**AN ADDRESS PRESENTED BY HIS EXCELLENCY, SENATOR DOUYE DIRI, GOVERNOR OF BAYELSA STATE, ON THE OCCASION OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE 2024 BUDGET TO THE BAYELSA STATE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, ON WEDNESDAY 29TH OF NOVEMBER, 2023.**

Protocol

1. In keeping with the requirement of extant laws, I am here to present to the esteemed members of this hallowed Chambers, the plans, projections and budgetary estimates of the Prosperity Government for the year 2024.
2. I would like to emphasize the commitment of the Government of Prosperity to the implementation of its agenda, as delineated in the priorities that I am privileged to present to this House.
3. Permit me to express my deep gratitude to the people of Bayelsa State for emphatically endorsing the Government of Prosperity for a second term in office. I am confident that your massive votes confirmed your alignment with the policies and financial decisions that this government made, through this Assembly, to achieve our collective vision of prosperity.
4. Mr. Speaker, over the past three (3) years, we have implemented policies, programmes, and projects aimed at uplifting the standard of living of our people and steering our State towards a united, secured and prosperous land. Undoubtedly, these initiatives have posed considerable challenges, given our difficult terrain and the associated costs. In spite of these, we have remained focused on ensuring that Bayelsans truly benefit from their government.
5. In our firm commitment to open, inclusive, accountable, and transparent governance, we organized a Critical Stakeholder and Public Interactive Session to collate citizens’ inputs for this 2024 budget proposal. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform you that the aspirations and desires expressed by the people during this interactive session are reflected in this proposal. I assure you that these aspirations will be implemented meticulously. In the spirit of continuity, this 2024 budget shall be termed the "**Budget of Sustainable and Shared Prosperity**."
6. A review of the 2023 budget performance reveals that a total of ₦439,271,578,564.84 (Four Hundred and Thirty-Nine Billion, Two Hundred and Seventy-One Million, Five Hundred and Seventy-Eight Thousand, Five Hundred and Sixty-Four Naira, Eighty-Four Kobo) only, was approved.
7. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to announce that our implementation of the 2023 budget achieved considerable success and consistency in critical areas such as:
8. Security:

You will agree with me that our administration achieved the much-needed relative peace for sustainable growth and reconstruction. We prioritised peace building and provided full support to the various security agencies. With the support of this House, we institutionalised, established and operationalised the Community Safety Corps, which has engaged over 630 Bayelsans.

It is my pleasure to inform you that security reports available to me indicate that the State is safer than ever.

1. Education:

Mr. Speaker, our achievements in the education sector have been considerable in the outgoing year 2023. We established new technical colleges, with the aim of ensuring that our children get technical/vocational education so as to be self-employed after graduation. We improved on the quality of our education by providing facilities in schools and training of our teachers. Our administration also ensured the accreditation of programmes in all our higher institutions.

1. Agriculture

In our effort to enhance food security and livelihood, our government has continued to provide support in the form of agricultural inputs, tools and training to farmers and fishermen. These include the implementation of programmes and projects in the agricultural value chain, where we have empowered over 1,000 Bayelsans to boost agro-business.

1. Health

Mr. Speaker, the health sector also had its very fair share of attention. We built and upgraded health facilities across all LGAs, and health-related tertiary institutions including completion and furnishing of the first Psychiatric Hospital in Bayelsa State. Also, in partnership with *Fly Zipline*, we established a health chain distribution system to cater for drug distribution and emergency health matters using drones. The Health Insurance Scheme enrolment is growing by the day. As at 2020, our mobilisation was limited to the Public Service. We have gone further in 2023 to launch the “**Diri Care**” programme, which has boosted the enrolment of the informal sector. The total enrolment as at November 2023 is **149,067**. The breakdown is as follows:

* 1. Civil Servants - 118,030
	2. Vulnerable Population - 27,803
	3. Informal Sector - 3,134

This is as a result of the Diri Care programme that was launched.

