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PRESS RELEASE

DAY TWO: DEBATE CONTINUES ON THE 2018 BUDGET

Following continued debate on the 2018 Budget which has entered its second allotted day on 02nd November 2017, MPs on both sides of the political divide (ruling APC and SLPP) are busy examining its contents.

Speaking on the Budget, Hon. Amadu Kanu described the business of politics as the delivery of goods and services, with reference to the transformative leadership of President Koroma, whose development initiatives, he said, have been carried out across the country. He called on Government to initiate chieftom farming by allocating funds to Paramount Chiefs, subject to the supervision of Parliament and Audit Service Sierra Leone, to guarantee sustainable food supply.

Reacting, Hon. Sualiho M. Koroma affirmed that “the reign of SLPP was pre-occupied by the (need for) resettlement of displaced persons, ending the war, and re-building of our damaged infrastructures in the country”. In comparison with previous Budgets, he spoke of inconsistencies without economic diversification, with concentration only on the construction of roads.

Contributing, Hon. Frederick S. Sourie said that “child mortality rate in the country has been considerably reduced now, as compared to the days of SLPP in governance from 400 to 112 in every 1000 live births”. He also spoke on the benefits of improved electricity in Kono and other parts of the country.

Hon. James N. D. Alie among other things queried the Budget for being silent on the rationalization measures that were introduced by Government to cushion our economic shocks. He also called on the Government to explain clearly the roles of SLRA and RMFA, whilst speaking on a “dysfunctional” Mechanical Services Unit. He also spoke on multiple allocations to the Barefoot College totaling Le 3 Billion by the Ministries of Education and Energy, saying that the said amount is more than the allocated sum to all the technical and vocational institutions in the country.

On his part, Hon. Sallieu O. Sesay described the Budget as a friendly one having compared the Budgets of Nigeria, Liberia and Ghana in the West African sub-region. He said in spite of external and internal shocks in the country, he said in 2016 and 2017, the economy of Sierra Leone has grown from 4.5 to 5.6 respectively, the reasons our donor partners are supportive of the policies and programmes of Government.

Other MPs spoke to the Bill as the debate continues tomorrow.

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