



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

THIRD SESSION –SECOND MEETING

TUESDAY, 11TH MAY, 2021

SESSION – 2021/2022



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PARLIAMETARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

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Second Meeting of the Third Session of the Fifth Parliament
of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone.

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held Tuesday, 11th May, 2021.

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THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

**THIRD SESSION – SECOND MEETING
OF THE FIFTH PARLIAMENT
OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC**

Tuesday, 11th May, 2021.

I. PRAYERS

[The Table Clerk, Mr Edward S. Lebbie, Read the Prayers]

[The House met at 11:15 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown]

[The Rt. Hon. Speaker, Dr. Abass Chernor Bundu in the Chair]

The House was called to Order

Suspension of S. O. 5[2]

COMMUNIATION FROM THE CHAIR

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA [Leader of Government Business]: Mr Speaker, I want to amend the Order Paper.

[I]. Prayers;

[II]. Records of Votes and Proceedings for Monday the 10th May, 2012;

[III]. Announcement by Mr Speaker;

[VI]. Laying of papers.

Take note of this! These are the amendments:

Honourable Mathew S. Nyuma, Leader of Government Business:

[A] Treaty for the establishment of the African Medicine Agency.

[B]

[i]. Electronic Cash Register Regulations 2021;

[ii]. The Goods and Services Tax Act *[Act No. 6 of 2009]* and

[iii]. Statutory Instrument No. 2 of 2021.

[C] The Income Tax *[Transfer Pricing]* Regulations 2021. The Income Tax Act, Act 2000, *[Act B1, 8IF2000]* and Statutory Instrument No. 3 of 2021

[V]. Government Motion

[A] The Minister of Mines and Mineral Resources; and

[B] The Minister of Transport and Aviation.

I move that the following amendments be adopted by the House.

THE SPEAKER: I hope all of you have the Amendments. What is your point of Order?

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: It is in relation to the Order Paper that we have. I think the Leader of Government Business is reading from a different Order Paper than the one we have in our hands. If it is an Amendment, all of us sitting on this side have different Order Papers from what he is reading. The Leaders there have a different Order Paper.

THE SPEAKER: Your point is well taken, hold on! The Whip of the Opposition, bear with me.

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH [*Leader of the Opposition*]: Mr Speaker, save your breath.

THE SPEAKER: Bear with me, Leader of the Opposition, kindly take your seat all of you, this is a very simple matter. I will now ask the Leader of Government Business very slowly to introduce the Amendment again.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Alright Mr Speaker. I said after the announcement of Mr Speaker, we will start the fourth item chronologically. I said after the announcement of Mr Speaker, we will have the fourth item, laying of papers. Announcement, Honourable Mathew S. Nyuma [*Leader of Government Business*]

“A” under item [4]; Treaty for the establishment of the African Medicine Agency

THE SPEAKER: Hold on there! You who complaint about not having received the Amendment, you are not listening when the Amendments are being repeated [*undertone*].

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: But I said, the Amendment item [4], inserted.

THE SPEAKER: He is still introducing the Amendment to the Order Paper that had been distributed.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I am doing it Mr Speaker. What I have done is for your own convenience. I can understand Mr Speaker!

THE SPEAKER: And you are?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: He is fasting Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: And you are deliberately refusing to listen, and to take note of the Amendments. Instead, I noticed this continuous unending exchange between you and the Leadership. With the greatest respect Honourable Ibrahim Ben Kargbo, I have not given you the Floor. If only you pay attention, it will be ok; you will make the necessary Amendments as he goes through them.

HON. DR MAHMOUD M. KALOKOH: Point of Order Mr Speaker!

THE SPEAKER: Another one?

HON. DR MAHMOUD M. KALOKOH: For this same issue.

THE SPEAKER: Are you going to help me?

HON. DR MAHMOUD M. KALOKOH: On this same issue, my point is that the Order Paper he is reading from is already in possession of some people here. This is what we feel jittery about. If he should make the Amendment, let us get this paper he is reading from.

THE SPEAKER: No! We proceed on the assumption that the Amendment he is making is not available to all the MPs.

HON. DR MAHMOUD M. KALOKOH: He has it.

THE SPEAKER: It is most unfortunate.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, he needs to sit down, it is an unfortunate statement coming from the Honourable Member.

HON. DR MAHMOUD M. KALOKOH: It is not unfortunate.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you no longer have my permission, take your seat! You are creating more confusion here.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, can I precede? We are expecting to pray tomorrow.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, before you proceed hold on. Honourable Members, I advise that you take your Order Paper and your pens and have them ready,

so that you can make the necessary amendments as the Leader of Government Business reads them out. Over to you Mr Leader!

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Slowly

THE SPEAKER: You know some of them are still half asleep.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Insert item [4], Laying of Papers. Honourable Matthew Sahr Nyuma, Leader of Government Business.

[4a]. Treaty for the establishment of the African Medicines Agency

THE SPEAKER: Stop there!

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I will!

THE SPEAKER: Give them time to write. Ask your Members on your side.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Inaudible!

