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15th November 2018

PRESS RELEASE

DEBATE ON 2019 NATIONAL BUDGET CONTINUES

The Parliament of Sierra Leone is for the second consecutive day progressively debating the Bill entitled “The Appropriation Act, 2019”, starting from the 14th November, 2018. This debate is relayed live on radio and television stations for the benefit of the wider public.

Moving the motion, the Deputy Minister of Finance, Patricia Laverley said that the Act is aimed at authorizing expenditure from the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the services of Sierra Leone for the year 2019 and for other related matters.

In light of general contributions on both sides of the aisle, the governing MPs described the 2019 Budget as being “people-centered, pro-poor, putting smiles on the faces of Sierra Leoneans”, due to robust revenue mobilization and efficient expenditure by Government, increment in wages and salaries, recruitment of 9000 personnel including 5000 teachers to support the successful implementation of the free quality education promised and being delivered by Government in phases.

Whereas the opposition decried the Budget as being “bogus, fictitious and unrealistic”, with huge discrepancies in figures, huge tax variations which they described as “robbing Peter to pay Paul”, challenging the allocations to the Ministries of Education, Health and Agriculture as being “lower than the actual figures in the budgetary estimates for 2019”.

The debate continues tomorrow, commencing at 10:00 AM in the Chamber of Parliament. However, Ministries, Departments and Agencies of Government are required to send senior officials like Vote Controllers, Directors and Accountants to witness the debate live in Parliament until it reaches its logical conclusion in the House, insofar as the entire Budget approval process is concerned.

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