because it is only by critics we can develop this nation, we cannot say yes all the time because it is a destructive element, let us allow people to criticise us, let us have the courage and be thick-skin to allow critics to criticise us, thank you very much for criticising us. Thank you very much to all the supporting staff for being here with us since the start of this debate and may the Lord bless us all. Thank you *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I thank the Honourable Leader of Government Business, S.O 2 'U do am oh'. Madam Minster, half of your job I think has been done to some extent by the Leader of Government Business, but over to you to put the icing on the cake.

**DR PATRICIA N. LAVERLEY:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Indeed the Leader of Government Business has touched on some of the issues, responding to the reactions of Honourable Members of Parliament to the Budget for next year. Mr Speaker, in listening to the Leader of Government Business, I had a deep reflection of my very first time in this noble House. First, I will like to just take you down to memory lane and to just remind you that this is actually the Fifth Budget document that our Government has brought to this noble House. We brought the 2018 Supplement expenditure from July through December of 2018, we brought the 2019 Budget for the full financial year, the 2020 Budget for the full financial year as well as the supplement and now we are debating the Budget for 2021. Mr Speaker, when I first came to the Well of this noble House to debate the 2019 Budget, I made a commitment to this

noble House. Mr Speaker, during the debate, Honourable Members bitterly complained about the conditions of service of Honourable Members in Parliament and at that time I made a commitment to you. The commitment that I made to you was that as long as I am Deputy Minister of this Government I will work relentlessly to ensure that your conditions of services, the facilities in this Parliament, the support that you receive from the Ministry of Finance thus improve and I believe that today more Members of Parliament have vehicles, you do have better facilities in Parliament and I hope that you do acknowledge the role that I have played in working with you in helping you improve your conditions of service *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I think she deserves more *[Applause]*.

**DR PATRICIA N. LAVERLEY:** Okay! So it is with the same spirit that we formulated the Budget, the same level of support that we are providing to this noble House is the same level of support that we are providing across the country not just to all the MDAs, but to the people of Sierra Leone. The Minister always reminds us that this is the peoples Budget; yes the SLPP in Government, but this Budget is for all Seven Million Two Hundred people of this country. So I am not going to repeat what Members to my right have said, but what I am going to do is first remind you that lot of the issues that you raised during the debate were covered in the different annexes in the Budget document. A lot of you made references to the narrative, yes you have not received the detailed estimate, but if you just go annex by annex you would discover that the responses, the clarifications that you were seeking had been included in the different annexes. I will give you an example, if you look at annex one of the Budget document specifically in response to the mining sector for example, we have actually provided the different revenue streams including the projections from the mining sector. We have included projection on rutile, over the next two years projections on bauxite, diamonds, gold, iron ore and so on, the figures are there projection as a percentage of GDP for a different commodities from 2021 through 2023 and I will like to remind you that these projections from the mining sector were discussed with the International Monetary Fund [IMF], National Minerals Agency [NMA], GDDO and the various stakeholders the