THE SPEAKER: Go ahead Leader.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you.

[b] Electronic Cash Register Regulations 2021. The Goods and Services Tax Act No. 6 of 2009, Statutory Instrument No. 2 of 2021; and

[c] The Income Tax Transfer Pricing Regulation [Transfer Pricing Regulations 2021]. The Income Tax Act 2000, [Act b1 8IF2000] Statutory Instrument No. 3 of 2021.

Government Motion should be the fifth item.

[a] The Minister of Mines and Mineral Resources; and

[b] The Minister of Transport and Aviation. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the amendment proposed to the house be adopted.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder to that Motion?

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I so second.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Motion to Amend the Order Paper has been carried]

THE SPEAKER: Let us now take up the Votes and Proceedings for 45th Sitting held on Monday, 10th May, 2021.

II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON MONDAY, 10TH MAY, 2021

THE SPEAKER: We shall skip Pages 1 to 4 and start from Page 5. Page 5? Page 6?

HON. MOSES B. JORKIE: *[V]* Loan Agreement, Construction of Tikonko Kpetema. The word there is "Kpetema" and not "Kpetemba."

THE SPEAKER: Any other? Page 7? Page 8? Can someone move for the adoption of the Votes and Proceedings?

HON. MOSES B. JORKIE: I so move Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. MOHAMED B. SHAW: I so second the Motion.

[Records of Votes and Proceedings for Monday 10th May 2021 has been Adopted as amended]

III. ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR SPEAKER

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, the only announcement I have to make this morning is in pursuance of what I said yesterday when I introduced some uncertainty about the venue for the State Opening of Parliament. I have been advised that every deliberate effort is being made to ensure that the State Opening is held where it should be held and that is in the Chambers of Parliament. I go by that advise and I hope and pray they are not mistaken and that come 18th we shall all be present to witness the

State Opening of Parliament and the introduction of the beginning of a new session. I thank you all for your attention.

IV. PAPERS LAID

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I beg to lay the following items on the Table of the House:

[a] Treaty for the Establishment of the African Medicines Agency;

[b] Electronic Cash Register Regulation 2021. The Goods and Services Tax Act *[Act No. 6 of 2009]* Statutory Instrument No. 2 of 2021; and

[c] The Income Tax *[Transfer Pricing]* Regulation 2021, the Income Tax Tax Act 2000, *[Act B1 8IF2000]*, Statuary Instrument No. 3 of 2021 *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Before your point of order, I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge people in our midst this morning, Dr Austin Demby, our Minister of Health and Sanitation *[Applause]*. He is accompanied by two eminent personalities, whose introduction have equal privilege to make, Dr Michelle Sidiabby, who is the former Under Secretary General of the United Nations and now special envoy for the establishment of the African Medicines Agency *and* Dr Margret Agama, Director of Health and Humanitarian Affairs in the African Union Commission *[applause]*. You are most welcome. They are here in connection with the first set of papers that have been laid on the Table of the House. That is to say, the treat for the establishment of the African Medicines Agency, we thank you for the great effect you are leading in that direction and be assured that this House stands ready and willing to lend it fullest support. I thank you.

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: Yes Mr Speaker, Point of Order.

THE SPEAKER: What is your Point of Order?

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise on S.O *[25]* in tandem with Section 177 of the Constitution.

THE SPEAKER: S.O [25]?

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: Yes Mr Speaker! Considering the sensitivity of the important document being laid by our Leader, pursuant to the Section I have just cited, Section 177, I ask that within the 21 days period, Parliament debate these documents laid before the House. Mr Speaker, let it happen at a date you will specify before the expiration of the 21 days. Yes, we have some of the documents, we have the income tax, we know that one has to do with alteration of taxes and that powers lies on Parliament to sit and understand the content of the alteration, so that Parliament can be better informed as to the kind of alteration we may want or the kind of plus we want to actually amend. And also, the Electronic Cash Register Regulations are also very important document that also needs the proper attention of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, on that note, being that the section will be ending on 18th , we are asking that before the expiration of the 21 day period, Parliament considers a debate on this particular document.

THE SPEAKER: Sorry, there is some vibration coming from the mike you are using. There is some technical fault that I did not quite hear you.

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: Alright, I said considering the sensitivity of the documents laid by our Leader of Government Business, pursuant to Section 177 of the Constitution, which requires these documents to be laid in Parliament and then take the full force of the Law after 21 days. On that note, I asked that because of the sensitivity of these documents, we debate them before the expiration of the 21 days period. The documents I am referring to has to do with the three Principal documents that have to do with the tax alteration, measuring about the Income Tax amendment, the transfer pricing Income Tax Pricing Regulation, GST and the Electronic Cash Register Regulations 2021.

THE SPEAKER: Very well!

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: That is why I moved that we debate them before the expiration of 21 days period.

THE SPEAKER: Very well, there is no problem! I take that as a notice of intention.

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: I will do the needful.

