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**PRESS RELEASE**  
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## **2017 BUDGET DEBATE ENTERS DAY TWO**

The Parliament of Sierra Leone has on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2016 continued debate on the 2017 Budget, which provides for the authorization of expenditure from the Consolidated Revenue Fund and other related matters for the services of Sierra Leone.

During the course of the debate, Hon. Lahai Marah called for Krubolla to be included in the next budget, noting that five sections in his constituency are disconnected from the main town in Koinadugu District. He largely blamed the late S.B Marah for the under-development of his constituency. He described the budget as a good and sincere one and thanked the Government for the continued payment of salaries, despite the current economic crunch in the country. He particularly thanked President Koroma for paying salaries to all and sundry in this economic downturn which has resulted in the rationalization, otherwise known as austerity measures. He also said that the prices of commodities should be determined by the forces of demand and supply and called for a boost in local production, “made in Sierra Leone” by putting the necessary infrastructure in place. He also called on the Ministry of Finance to put strategies in place to combat the inflationary pressure not to degenerate to hyper-inflation, and noted that salaries have remained constant and taxes raised with the view of stabilizing the economy.

Hon. James N.D Alie said that our local industries should be capacitated to ensure quality production so as to healthily compete with other economies in the world. He also spoke on the need for improving flour production and standardizing water management in the country. He also said that NPPA had been sidelined on procurement related issues, citing a number of sole-sourcing undertaken during the ebola audit; during which Government lose Le Billions of Leone for not adhering to audit recommendations. He also decried the allocation of Billions of Leone to the “Barefoot College” for doing nothing. He also said that most of the solar lights in the Districts are not working due to lack of maintenance. He also called for role definition between SLRA and RMFA as they are performing almost the same functions at the same time. He furthered that staff in Sierra Leone embassies in Guinea and Liberia are given close to “\$80 Million” for not doing anything. He also said that the Minister of Finance failed to announce the actual increase in fuel price and few hours later, it was astronomically increased to Le 6,000 instead of Le 5,250.

Other MPs also contributed to the debate that will continue on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2016.