figures are there for the mining sector. With respect to the Wage Bill, indeed the Wage Bill as a percentage of the GDP for 2021 is slightly higher than 2020. The Wage Bill as a percentage of GDP for 2020 is highly projected at **8.1%** as a percentage of GDP. However, when you look at the growth expansion, the expansion of the economy, the GDP denominator, the Wage Bill as a percentage of GDP will actually decrease next year because of a more positive outlook of a micro economic framework.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will take you to page 2 roman number ii of annex one; the discussion on Contingency Funds and the different sections of the public Financial Management Act; 2016. It has been debated extensively and I just like to refer you to Section 36, 37, 38 and 39 of the Public Financial Management Act; 2016. The questions regarding the transfer of the National Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate from the Ministry of Economy and Planning to the Office of the President, the rational of the transfer from MOPED to the Office of the President is because what we intend to do next year is to actually withhold funds for MDAs that are under performing and we are trying to strengthen our controls and it only when we strengthen our control that would enhance the credibility of a financial management practices, so the move of NAMED from MOPED to the Presidency is precisely because that will give us in the Ministry of Finance the greater authority to withhold funds to underperforming MDAs *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me now turn to the establishment of the Wages and Salaries Commission; a lot of discussions around the Wage Bill, the size of the work force and so on. Before the end of this year we will bring the Bill for the establishment of the Wages and Compensation Commission and through the harmonisation effort across Government we would address the issues regarding the salary different and the compensation or disparities across Government. I do not want to be laboured the point, but I think you understand where I am going, just going annex by annex. So let me turn to some of the highly relevant annexes that you can refer to when you do go back to give you the answers that you seek from your review of the Budget.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am going to talk about annexes 5[a] on the allocation to education and annex 5[b] on the allocations to the Health sector, annex 5[c] including different allocations to agriculture. Again, I would like to just appeal to you to really spend your time on these specific annex that we do not be laboured the point on the different line items and how we classified the different expenditure items on the human capital development while you are waiting for the detail Budget estimate that you will receive by Friday.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with respect to the pin code, some of the Members of Parliament raised issues about Teachers getting appointed and not receiving their pin codes and the delays in getting their salaries. We have been working very closely with National Civil Registration Authority [NCRA] on a payroll analysis and the computerisation effort, next year we are going to computerise the payroll and that would help us in dealing with the delays in salary from when civil servants receive their pin codes and when they do receive their first salary. Again, the computerised payroll that will come in to effect in January of next year would help to reduce the delays between the issuers of pin codes by NCRA and the processing of salaries by Accountant General.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Leader of the Opposition asked the question about the new Ministries that we have established; the Ministry of Gender, the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development. Mr Speaker, Gender was part of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Environment was part of the Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and Environment and MoPED was part of the Ministry of Finance. A lot of the staff in these Ministries were basically reassigned; recruitment for these new Ministries would take place next year. This year, we have them get setup, ensure that their offices are functional and next year is when they will be undertaking new recruitment [*Undertone*] sorry? Okay! With respect to State-Owned Enterprises [SOEs], the observation made on State Owned Enterprises; annex 7 provides the current comment in the very last column of this annex on the extent of profitability, the cash position of each SOEs in this country to give your cent of those