THE SPEAKER: Very well point taking, shall we proceed please.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you very much Honourable Speaker. I know the provision my colleague on the other side cited and I know the ramifications you will get in what that provision is required. So what I will do for the edification of the House and for Members to understand the instrument, we will try to get the NRA personnel to come and engage Parliament before the expiration of the 21 days, so that we can understand the instrument properly. Mr Speaker, it is not going to be easy for any Member to get two third, but it will be good for us to engage NRA, so that we can have some discussions around the tax waivers, tax Instrument before the expiration of the 21 days. Thereafter, we can now come to the Chamber for debate, so I am going to take that line of action. I will call them to engage Members of Parliament and we will now come for the debate. Thank you. If we get the Motion, but even though we will not, we will come.

HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH: Mr Speaker, I join the Leader of Government Business, but for clarification, the intent of the Honourable Member is not to overturn the instrument that is not the intent.

THE SPEAKER: The intent?

HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH: Is not to overturn, that is not the intent. That is why I appreciate the statement made by the Leader of Government Business, for him to push for the experts, be it from the Ministry of Finance or the NRA to take Parliament through these documents. But at no point in time, has there been any intention by the Member from Tonkolili in his statement to overturn the documents. For the records!

THE SPEAKER: I perfectly understood what the Member from Tonkolili said.

HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH: So it is good for it to be on the records, because when we start to talk about it...*[interruption]*

THE SPEAKER: Let us not open up the debate yet, he has just given notice of his intention.

HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH: Mr Speaker, the Leader has made it very easy for the House. He has taken the responsibility to push further to get the experts to take us through. I am not sure we will need a notice for a Motion that is the point I am making. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Very well, we are on the same page. Now, I am sure I speak the minds of many when I said, I intent to rise latest 12:30 pm, by my own clock. So bear that in mind as we proceed, we will go through the next items please. I understand some Members of Parliament want to go and pray with their constituents and then you will pray with me in Freetown. Shall we move please. Is the Minister of Mines here?

V. GOVERNMENT MOTION

[A]. THE MINISTER OF MINES AND MINERAL RESOURCES

THE SPEAKER: Can you come forward, please go ahead.

MR TIMOTHY M. KABBA (*The Minister of Mineral Resources*): Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House hereby ratifies the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of the House of Parliament on Monday, 10th May, 2021;

[i]. Railway importing Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone [*GOSL*] and Kingho Railway Port and Rail Company Limited.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Kingho Railway Port Agreement that was signed in December between the Government of Sierra Leone and the said Company, came into an Agreement as a result of several works that were done by the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources, the office of the Attorney General and Minister of Justice and the National Minerals Agency [NMA]. Bearing in mind, the Government of Sierra Leone required assistance in September 2020, when Shandon sliced their operations licenses in Tonkolili Iron Ore mines concealed. The Government at the moment did not show our capability to take care and maintain the assets that were depleted to us. And at

that time, he who adopting the Mineral right which gave them the exclusive right to mine the Tonkolili Mines...*[interruption]*

THE SPEAKER: Mr Minister, you can go ahead.

THE MINISTER: I have the humanity of the Honourable Speaker Sir! So the infrastructure was then given to "Kingho" for temporary care and maintenance, bearing in mind that the structure has already suffered vadarisation and theft and other adverse effect caused by the long hall that the asset was not utilized by any Company. And after the care and maintenances was conducted and maintained by Kingho, Government then decided to enter an agreement with Kingho, Railway and Port for the use of humility maintenances and expansion of the asset. That document was designed and negotiated for the best interest of the people and the Government of Sierra Leone. The document was taken to Cabinet and Cabinet gave its approval to the document and concluded that the document should be brought to Parliament for ratification.

Mr Speaker Honourable Members, another fixed call we agreed on for that payment was about \$1,250,000 [One Million Two Hundred and Fifty Thousand United States dollars] per annul.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, previously, we had an agreement, the Government of Sierra Leone and the previous users of the asset for a payment of about \$250,000 [Two Hundred and Fifty Thousand United States Dollars] annually, but when the asset became the only property of the Government, we then negotiated for that amount of money for over 100% increment of the fee. Mr Speaker, this asset was given to Kingho for two years with quality enjoyment, but with the caveat that if any Bulk-Mining Company emerges along the corridors of Part-Loko District and Tonkolili District, they will have access to the Railway Port infrastructure. Other than that, those facilities would be owned by the Mining Sector of those that are coming from those areas.

Mr Speaker Honourable Members, we know that Agriculture is picking up in that part of the country. The Wrong Ball Project is also intended that if that Company elect to use the Railway Port facilities as an infrastructure to enable the shipment and transportation of their products, they may also have access to that particular Rail. So the benefit of that Rail and the expansion of the Rail will be unprecedented.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in the past arrangement, no other Company had the opportunity of using that Rail, those who are operating them had used that Rail infrastructure as a competitive tool to wage out new entrance to the Bob Sub-Sector of the Mining Industry. Today, that is an enabler to make sure that the Mining Sector becomes competitive. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, incidentally yesterday, the Government of Sierra Leone and one of the Companies that is operating in Sierra Leone called SL Mining, agreed on an out of court settlement, which will enable that front yield to be opened especially this asset. It enables the movement of all that will eventually reduce cost of production and increase our revenue.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this asset if ratified will give us the people of Sierra Leone and the Government the opportunity to make 2.5 million dollars as supposed to what we would have made in the tune of about \$500,000, if the whole Agreement was to stand.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Agreement, if ratified by Parliament will have a greater benefit to the people and to the Government of Sierra Leone. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: With that?

