



OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF PARLIAMENT
PARLIAMENT BUILDING
OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL
FREETOWN
Tel: 232-076-615187
E-mail: admin@parliament.gov.sl



PRESS RELEASE

22nd May, 2015

GUMA BRIEFS COMMITTEE ON WATER RESOURCES

For the purpose of providing sustainable water supply to the residents of Freetown and its environs, the Parliamentary Committee on Water Resources which is chaired by Hon. Sualiho M. Koroma few days ago summoned the management of GUMA Valley Water Company; charged with the exclusive responsibility of providing water for Freetown; at Committee Room 1 in Parliament to give an update on the status of their activities undertaken in 2014.

According to the Chairman, this was the first time the management of GUMA had met with the entire membership of the Committee since it was reconstituted in the third session of the fourth Parliament. He recalled that such engagements last year resulted in an oversight of GUMA's existing facilities. He also assured the management of GUMA not to feel intimidated as the Committee was only performing its oversight function; whose findings and recommendations would be tabled and debated in Parliament for necessary action. He furthered, that the briefing was not meant to witch-hunt anyone, but to sincerely discuss their status report; as MPs had a lot of water related issues in their constituencies in Freetown.



Chairman with microphone addressing the management of GUMA

In his briefing to the Committee, the General Manager of Guma Valley Water Company, Mr. Bankole Mansaray, said that he was excited to come to Parliament and described it as a routine exercise every year. He referred to Parliament as an integral partner to assist in solving the challenging water situation in Freetown. He also said that GUMA needed the support of politicians because if they failed in their duties; politicians would receive immense pressure from their constituents. He said that GUMA's flagship dam at Mile 13 had a leakage problem with its square valve which had been purchased by DFID four years ago; but it is yet to be replaced because of the risk involved; and efforts are being made to get a replacement of the valve; the gadget that is used to clear the debris at a dam that is 850 feet above sea level. He called for the review of the GUMA Act, and told MPs that GUMA is not subvented by Government; and they paid for chemicals purchased for use at the water treatment works.

Most of the issues discussed during the course of the meeting relate to the Committee visiting existing GUMA facilities; GUMA water sources in terms of daily supply, retention and distribution of water to customers; a review of the GUMA Act; alternative water sources at Wellington and other areas, the effects of water packaging companies in the East and the need to reduce them; regular water supply to Parliament; the protection of water sources from encroachment and deforestation; water tariffs; replacement of old and damaged pipes; the use of PVC pipes as against metal pipes; water engineering and taps use of meters; improvement of community water sources and use of bowsers; who controls GUMA among the Ministry of Water Resources, NCP, Energy and Water Regulatory Commission; and heavy capital investments in GUMA to provide clean and sustainable pipe borne water for residents in Freetown.

The Chairman resolved at the end of the meeting, that the Committee has to further dialogue with GUMA, NCP, Energy and Water Regulatory Commission, EPA, the Ministries of Lands, Works, and other stakeholders to chart the way forward.