that are making losses, those that do have the potential to make profit and so on. Under SOEs, I am going to highlight the Sierra Leone Ports Authority and the comment on the new terminal. We are currently not making or not generating lots of revenue from the Airport, the Airport does have the potential to raise revenue. We believe that with the construction of this new terminal and giving the proximity of our airport with South America, the plan is to use our airport as a major hub for carriers of airlines travelling to Latin America and it is with this new passenger traffic that we expect to generate revenue for Government *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, let me just also inform you that the agreement of course, it has been signed, but it will be sent to you through the Office of the Attorney-General for a review and for your information, but you will receive the agreement of the new terminal.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me finally with respect to the annex, I would also like to draw your attention to annex 13[a] on the transfer to Local Councils so you can see what the transfers are for your various constituencies. I will now turn to some of the specifics that have been raised. Yes, just the day before yesterday His Excellency the President launched six patrol boats at the Navy Base in Murray Town and the six patrol boats are intended to undertake surveillance missions of the entire coast from Yelliboya up by the Guinea board all the way down to Solima. The outstation will be based at Solima, but the boats will patrol the entire coast line. This effort is intended to strengthen our illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities on our waters. The comment on support to Parliament and strengthening the research capacity of the Parliamentary Budget Office; yes, it is indeed true, other countries do have Parliamentary Budget Officers that do review the Budget document extensively and they work closely with the officials of the Ministry of Finance to strengthen Budget governance and moving forward, we do hope that we would work, we would give you the support that this Parliament needs, we will give the support of your Budget Officers to undertake the research that you need to strengthen your future analysis of Budget statements.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me now turn to the disconnect between the provisions of the Mining Lease Agreement, the provisions of the Local Government Act and the need for coherence on issues bordering on beneficial ownership and opportunities for expanded local revenue mobilisation efforts at the Council level, we fully agree. There is need for greater coherence, but for next year, with the on-going effort by the Vice President on strengthening devolved functions and our work at the Ministry of Finance on broadening attacks-base at the Local Council level including ensuring that members of the Local Council are involved in the formulation of future CPIA manse, there is light at the end of the tunnel; it is all about inclusive governance so we do hope that as we embark on greater inclusiveness in the formulation of future mining lease agreements, our Local Councils and our traditional rulers would be more involved in the formulation of future mining lease agreements, that way they can mobilise the revenues that they need to develop their different localities. With respect to the Country Policy and Institutional Assessment Ratings [CPIA], every year, the Ministry of Finance, the World Bank and Liaisons Officers across MDAs do undertake an annual seminar on the CPIA rating and the CPIA seminar for the latest assessment was undertaken last month. Mr Speaker, we do have focal points for each variable, we do have a focal point for structured policies, social inclusion and public sector management for all nineteen variables that are addressed under the CPIA rating and we are monitoring the CPIA rating not just that of the World Bank, but the African Development Bank as well. We do administer seminars at the Cabinet level that way all Ministers understand how their work programmes do impact these ratings.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the low pass rate in the recent West African Senior School Certificate Examination [WASCE] result is personal to everyone because we all have someone I am sure that took these examinations and of course, Honourable Speaker has informed us that the Minister of Basic and Secondary Education would be invited on Tuesday to provide an explanation on what the views are on the low scores that our students have received this year.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have brought five Budget documents to this noble House and we have been consistent in our theme over the last two and half years. The theme is each year has focused on human capital development and you will agree with me that we have made remarkable progress on each of our human capital development clusters. When you look, it is not just in the education sector, but we have maintained Education Budget allocation at **22%**, we have increase the allocation for health, in Agriculture; we are encouraging greater private sector participation in the Agriculture sector and for social protection we have now targeted seventy three thousand disenfranchised, vulnerable groups and disabled persons. Seventy three thousand beneficiaries have received and would be receiving **Le1.3mIn** per quarter over the next three years and the profiling of these seventy three beneficiaries, the profiling framework that we have used because Honourable Members have raised concerns about the disability or the disabled people, the beneficiaries and how we will go about selecting the beneficiaries of the Cash Transfer Programme. This is based on in-depth assessment undertaken with Statistics Sierra Leone and for World Bank based on the poverty data set. The list of beneficiaries is validated by not just NaCSA but by the World Bank before the cash is released to the beneficiaries and I believe that we have made remarkable progress in this regard and in fact, what we would be doing next year; instead of making manual cash payment, we are encouraging all beneficiaries to have mobile account because the **Le1.3MIn** will be released to them on the different mobile platforms payments to beneficiaries of the Cash Transfer Programme *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, an Honourable Member raised concern about the difference within the monthly cleaning and waste management activity; they wanted clarity on why we separated monthly cleaning from waste management. Waste Management is a devolved function to Local Councils to manage daily waste collection and disposal within their different localities whilst the monthly cleaning exercise is a Central Government lead activity to reduce flooding and other environmental disaster so that is the fundamental distinction.



Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Honourable Ibrahim Ben Kargbo raised concern about the school feeding programme; Honourable, you asked whether the school feeding programme actually exists. Honourable Member, I am pleased to inform you that the school feeding programme is actively on-going and it is part of the free quality education programme [*Undertone*] yes, it is on-going and we are releasing funds for school feeding.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there was also another concern raised on the size of the allocation to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. What we would like to inform this Honourable House is that in as much as there is a slight drop in the administrative allocation for the Foreign Ministry, in general there is an upward increase in the size of the allocation to foreign missions. The foreign missions will receive an upward increase next year. Foreign missions would receive more money next year and of course, you mentioned the new missions that will be opening in Morocco and the reopening of the mission in France that is on the way. With respect to Covid-19 related activities and the audit of Covid-19 funds, well giving the special relationship with the office of the Auditor-General, the Covid-19 funds are being audited by the Auditor-General on a real time basis. I will like to encourage you to consult with her on what the findings are at least so far based on the Covid-19 funds audited. By virtue of my natural orientation, the comments raised by the female Members of Parliament on the **30%**, parliamentary representation, the issue on gender, women and children Affairs, I believe I am the champion on women's issues, advocating for increase allocation for women and children. I do have a special relationship with the Minister of Gender and Children's Affairs and I am personnel giving her all the support that she needs to ensure that her new Ministry succeeds and that her activities are adequately resourced [*Applause*].

