



**Press release, Monday, 14 June 2010**

## **Are the MPs going to rubber stamp the Budget again?**

If Members of Parliament (MPs) have no constitutional mandate to change any amounts in the presented budget, if they are not given budget books on time, and if they are given highly aggregated budget figures to approve, then the whole approval process is nothing but rubber stamping.

According to article 90.2 (b) of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, MPs cannot force the government to make any changes in the Budget unless they want the President to dissolve the Parliament. This means that on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2010, the Parliament must approve the budget which was tabled on 10<sup>th</sup> June, or else the Parliament will be dissolved pre-maturely.

Following the approval of the budget, Sikika is calling for MPs to go back to their respective constituencies. Sector budget discussions are not supposed to change any figures since the entire budget was already approved on 14<sup>th</sup> June. This means that budget discussions beyond 14<sup>th</sup> June contributes to unnecessary spending of taxpayers money

As per Article 96 of the Parliamentary Standing Orders (2007 Edition), MPs need to have received copies of government's budget estimates twenty one (21) days before a Parliament budget session starts. We know that until 8<sup>th</sup> June when the budget session started, MPs had not received budget books. How did MPs prepare to discuss budget speech?

Budget books present highly aggregated budget figures. Details for these figures are usually found in the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) documents. The government does not usually share MTEF with MPs. This means that in some instances, MPs approve expenditures without enough details.

Sikika is therefore of the opinion the on-going budget discussions serve only to rubber stamp the government budget and the cost to keep the MPs in Dodoma is unnecessary expenditure. MPs should instead go back to their constituents because they have no mandate to change any amounts in the presented budget, they were not given budget books 21 days before the session, and they have been presented with highly aggregated figures for approval.

Issued by

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