



# PARLIAMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

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## PRESS RELEASE



FOURTH ALLOTTED DAY:

### PARLIAMENT CONTINUES DEBATE ON 2025 NATIONAL BUDGET

The Parliament of Sierra Leone on Tuesday, 26/11/2024 continued debate on the Bill entitled; "The National Budget 2025 or The Appropriation Act 2025" for the financial services of Sierra Leone on the theme, "Improving the Well-being and Quality of Life of Sierra Leoneans".

The Bill seeks to authorize expenditure from the Consolidated Fund for the services of Sierra Leone for the year 2025 and for other related matters.

Continuing the debate, Hon Abdul Latiff Sesay from Port Loko commended the President for the construction of the fire force station in Port Loko City, but informed the House that there is no fire extinguishing fighter vehilce on the ground. He therefore, called on the Government to purchase a brand new extinguishing vehicle for Port Loko. He decried the Government for delaying the construction of a donor project hospital in Port Loko District. On State own enterprises, he said they are very important for the development of the nation and called on the Government to direct support to the sector for nation building. He used the opportunity to call on Government to reduce taxation on the people for ease of business.

On her part, Hon.Nenneh Lebbie from Bo District submitted her debate on project implementation and the fight against hunger and stressed that President Bio has prioritized the 'Feed Salone' program, citing the fisheries sector as a component. The MP underscored the success stories of that initiative and noted the challenges. She used the opportunity to advise the management on the judicious use of

donor funding. She also acknowledged the huge benefits of the fisheries sector. "This country is losing so much in the fisheries sector due to the lack of the EU market", she maintained.

The MP encouraged the Government to do more surveillance in the territorial waters of the country and called for drastic measures to address the issue of illegal fishing within the territorial waters of Sierra Leone.

On agriculture, she said there are a lot of projects that had been successfully accomplished within the agriculture sector.

On education, she urged the school authority to provide actual data to Government for an informed decision within the sector. She concluded by appealing to Government to provide more employment opportunities for youth across the country.

Hon. Meamunatu Jalloh from Port Loko District said the budget is a life wire for the people of Sierra Leone.

On the Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs), she commended the authority for the support given to women's on the same. She encouraged the Minister of Finance to remove the barriers that are affecting business women.

On the private sector Financing to business women, she called on the Government to support women's empowerment within the business sector.

On the Feed 'Salone' project, the MP called for proper management and implementation of the Feed 'Salone' initiative. She also raised serious concern over the economy.

Hon. Shiaka Musa Sama from Pujehun District denounced previous debater and commended the Government for making frantic efforts to alliviate the people out of poverty. He informed that the economy is relatively stable and advised colleague MPs to stop misleading others and support Government through oversight. "It is hyprocracy to say one thing and do something different" he stated. He lauded the Government's flagship programme Feed 'Salone' and noted that sustainable development means a nation must feed itself.

Hon. Paul Samba Conteh from Bombali, recalled that in 2020, the former Minister of Finance promised to electrify Fadugu but did not fulfill it. He therefore, expressed dismay over the deplorable road condition in Karena Town in the Bombali District and also decried unfair allocations of Budget to some MDAs.

Hon. Rebecca Yei Sam from Kono expressed happiness over the budget with reference to wages and salaries increment, and additional employments. She related the budget to the President's manifesto promise with regards employment of thousands of people. She used the opportunity to ask Government to support the Ministry of Labour with mobility and urged all and sundry to support Government to raise money in various ways to implement the budget. She decried compatriots who are in the habit of misinforming others about the country. On the Kono University, she clarified certain financing towards same. She commended all for their various contributions towards the University.

The MP urged the Minister and the House to increase budget allocation to the Ministry of Gender and Children Affairs for proper sensitization and execution of activities.

Hon. John Sartie Kargbo from Western Area thanked all for their various contributions towards the budget and thanked the President for the 25% increment to pensioners. He however informed the House that, that the 25% increment for pensioners was not enough to sustain some of them. He also made projection on the wage bill and salaries and raised concern over the recruitment process. He also recommended to the Government to decentralize to district levels for fairness. He appealed to the Government for MPs to be giving quota in terms of recruitment. The MP expressed worries over the skyrocketing nature of prices of building materials and also appealed to Government to construct low-cost housing for civil servants.