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with respect to the number of Pathologists that we have, we do now have the graduate college of specialised; there is a new college that has been set up for specialists and we have actually brought in Nigerian Pathologists that would lead a team of Pathologists that we have. So this is an area that we are

monitoring closely, we have made provision in the Budget for that and within the next few months we would see the difference in the number of services provided by Pathologists across the country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, at this juncture I would like to say thank you to Mr Speaker for all the encouragement and support that he has provided to the team at the Ministry of Finance on ensuring that our Ministry provides the required support to this nation as detailed in His Excellency the President's Manifesto. What this Budget document represents is a translation of Manifesto commitments in monetary terms and based on our revenue projection for next year; what we have before you is a proposal of the activities that our Government would undertake next year based on the priorities established by the various MDAs. So, I would like to thank you very much, we have talked a lot about microeconomic variables, the Leader went extensively to discuss the trade; the way we have dealt with the revenue situation, the way we have dealt with the trade balance, the overwhelming support that we are enjoying from the donor community particularly this year as a result of Covid-19, the number of fatalities that happened this year in comparison to Ebola is huge and that precisely because we received lots of support from our development partners and I will like to profusely thank them for the support that they provided to us this year.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me conclude by thanking you all again, thank you to both sides of the aisle; the Honourable Leader of the Opposition is not here, but I would like to extend my profound appreciation to all Members of the Opposition for their collaboration, the discussions that we had; you cautioned us on issues that are important to you, we take them in good faith, we are here to support you because this is about our country and not about party politics. I would like to thank you very much for the great relationship that we have fostered over the years. So let me stop here and thank everyone; may God bless us all. Thank you very much *[Applause]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Yes, move please!

**DR PATRICIA N. LAVERLEY:** Before I move *[Interruption]*.

**HON. LAHAI MARAH:** Mr Speaker, Point of Order before she moves!

**DR PATRICIA N. LAVERLEY:** Yes!

**THE SPEAKER:** Oh you are back *[Laughter]*.

**HON. LAHAI MARAH:** Mr Speaker, Point of Order before she moves *[Undertone]* you are not the Speaker, I am talking to Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I stand on the Constitution of Sierra Leone, Section 111 Sub-Section 3. Mr Speaker, with your leave, let me read; **"No monies shall be withdrawn from the Consolidated Fund except;**

**[a] To meet expenditure that is charged upon the fund by this Constitution or by an Act of Parliament. Where the issue of those moneys have been authorised by an Appropriation Act or by a Supplementary estimate approved by a resolution of Parliament passed in that behalf or by an Act of Parliament enacted pursuant to the provisions of Section 112 and 113."** Mr Speaker therefore, I would like to submit that the Ministry of Finance expended money that has not been authorised by this Parliament. Mr Speaker, I want to submit that the Ministry of Finance has expended monies *[Interruption]*.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Speaker, Point of Order!

**THE SPEAKER:** Hold on and let him land.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** But it is inappropriate.

**THE SPEAKER:** I know, but let him land.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Mr Speaker, some of these things carried in the news are not correct, it is inappropriate; this Budget is a process. To critic a Budget, you do it in the Supply Committee and we have an Act of Parliament; he has not ascertained Section 31[1] which the Minister mentioned. Where is he coming from? Mr Speaker, on what Point of Order is he standing on? We knew they are going to use Point of Order *[Interruption]*.

**HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO:** He has quoted the Constitution.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** But he said Point of Order.

**HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO:** No!

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** That is what he said.

**HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO:** He quoted from the Constitution.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** He should have a leeway before you say a Point of Order.

**HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO:** Honourable Leader, please allow the Honourable to land.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Honourable Ibrahim Ben Kargbo, can you allow me to finish please?

**HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO:** No!

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Let me just make my case. This Budget is a process; we have the first reading, second reading and the debate.

**THE SPEAKER:** I do not know what he was about to say.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Alright Sir! I will yield at the moment.

**THE SPEAKER:** With respect!

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Okay Sir.

**THE SPEAKER:** Let me understand what he is about to say.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Okay Sir!

**HON. LAHAI MARAH:** Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I therefore want to submit that the Ministry of Finance has expended money that was not authorised by this Parliament; according to Section 111 Sub-Section 3. Mr Speaker, 2019 that is in the Budget, we budgeted in the Appropriation Bill **Le6.9Tln**. Mr Speaker, the Ministry of Finance spent above **Le7Tln** in 2019 and Mr Speaker, if you look at roman number V of the 2019 Budget and roman number IV of this present Budget you would realise that we allocated for Ministry of Political Affairs **Le2.12Bln** and they expended **Le5.4Bln** *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable Member, with that point I think I know understand where you are coming from and let me say this; the Appropriation Act before this Parliament right now is Appropriation Act 2021; that is what we are addressing.

**HON. LAHAI MARAH:** Mr Speaker, if you read Section 111 Sub-Section 3 *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I have read it.

**HON. LAHAI MARAH:** Mr Speaker, it also refers to as estimate and therefore, we are not only passing the Appropriation Act, but which also include 'Estimate' *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Supplementary Estimates.

**HON. LAHAI MARAH:** Mr Speaker, if you look also the PFM Act, the Budget *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I rule you out of order, I am sorry. Let us proceed. Madam Minister, you have the Floor.

**DR PATRICIA N. LAVERLEY:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled: the Appropriation Act for Financial Year 2021 be read the Second time.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you Madam Deputy Minister.

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]*

*[The Bill entitled: the Appropriation Act for Financial Year 2021 being an Act to authorise expenditure from the Consolidated Fund for the services of Sierra Leone for the year 2021 and for other related matters has been read the Second time]*

**HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Appropriation Act for Financial Year 2021 having been read the Second time, stand committed to the Committee of Supply pursuant to Section 112 Sub-Section 6 of the 1991 Constitution, in tandem with S.O 64 [1,2 and 3].

**THE SPEAKER:** Any seconder?

**HON. MOSES A. EDWIN:** I so second Mr Speaker

*[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]*

*[Pursuant to the Standing Orders 64 [1 and 2], the Bill has been committed to the Sub-Committee on Appropriation]*

**HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA:** Mr Speaker, the Sub-Committee on Supplies is supposed to commence on Monday, 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2020.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. I hope it would last for five days?

**HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA:** Approximately six days.

**THE SPEAKER:** Six days, that is good; even better!

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** Internal Notice Paper:

Papers Lay: The Chairman, Public Accounts Committee. Annual Report *[Interruption]*.

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Point of Order Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Yes!

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** On the issue just addressed by the Chairman of the Finance Committee, we have not been adequately informed about what the situation is relating to the Committee on Supplies and I think we deserve to be adequately informed before the announcement is made in this House and now the new format that is coming, we need to be properly informed as to what the situation is before *[Interruption]*.

**HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA:** Mr Speaker, on the proposed format the Opposition Whip is talking about, I guess a lot of notices has been held informing Member of this House regarding that format and in fact, we are summoning all Chairmen and Chairpersons of Committees to a meeting tomorrow and their Clerks so that we will be able to know exactly what we would be doing.