1. Works and Infrastructure

It is clear that the key to unlocking the economic growth and development of our dear State is the construction and provision of roads and infrastructure. Therefore, very high priority and attention were given to the construction/rehabilitation of many roads and infrastructure in 2023. Some of the high-profile, cost intensive projects that got our deserving attention include but are not limited to:

* 1. Completion and commissioning of the 10.2km Glory Drive Phase II Dual Carriage Way with street lights.
	2. Completion and commissioning of the Angiama section of the Yenagoa-Oporoma-Ukubie Road.
	3. Ongoing construction of the Angiama-Oporoma section of the Yenagoa-Oporoma-Ukubie Road including the major bridge across the River Nun.
	4. Completion and commissioning of the 42km Sagbama-Ekeremor Road which includes six new bridges.
	5. Over 90% completion of the 21km AIT/Elebele-Igbogene Outer Ring Road.
	6. The very strategic and ambitious First Phase of the 21km with 10 bridges Nembe-Brass Road, where sand filling has reached advanced stage.
	7. Ongoing construction of the Onuebum-Otuoke Road.
	8. Rehabilitation of several failed roads caused by the 2022 devastating flood at Bolou-Orua, Tungbo, Imiringi, three portions along the Amassoma road as well as along the Opokuma road etc.
	9. Commencement of the Sabagreia-Polaku Road with a bridge.
	10. Commencement of the Akaba–Okodi Road.
	11. Completion and commissioning of the Finance House.
1. Sports

Mr. Speaker, due to the Prosperity Administration’s huge investments in Sports in the outgoing year, our performance has been astral. Some of our major achievements for the year are:

1. Hosting of the first ever Bayelsa State Sports Festival.
2. Hosting of the Prosperity Football Tournament which engaged over 216 teams and has been adjudged as one of the largest football tournaments in Africa.
3. Bayelsa Queens won the AITEO Cup.
4. Blessing Oborodudu and four others clinched gold medals in the African Wrestling Championship.
5. Civil Service.

We have in the outgoing year, as in the past three years, ensured that the Civil Service is given the necessary attention (including the prompt payment of salaries and regular promotions) for an effective work force, and to enhance the economic and social development of the State, because ours is predominantly a civil service State. Mr. Speaker, in addition, this administration consistently ensured that the entitlement of our senior citizens (by way of pensions and gratuities) are paid promptly. Over 3.3b was spent on Gratuities and 10.8b for pensions in 2023. Let me assure you that, even in the coming year, we will continue to meet our obligations to the senior citizens within the limits of available resources.

1. Mr. Speaker, as noted earlier, the greatest challenge in the course of implementation of the 2023 budget is the high inflation rate in the country. Current reports from the National Bureau of Statistics indicate that food inflation is about 31.5% while inflation hovers around 27%. We understand that we are not alone in tackling these economic challenges, however, on our part we shall continue to ensure that we maintain a high level of prudence in our financial management.

A general analysis of the budget performance as at September 2023, shows that we had achieved an overall performance of 73%, where both the recurrent and capital expenditures got due attention.

1. The 2024 Budget Proposal.

Mr. Speaker, you will recall that in October 2023, this Honourable House approved the 2024-2026 Medium Term Expenditure Framework and Fiscal Strategy Paper (MTEF and FSP). The 2024 budget proposal is, therefore, consistent with the assumptions as contained in that approval.

1. At this juncture, Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the 2024 budget estimates to the House. We are guided by the desire to prepare a realistic, implementable and prioritized budget which is a reflection of the aspirations and wishes of critical stakeholders, and the economic realities in the country.
2. Size and Structure of the 2024 proposed budget

Mr. Speaker, I hereby present to you the 2024 budget with a total size of **₦480,993,632,369.00 (Four Hundred and Eighty Billion, Nine Hundred and Ninety-Three Million, Six Hundred and Thirty-Two Thousand, Three Hundred and Sixty-Nine Naira)** only.