THE MINISTER: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House hereby ratifies the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of the House on Monday, 10th May, 2021, "Railway and Port Lease Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the People Railway Port Company Limited."

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Minister of Mines and Mineral Resources for his statement to the House.

Question Proposed

THE SPEAKER: I will entertain not more than three speakers from either sides, starting of course with the Chairperson of the Committee, Parliamentary Oversight Committee on Mines. Mr chairman, you have the floor.

HON. SAA EMERSON LAMINA: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the House today stands to ratify the Railway and Port Lease Agreement

between the Government of Sierra Leone and Kingho Railway and Port Company Limited.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Sierra Leone will breach a side for a comprehensive and detailed agreement. We might not have all of the brightest and finest legal minds, but Mr Speaker, for the Honourable Minister to reach his conclusion of making a concrete agreement on behalf of the Government of Sierra Leone with the approval of Cabinet and today, we are about to ratify the document and it will be a big Economic Boost to the people of Sierra Leone. We are talking of an agreement between the leisure and the lessee of a 200 kilometre Railway from Pepel to Tonkolili Mines; this is an agreement that will end the monopolistic tendencies of the past. Before this time, Shangdon created a whole monopoly on the rail, nobody uses it. But with this new Agreement, it makes Sierra Leoneans feel that this is a 100% asset owned by Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, few years ago, we were strangers to our property in this Country. Today, it is being owned by Sierra Leoneans. The lessee and the leisure; the Lessee knows that this is a property of our land. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have seen from the Hansard of Parliament a 99 year old agreement, with little or no benefit. But with this agreement, it is just 6 years and the interesting part about this Agreement Section 2, Section 3[5], clearly put it out; the first 3 years, Sierra Leone has the authority to open the consortium or to call a manager to manage the very Mines if the Lessee falters along the line. So before 2027 expires, Sierra Leone has the authority to call a consortium to manage this Rail. From the Hansard, I understood that the leisure use to pay the lessee which is the lender of the particular facility and the leisure use to pay about 250,000 dollars.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it will also surprise you from the 2019 Appropriation, the National Minerals Agency [NMA] as well as the Ministry of Mines struggled to show how those monies were paid [250,000 dollars]. With this new Agreement, Sierra Leone will benefit 1,250,000 dollars; you can imagine the disparity [Applause]! Before this time, 10% amounting to 250,000 dollars were hardly seen. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, even our newest friend SL Mining, Marampa Mines, will be beneficiary to this

particular facility. Before this time it was monopolistically owned by just one Company, but even our newest friend in the Mining Sector will also be a beneficiary to ship out the Mines and the Marampa 63, 65 grade points, can you imagine?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Agreement also gives leverage for its expansion to Bumbuna as well as to Kambia as the years unfold, which means several of our Sierra Leoneans will have jobs and will benefit. From the Agreement, one of the interesting things I remembered was the launch of Pepel Six months back. I remembered that within that community of Pepel, they are not only practising the Local Content Policy, but they are practicing locally, which means the Company gives authority to local people to form Village Recruitment Committee. They look within the village setup if they have people with the technical know-how for a particular job; the family make sure they exhaust that particular locals, before going out to look for a human resource.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the time will not permit us to look at the whole sections of this Agreement, because it will spend Parliament to write a whole compadium. Mr Speaker, Section 54 of the Mines and Minerals Act, gives Sierra Leone the authority to get this asset that at the termination of a particular Mining Company, those assets belong to the Government and between that particular period we were told that only compensation will be paid by those that will take over to be owned and it was a whole debate. I must commend the Minister upon taking his office, in three days [72 hours] with thorough psychological theory, negotiating on behalf of Sierra Leone and even the Chinese Embassy came on board. They came on board because it was a Chinese Company going out and a Chinese Company coming in. They came in because they wanted all parties involved to have a win-win agreement. So, the Minister must be commended Mr Speaker. I think he deserves a standing ovation [Applause].

Mr Speaker, today he has brought asset for Sierra Leoneans and Sierra Leonean children even for the future. I also admired Schedule 1, Schedule 2, which give a vivid description and also give litigation and stabilizing clauses to this Agreement. It is very important for an agreement to have a stabilizing clause. It gives the Government of Sierra Leone authority at any time to even Institute Audit. It makes us, the lessee very

powerful as against the leisure. It means at any time, the Government of Sierra Leone can institute audit on what is going on with the activity of the Company. This Agreement gives us authority, if you trace Sections 18, 14 and 12 of the Agreement.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, without saying much, I urge Honourable Members to speedily ratify this Agreement, between the Government of Sierra Leone and Kingho Railway. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. Before I call on my next speaker, I will like to take this opportunity on behalf of Parliament to extend our very best wishes to Dr Sidibay and his colleague for giving us the benefit of their presence here today and I want to give them the assurance that Sierra Leone will be among the first countries that will ratify the treaty for the establishment of the African Medicine Agency. We extend our very best wishes as we progress with the ratification process. We wish you well and please come back again whenever you want. Sierra Leone is ready to receive you at any time. I thank you and wish you the best of luck.