**THE SPEAKER:** What time and where?

**HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA:** There is a Notice Paper.

**THE SPEAKER:** Then okay! Let me first then listen to the Internal Notice Paper.

**HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA:** [A] Annual Performance Report of the Audit Service Sierra Leone, for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2019;

B] Minster of Finance:

[i] Financing Agreement, [Free Education Project] between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the International Development Association [IDA];

[ii] Financing Agreement [Economic Diversification Project] between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the International Development Association;

[iii] Financing Agreement [Additional Financing for Smallholder Commercialisation and Agri-business development project] between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the International Development Association;

[iv] Multinational Protocol of Agreement between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the African Development Fund [Multi-country Covid-19 crisis response support programme for Liberia, the Gambia and Sierra Leone];

[v] Multinational protocol of agreement amongst the Republic of Sierra Leone and the African Development Fund [as Administrators of the Transition Support Facilities]. Multi-country Covid-19 crisis response support programme for Liberia, The Gambia, and Sierra Leone;

[vi] Multi-national letter of agreement Transition Support Facilities project for decentralisation of Government payment in the Mano River Union [MRU] the Republic of Sierra Leone; and

[vii] Financing Agreement [West Africa regional Energy Trade Development Policy Financing Programme Sierra Leone] between the Republic of Sierra Leone and International Development Association.

**BILL:**

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH, CHAIRMAN, LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE.

[i] Report on the Bill entitled: The Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion 2020.

THE CHIEF MINISTER

COMMITTEE STAGE AND THIRD READING

THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION FOR PEACE AND NATIONAL COHESION 2020

[B] The Cyber Act 2020

Introduction and First Reading

The Minister of Information and Communications;

Second Reading

Committee Stage and Third Reading;

The Minister of Information and Communications

[C] The Medical and Examiners Act, 2020;

Introduction and First Reading

The Minister of Internal Affairs

Second Reading, Committee Stage and Third Reading

The Minister of Internal Affairs

[D] Statement: By the Minister of Basic and Secondary Education on the Status of Education and the recently published WASCE results [the date to be communicated by Mr Speaker for that particular hearing]. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Yes!

*ANNOUNCEMENTS*



**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Any S.O?

**HON. AARON A. KOROMA:** Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise on S.O 23 to draw the attention of the House on an issue which I considered to be an outbreak that is affecting our people in this country. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am sure all of us must have been aware of the unprecedented outbreak of 'Champion' otherwise called 'Nairobi flies' in the country and they are most prevalent in places like Magburaka, Makeni even in Freetown and even as we speak there are Members of Parliament that have been infected with that and I do believe that these are issues we need to invite the Minister of Health and Sanitation to draw his attention to that because this is posing a very serious threat on not only adults, but even our children and the general populace in this country. Thank you very much Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you very much for bringing that to our attention. Honourable Members, you will recall *[Undertones]* Order! The information that we have just received from the Honourable Member is important, it reminds all of us of the proactive position that we took with regard to Covid-19. We were able to foresee the problems ahead and invited the Ministers of Health and Sanitation, Internal Affairs if I remember rightly and Defence *[Undertone]* that is right! Thank you for the correction. It is important we take note of the information our colleague has just presented and to say we do take note and will make appropriate arrangement to summon the relevant Ministers to engage in a conversation with Parliament in due course.

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Yes Mr Speaker. Also, let me draw your attention to a statement you made in the Well of Parliament relating to the fumigation of the Well. Mr Speaker *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I was visited by quite a number of them *[Laughter]*.

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Mr Speaker, let me finish. Mr Speaker, it is embarrassing that we come to this House on a daily basis with roaches being our partners *[Undertone]* when I say partners *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** Your point is made.

**HON. HASSAN A. SESAY:** Mr Speaker, let that be *[Interruption]*.

**THE SPEAKER:** I hereby direct the Administration to take all appropriate measure to ensure that the Well and other relevant offices of Parliament are fumigated within the next week. Fortunately, we would not be using this Well for the next six to seven days or more. In the meantime, you have already heard from the notices given that the Committee on Supply will get in to action as from Monday for a period of six days and on that same date, I hereby give notice that we shall receive the Minister of Basic and Secondary Education on the 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2020 to engage him in a conversation as we have already indicated relating to the WASCE examination; we shall engage him in the morning before we commence with the business of the day which is the Report of the Committee of Supplies.

*[The House stood down at 5:20 p.m. and was adjourned to Tuesday, 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2020 at 10.a.m]*