This will be financed as per the breakdown below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **DESCRIPTION** | **AMOUNT** | **%** |
| Opening Balance (A) | 13,625,000,000 | 2.83 |
|  |
| Statutory Allocation | 57,000,000,000 | 11.86 |  |
|  |
| VAT | 36,000,000,000 | 7.48 |  |
|  |
| 13% Derivation | 208,920,788,601 | 43.44 |  |
| IGR | 23,869,070,000 | 4.96 |  |
| Other Capital receipts (Stamp Duties, Loans, Grants, etc. | 141,578,773,768 | 29.43 |  |

The planned expenditure is also broken down as follows:

|  |
| --- |
| **PERSONNEL** |
| **ITEMS** | **AMOUNT** | **%** |
| Personnel Cost |  52,344,096,116.34  |   |
| Pensions and Gratuity |  13,029,815,318.00  |   |
| Contributory Pension Scheme |  2,400,000,000.00  |   |
| CRFC: TRANSFERS: OTHER PERSONNEL COST (18,000.00 MINIMUM WAGE, ARREARS, CORPERS ALLOWANCE ETC) |  1,346,460,935.00  |   |
| **TOTAL PERSONNEL** | **69,120,372,369.34** |  **14.37**  |
| **OVERHEAD** |
| **ITEMS** | **AMOUNT** | **%** |
|  Overhead Cost  |  94,337,000,000.00  |  |
|  Grants, Contributions and Subsidies  | 13,844,000,000.00  |   |
|  10% Contribution to SUBEB  |  2,500,000,000.00  |  |
|  RDAs  |  170,000,000.00  |  |
| Public Debt Services |  43,245,160,000.00  |  |
| **TOTAL OVERHEAD** | **154,096,160,000.00** |  **32.04**  |
| **CAPITAL** |
| **ITEMS** | **AMOUNT** | **%** |
|  CAPITAL EXPENDITURE  |  245,502,000,000.00  |   |
|  PLANNING RESERVE  |  12,275,100,000.00  |   |
| **TOTAL CAPITAL** |  **257,777,100,000.00** |  **53.59**  |
| TOTAL RECURRENT  |  |  **46.41**  |
| TOTAL CAPITAL  |  |  **53.59**  |

1. Mr. Speaker, we will endeavour to ensure strict discipline, transparency, and due process in the implementation of the 2024 budget. In this regard, the Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning is empowered to regularly analyse, monitor and evaluate the budget performance against the various government policies, programmes and projects.
2. In keeping with the priorities and goals of our prosperity agenda, the specific objectives of the 2024 budget include:
3. To increase our indigenous participation in the ownership and management of businesses.
4. To continue to provide relevant, quality and skilled manpower training facilities in our educational institutions.
5. To mobilize men and resources for a good healthcare delivery system.
6. To continue the infrastructural development in the areas of electricity, transportation, and roads (to link up our rural communities).
7. Harnessing our tourism potential to galvanize the State’s economy.
8. To continue the fight against crime and promote peace and unity in our State.
9. Ensure and promote the Ease of Doing Business and create a conducive environment for private businesses to thrive.
10. To continue to prioritize the welfare of the State Civil Service to derive maximum benefits from the workforce.

Consequently, a breakdown of the expenditure in some sectors/MDAs is as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **SECTOR** | **TOTAL** |
|  | **EDUCATION**  |  49,888,306,256.36  |
|  | **HEALTH**  |  26,041,947,470.72  |
|  | **AGRICULTURE** |  14,886,332,487.68  |
|  | **POWER**  |  6,049,606,384.84  |
|  | **WORKS & INFRASTRUCTURE**  |  141,837,745,560.20  |
|  | **ENVIRONMENT**  |  15,554,283,741.68  |
|  | **LANDS & HOUSING**  |  6,876,522,923.84  |
|  | **TRANSPORT**  |  6,424,223,686.84  |
|  | **YOUTHS & SPORTS** |  7,656,552,945.96 |

**CONCLUSION**

1. Mr. Speaker, Hon Members, let me again thank you for your unalloyed support to the Prosperity Administration. We have enjoyed mutual partnership since we took over the mantle of leadership. Indeed, I cannot thank you enough.
2. I also appreciate the contributions of Bayelsans in ensuring that the State is peaceful, before and during the recent governorship election. We need the spirit of tolerance, brotherhood, and unity. This is as we have long realized that peace is a requisite for economic growth and development.
3. I trust that your expeditious approval and subsequent oversight of the implementation of this budget will bring greater dividends to our people.
4. Mr. Speaker, Hon. Members, it is my singular honour to lay before you the **2024** **Budget of Sustainable and Shared Prosperity** for your kind consideration.