THE SPEAKER: I recognise the Honourable Member from Kambia, Masongbala.

HON. ABDUL A. KAMARA: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today is indeed an historic day for the people of Sierra Leone, especially the North-West region. Mr Speaker, when you listen to the Minister, you will realise that we from the North-West Region of Sierra Leone are happy due to the fact that he mentioned about SL Mining and Government is going for negotiation, as that will improve the Economy of our Region and our people. We have look forward long for this Agreement, so we say thank you Mr Minister...*[interrupted]*

THE SPEAKER: I think the Minister deserves the loudest applause, especially from those of us from the North-Western Region *[Applause]*. That particular Agreement has been long coming.

HON. ABDUL A. KAMARA: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, sometimes it is very easy just to say, with time the people before us for what we have done that is making it easy. When I listened to the Leader of C4C, who also happens to be the Mines

Chairman, it was baffled to us as Members of Parliament and this attitude has to stop Mr Speaker, for the smooth running and for certain Agreements that are not controversial. Let us just go to the point and talk about the merits for us, but when you start to talk about monopoly and that the Rail will be run now by the Government, I tend to ask; was the Rail built overnight and just handed over to Government? There was process at that moment and there was a Minister before this Minister. So, sometimes just give kudos to those who came before you, for what they have done. By so doing, Sierra Leone will progress. Sometimes, we stand in this Well and pretend as if those who came before us were just bunch of fools who had nothing to do. It is just a culture of S.O 2 "lay belleh tin." It is really not auguring well for this country So we really need to stop this. The ownership of this Rail in Serra Leone was done by the last Government and this Agreement indeed is a laudable one. Now that we have other companies who are to use it, the monopoly is not going to be there again. It is very good and we applaud the Minister for that. But creating a picture as if people before him did nothing is big mistake. the Minister may not have seen that, but a Member of Parliament is that in this Well, it is absorbed and we must stop that Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I will ask the Member to allow clarification.

HON. SAA E. LAMINA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am representing the people of Constituency 030. Mr Speaker, Section 98 of Sierra Leone 1991 Constitution, gives me the leverage not to be intimidated, so let me express my opinion. Mr speaker, the document I was referring to are not strange to me at all. I have been very friendly with the Archives and the Hansard. Mr Speaker, I have read the past Agreement, so I am was just expressing my candid and sincere opinion. So, there is no need for the Honourable Member to attack my personality.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, you have made your clarification.

HON. SAA E. LAMINA: I thank you Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: The Honourable Member may proceed with his contribution.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Thank you Mr Speaker. Honourable Members, sometimes, I know the body language of Mr Speaker and when he tells an Honourable Member to continue, it means he understands there was more sense in what you were saying. Mr Speaker, in 2007, Sierra Leone did not have mining companies and by 2018, we have a Railway and other mining companies in Sierra Leone and the Economy was moving. We still emphasized as Sierra Leoneans that we want the Mining Sector to do well. Because when the Mining Sector contributes or performs well, the advantage is to us as Sierra Leoneans and we continue to enjoy what we deserved.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is sad that even Lunsar of late, the people do not enjoy Electricity any more. But when the Mining was booming that town never went into a ghost town again. Now, it is almost like ghost town. When you go to Pepel, the same thing happens, life is not moving. So we are happy as Sierra Leoneans to see the Mining Sector boom again. Our interest as Sierra Leoneans is to you Mr Minister in some of these agreements. But again, I want to signal this passion Mr Speaker, this is not new to this Parliament and I keep calling your attention as the Honourable Speaker, that sometimes let us not go back in doing the wrong things. The Company is using the Railway already before we bring in this Agreement, so it will not even kill a fly before this Agreement is brought here. But the Government had started using the Rail already before this Agreement is brought to this House. But this culture of coming to clear up the mess when it has already been done is not good for the reputation of this House, and I will continue to say under your Leadership as a Speaker, some of these things ought to stop, or else you promised us we will not be a Rubber Stamp, but this is worst than rubber stamping. So we still look forward to the lease Agreements. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member from Kambia for his contribution. I will take one or two more before we wind up this debate. Now, I will give preference to the North-West, for reasons all of you will understand.

HON. ABDUL KARGO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am not only contributing to this debate...*[interruption]*

THE SPEAKER: What I notice from you Honourable is that you are more proximate to the problem.

