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PRESS RELEASE
02nd July, 2015

Parliament Engages Companies on EIA Licenses

The Parliamentary Committee on Lands, Country Planning, and the Environment on Wednesday the 01st July, 2015, engaged some companies operating in the country to produce their Environmental Impact Assessment Licenses and other related documents on their operations in the country.

The meeting which was held at the Conference Hall of the New Administrative Building in Parliament, was chaired by the Deputy Chairman of the Committee, Hon. Ibrahim Pateh Bah who said among other things, that it is the responsibility of Parliament to oversee the operations of MDAs, investigate their activities, and proffer recommendations based on their findings which have the potential to result in legislation.

He furthered that the Committee had summoned these companies to determine lawful compliance with safety regulations and protection of the environment with the view of adhering to international best practices for protection of the environment.

The Committee inquired into issues bordering on relevant documentations and other matters such as surface rent, corporate social responsibility and community engagements.

The companies which were arraigned before the Committee were Foresight Company, First Investment International Company, and MK Construction Group.

These three companies are operating in Port Loko District on stone mining. In dealing with these companies, the Committee observed that their EIA licenses are in place, excepting MK Construction Group, and they are yet to start full scale operations as a result of mobilizations and ebola. Also with the exception of MK Construction Group, the other two companies have started meeting their corporate social responsibility.

The Committee also observed that these companies do not understand certain provisions in the Mines and Minerals Act, 2009 which was passed by Parliament for the smooth operations of the mining companies.

The Committee advised Foresight and First International Companies to go back to their operational locations, and engage the stakeholders on their operations and put all relevant documentations in place to face Parliament on a date to be communicated later.

For MK Construction Group, officials of this company were detained for three hours in Parliament for failing to produce their EIA license, and for their involvement in other operations such as steel bending, welding and water packaging that are not indicated in the license issued to them. The Chief Executive Officer was not present at the meeting because he was out of the country. Those present proved incompetent to deal with the issues raised by the Committee.

The Chairman and Members of the Committee also observed that certain companies are operating in this country without proper documentations in place. The Chairman said in strong terms that serious action will be instituted against any company that is found wanting of breaking the law.

The meeting was adjourned "sine die".