Hon. Rugiatu Tarawalie Mustapha from Kenema District described President Bio as a visionary Leader. She zoomed in on agriculture and noted that the 'Feed Salone' Project is the most viable project. She informed the House that any country that is ready to invest in agriculture and infrastructure especially on roads, would promote development. She used the opportunity to call on Government to construct the road between Mano-Junction to Kono, Bo to Yeile and Kenema to Zimmi amongst others. She finally underscored the importance of agriculture in nation building.

Hon. Aruna P. S. Larkoh from Tonkolili, thanked all for the budget especially on the recruitment. He urged Government to do fair treatment in the proposed recruitment for all. The MP expressed dismay over what he described as government lip service to Tonkolili District in the budget allocation. He noted that the district is contributing to the national bread basket. "We are calling on the Government to think about Tonkolili" he stated and added that they are deprived. The MP spoke about deprivation of roads especially in Magburoka township and other places. "This is an economic injustice for Tonkolili" he informed and appealed to the Government to consider them. He also appealed to Government to consider a certain community that is going without safe drinking water and also spoke about healthcare facility. He appealed on the Government to improve on the Magburaka Government Hospital.

Hon. Hindolo Ngevao from Kailahun District, predicated his debate on budget performance with reference to past, current and future budget. He thanked the Government for the fiscal growth with stable improvement and deflation in US dollars to the Leone. Agriculture, the MP said is considered for economic growth and noted that the budget is Premised on growth in tandem with domestic revenue mobilizations. He used the opportunity to encourage compatriots to support Government to raise revenue to implement the budget in light of the projection and ensure that the nation feeds itself. The MP also drew the attention of the House to the National Sports Authority considering it's huge task to improve on sporting activities. He also raised concern over allocations of Budget to EPA and NPPA, adding that EPA raised revenue whilst the latter wholly depends on Government. He expressed worries over environmental hazards especially in the Western Area.

Hon. Peter Yamba Koroma from Bombali, expressed concerns over the GDP of and the economy with reference to other countries. He also raised concern over the redenominations of the Leone, wage bill, salaries harmonization and huge disparity in same. He used the opportunity to suggest to the House to have discussion on same.

The allocations of Budget for Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, the MP said was appalling and urged the Government to support improve on their budget.

Hon. Alice K. Sandy Esq from Kenema District, described the budget as forward thinking, job creation and with lot of achievements. She reflected on several achievements including the midwifery school in Kenema City. She used the opportunity to appeal on Government to consider the reconstruction of certain roads in Kenema District. She lauded Government for supporting youth with Keke, launching of Iron Rod industry amongst others. The MP said amidst the global challenges, the Government is doing extremely well. She drew the attention of the Government to Jembe Bridge for maintenance and underscored the construction rehabilitation of the Magburaka Boys School by the Bio led Government.

Hon. PC. Marrah III Thor Thor Sheku Terenah Tongos Neya Konkoroba Franko Lai From Falaba District, focused his debate on roads with specific reference to Falaba and raised concern over the diversion of a major road in that district causing delay in the construction project. He pleaded with the Government to employ more people from Falaba and also thanked the Government for his Hajj scholarship.

Hon. Mariama Bangura from Western Area, highlighted several issues including inadequate water supply especially in the Western Area, problem around rehabilitation of Government building including Parliament. She emphatically expressed dismay over the dilapidated state of some buildings. He spoke around the construction of roads especially Passonage Street. She appealed to the Government to rehabilitate youth at district levels. She used the opportunity to ask Government to consider providing support to traders.

Hon. Ing. Fabbah Habib Keifa from Bo District, explained the meaning of the budget and compared it to task of construction. The MP asked all to support Government on the budget implementation. He described the budget as a problem solving Budget and spoke about the objective of Feed 'Salone' concurrent with development. He underscored market accessibility to the Feed 'Salone' and called on all and sundry to promote the implementation of the budget.

Hon. Ernest Dura Koroma from Kambia, described the debate as important as one of their functions which predicates around Budget scrutiny and approve. The MP raised concern over the delay in construction of certain roads in Kambia. He recalled on President Bio's promise to construct the Kambia-Tonko Limba Road. He appealed to the Government to consider Tonko Limba. Without roads he said many activities could not go on. He also advocated for Kambia to get electricity and appealed for a fair share of the National Budget.

Hon Mariama Ella Goba from Kenema, acknowledged the commendable works of President Bio's Government including Feed 'Salone' with lot of achievements to farmers. She underscored the importance healthcare delivery with specific focus on the budget with regards job creation and others.

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