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: I am not only contributing to this debate because I am a Member of Parliament, but I am contributing to this debate, but because I worked for African Minerals for five years. So I have served in the mining sector and I have enormous experience as a trained and qualified electrical and electronics Engineer.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I similarly want to thank the Minister for the great work he has done. Before now, it was a national cry that there is increase in inflation and an increment in the exchange rate. These are some of the reasons when you do not have foreign direct investment and dollars don't come to your country, there is every possibility that you may find it very difficult to have a stable exchange rate. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when I served as Engineer in African Minerals, now Kingho, there were a lot of families in this country that benefited from what was happening in Mining operations in the North-West and I was in the North-West was relatively at ease because the Mining Company used to respond to the needs of the community and used to also employ people from the community. So, there was a direct and indirect benefit from the people of this Nation. So when those mining operations were terminated Mr Speaker, it really disturbed not only the livelihood of the people, but it disturbed also the economy of this nation. That is why some of these things should not be trivialized.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Rail had been in operation and there is only a single company that was using it that is the African Minerals. But now that we have gone into another operation and Government is taking control of the Rail, it is a plus to us as a nation. But like I said, if you could go back and check, Mr Speaker, it was a deliberate attempt by the previous Government to ensure that they gave a Duty-Free Concession to those Mining Companies. Because it was not only Sierra Leone that has Iron Ore deposits, they have it in Ivory Coast, Guinea has a deposit of iron ore, Liberia also has, but the investor looked for where it is very easy for new entrance to come into

the business and when they checked, it was easy in Sierra Leone because there was Duty-Free Concession for these Mining Companies. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when they came and started operations, they were paying taxes to Government, they employed Sierra Leoneans, so that which they should have paid at the Port is now being utilized by the Country and the ordinary people who are employed by these companies. Well, let me tell you, when you raise taxes at the quay. For example, for those of you who do not know, we have BCM. BCM has over One Hundred tractors that they use. And for them to be able to clear a single tractor, they will pay more than 20 Million Leones. So meaning they are to pay billions of Leones just to clear those tractors. So why would not they look for a country in which it will be very easy for them to clear their tractors and begin operations. So, they would have circumvented Sierra Leone and go to another country. If it was difficult for them to have cleared all of those tractors, they deliberately choose Sierra Leone. When they came, it was the ordinary people that benefited from their operations.

Mr Speaker, today, if we are to talking about Kingho Mining Company, be aware that the structures are already there brought by African Minerals. Kingho would have found it very difficult if there was no Port, no Rail and no mining sites. So you must be appreciative to those who set the pace. Mr Speaker, it is very critical for us to note as a nation that there are some illegal mining activities going on, which this House should look at.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, before African Minerals left Sierra Leone, they left a deposit of Iron Ore, which was covered at the Port. Now that they have signed this new Agreement, we have to ask ourselves these questions; where are those tailings? Who is responsible for them? Where did they ship the trail to? So Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to say a very big thank you to our Minister. He has shown resilience and patriotism. The mining will not only benefit the inhabitants of the North-West, it will also benefit the whole nation. Mr Speaker, when we were at Pepel, there were people drawn from every nook and cranny of this country hosted in Pepel. So you will make the economy of this Country boomed again. So I want to seize this opportunity to thank

you for your good efforts. We always say it, regardless of the party you belong, when you do something that is correct, we say it to your face and when you do something that is bad, we will say it to your face. We want to also advise that the lease Agreement is looked at very properly.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to make it clear that in as much as we are Honourable Members from the North-West, who are very much appreciative of the efforts of the Minister, we want to similarly opine that we are totally appreciative, because this will have a far reaching effect on the economy of our nation. It will even decrease the exchange rates of our country, because you only talk about reduced exchange rate when you have dollars that are imported into the Country. And these foreign companies with import dollars, but Mr Speaker, let me make this point before I round up. *[Undertone]*. Am I protected?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I can see the Honourable Members to my right I have no intention of adjourning early to go and pray. So we will be here till tomorrow night.

HON. ABDUL KARGO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the information I am giving is very useful to the Minister that is why he is listening keenly. Some of you do not know that they pay for this kind of information. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is not only about the start of operations, but there are key issues I would want the Minister to look at, because these issues have created far reaching implications for Sierra Leoneans. When I was in Pepel as an Engineer, remember, I am a trained and qualified graduate from Fourah Bay College. I was paid less than the technician that was from Ireland, a person without a degree. But with his diploma certificate he was paid five times more than the Engineer that is trained and qualified in Sierra Leone. Am I protected?

THE SPEAKER: Order!

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: The Minister should ensure that Sierra Leoneans working for the company are protected, that lives of Sierra Leoneans working for the company are treated with utmost seriousness. The only crime, even those Engineers they brought from Ghana were paid three times than Engineers from Sierra Leone. The only crime we committed is to have Minerals in our own country of birth. That was the only crime, we were treated with the kind of inferiority and we were treated with a kind of dismissal. So Mr Minister, you have to pay keen attention to that, make sure that the resources are for Sierra Leoneans, we should benefit from the resources. So once more, I thank you for the opportunity, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member, and with that we will now bring this particular debate to a close starting with the Leader of the Opposition.

HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH: Mr Speaker we want to be heard in silence. Mr Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity. I want to join others in commending the Minister for bringing these Agreements to the House and also for the effort he has put in place since he assumed office. I am sure others before him did their best, but he is being the lucky one to appear before us with this Agreement. Mr Speaker, I heard a talk about 99 years lease Agreement without gaining anything. Mr Speaker for the records, there were no Rails between Ferengbehya and Peppel. It was someone who built that Rail. And it is like taking a lease for an empty plot of land as against taking a lease of a building, the cost will never be the same. It is just to clear the records; the cost will never be the same. As I said, I am commending the Minister because of the steps he has taken, but again, our Hansard must be kept straight. The records should be clear. That is why when I go back and read those statements, you made in the 80s, those debates are still there, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, the Minister knows very well, because he has travelled the world, he has worked in Russia, Cote d'Ivoire, with Companies that have invested heavily in infrastructure. The Minister knows that when they do those investments, definitely the concessions have to be there.

Mr Speaker, on that note, for the records, the Tonkolili Iron Ore project, invested over \$2 billion in this country, there is an MOU between Government and Shangdon. At a point in time Mr Speaker, there could have been nothing to lease, if there was no Rail. Kingho has not invested anything significant as far as I am concern. Even at this point up to this time, the Iron Ore they exported which I challenged are tailings. The Rail that has been used was constructed by somebody else. We will support them because we want them to succeed. We have made it very clear, but we must follow procedures. I said to the Leader of Government Business yesterday that we will accept and accommodate these Agreements, because we want to make progress. But the procedure will have been the mining lease Agreement before the Rail and Port Agreement. You must mine before you transport, but we do not want to rock the boat, just because we want jobs for our people. So I said to the Leader of the House that we will accommodate the Agreements and that is why we are here today. If we wanted to obstruct, we would not have accommodated it, because putting the cart before the horse in itself is a challenge. But as I said, we would support the things that will alleviate the sufferings of our citizens. That is why we are here.

Mr Speaker, again, it is true that the Agreement for the African Rail and Port was monopolistic, but that was a condition upon which they were encouraged to do the construction. We are fortunate that it has been reverted to Government, had they not built it, it will not have been reverted today. So we are happy that the African Minerals built that Rail. Mr Speaker, S.O [2] *"take tym kill anch leh u see ein gut."* Had we chased them away?

THE SPEAKER: Before I give the Floor to the Leader of Government Business, I do hope that both the Minister and the Chairperson of the Oversight Committee have taken note, because of what has been said. That should be taken as a very clear notice that the Oversight Committee should apply the strictest rules of Oversight and vigilance in ensuring that whatever has been agreed, honoured and respected. There is no intention here that one Company will have a monopoly over the use of the facilities that we are talking about; they should be made available to all other mining companies

along the corridor from Tonkolili down to Pepel. All those Companies should have access to the facility without unnecessary obstacles. Yes, Leader of Government Business!

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you Mr Speaker. Thank you very much my colleague Honourable Members on the other side for your contributions. Mr Minister, thank you very much for the job you are doing. What you have done is to translate rhetoric into action and that is what exactly you have done. We are not saying there was no Government, what we are saying is that we are here to change the narrative and that is the philosophy of the New Direction. The New Direction is to realise that in this very Mineral Sector, it should be people centred and that is what we have done. And that is what we are going to continue doing in the end of the first term of this Administration. So for you to understand what we have done Mr Speaker, I just want to take you briefly through the Agreement. What the Minister first did was to kill what we called monopoly, which is fairly enshrined in the Agreement. There is not going to be any monopoly anymore. If you think there is going to be expansions in operations, there is a facility for the lessees to understand that the lessees have to bring the other partners. So they talk about third party operations. With that the lessees and the lessees will come together to ensure that there is a third party agreement. So it is very clear that all of them will come on board. It is not like the previous agreement as stated by my colleague on the other side; you were very clear on that depending on the angle you were coming from at a particular time. Initially, we are about to invest into a mining agreement where they need to attract the investor, so they said it should be a monopoly; so it depends on the conditions. Now, you have met a structure, what you have done is to kill the monopoly, which is a very good one from this Administration. So you have built upon what was there from the previous Administration. What is our concern is how we manage this whole business of the Mining Rail and Port to benefit the common man of Sierra Leone. Of course, the commencement date, if at anytime ratified and passed in this Parliament, possibly today, extends up to 2027. So you have not given a blanket cheque to say it is going to be Fifty years or One Hundred years.

You have said, let us have an agreement that we have a terminal time, and you have said in Section 2 of the Agreement that it will pass through from the days of commencement right down to January, 2027.

Mr Minister, what you have done again is not like you are going to wake up one morning and try to terminate the agreement or the negotiation. From the commencement date to that of 2027, there is going to be 3 years period that we will give as notice in the negotiation that if you are going to accept the renewal of the Agreement and if you are going to reject it. You have to give a period of thirty days, which you have stated in our agreement that is in Section [2.03]. The reason I am drawing your attention to this is because, I do not want you to be under the influence of any directives that you can just wake up one morning regardless of the agreement and you want to do something else. It has to be within the frame work of this Agreement we are going to ratify here today. So, I draw your attention to Section [2] of the Agreement which you negotiated to bring to this House.

Mr Speaker, I want to say a big thank you for giving us a clear figure for the annual rent of \$ 50,000 and I thank you very much for bringing us to speed. It is very clear that we now understand what we are going to receive annually as rent for this particular arrangement, so it is good for us to know as Honourable Members. Mr Speaker, I drew your attention to the contract frame work, which if you are going to abort the contract at a point that you are not going to pay attention to Section [2] provision, it will be a problem for us to get this money for the annual rental. The Minister also mentioned that in the Rail and Port services, you know we have Rail in Guinea and we have it in the Sub-Region. I am happy you mentioned the Clause that the operation of the Rail and Port is going to be purely based on the West African Sub-Regional Arrangements. You are not going to take it out of scope; you do not bring in arrangement from China or Europe. You have looked at the African setting, because if you even look at the AU, this is one area we have talked about, the trade link between one African State to another. So, if we have the same Rail and Port Arrangement

between the Sub-regions, it is good for us to enhance trade development. I thank you very much for bringing us to speed on that.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we address our issues as Africans, because that is very important to our Agreement that is also mentioned in Section [4] of the Rail and Port services in Section [4.01]. The Minister mentioned in the same Section that this is what interest me the most, I will like Members to read because of time, but I will refer them to the relevant Sections. Go to Section [4.03], Page 6, which talked about producers, traders and Agricultural activities. They say the site of production and the site of consumption are very difficult. The chain between the site of production and the site of consumption are having serious problems with the distribution chain. But what we have done in this Agreement that you did not mention is, if you are living within the North-West Region where you have the Rail is advantageous to farmers to transport their goods to the city. Farmers will not have problem in transporting the commodities from where they are produced to where they are going to be consumed. You know if you are going to produce, for example, in Koindu to Freetown, you know the roads, from Koindu to Kailahun is a difficult terrain and from Kailahun, you come somewhere along the line, you will have difficulties somewhere along the line with transportation. But this time, you are talking about a smooth ride for the producers, for the traders and for those who are involved in some Agricultural activities. They can give them privilege to use this Rail and even the Train to help them take their cargoes, but also to transport the Iron Ore mined by Kingho. Mr Speaker, this is the way we do agreement to help people, but what is not spelt out is the Administrative arrangement, the cost have to be negotiated. You have to make them very comfortable and even what you can do from the annual rent that you are going to receive, you prepare somewhere they can come and settle and do their business, around the North-West Region. Because even what you said was a challenge between the Tonkolili and that of Bombali. When they brought in the African Minerals Company, the Head Quarter was in Bombali District, Makeni, and the people from Tonkolili challenged that one. What you have done in this Agreement is to make sure you spelt out where the Head Quarter should be, you mentioned it in

Section 4, Page 6; The Minister said, the Head Quarter should be around the North-West Region around Port-Loko District. The Minister was very specific in the negotiation and we learnt from our mistakes.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it was good when we had the African Minerals, the London Mining, but there are certain things that we are negotiating, specific things that will not bring some struggle within the Mining Sector. People should benefit from their natural resources, so what you have done specifically is that this area should have the Head Quarter in Port-Loko District, North-West Region. Now, what we are encouraging you to do administratively is to use part of the \$1.2m that you are going to be collecting to create a Market Centre where people can move all over to come and buy the commodities coming in from the Agricultural Sector, because you are bringing them from where they are going to be produced from a very rough terrain. Imagine somebody coming from a terrain in Ferengbeya, passing through somewhere in Tonkolili, the terrains are a little bit difficult, so you can transform these things into market areas where they can come and get swift sales and people can even move from Freetown and other places to access those goods. I encourage you to do so administratively and I know you have the potential to do so.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we also mentioned about construction and maintenance in Section [6.01] of the Agreement. The Honourable Member from Kono, Honourable Saa Emerson Lamina complimented that you have done well. Mr Minister, you have transformed rhetoric into a reality and that is what we should do, we should live by what we give out to our people. This is very key because Sierra Leoneans lack maintenance culture that is our typical description. We do not believe in maintenance, so what the Minister has done skilfully is that the sole responsibility of maintenance lies squarely on the lessees. They can take care of maintenance irrespective of any other thing, because it is enshrined in the Agreement. It is very clear that you do not have to give excuses when you want to do maintenance, when there is maintenance, you have the right to do Audit at any time. It is your responsibility to take up Audit; it is also in the Agreement. Mr Speaker, take note that Kingho will make sure that they are charged

with the responsibility on routine maintenance, which is in the Agreement. You can read Page 7, [6.02], which is very clear on that.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the Minister for bringing us to speed. He has brought value, because it is owned by Sierra Leone in what you have negotiated. So you are protecting the Rail from going beyond damage, because of maintenance issue. And what is also clear for the Port and Rail you negotiated is that you looked at standards in terms of safety operations. If you read Section 7, Page 8, control of Rail and Port operations Agreement, it is good to have like what you did for the Sub-Regional Rail and Port Construction. What you have done for operations and for revelations you exaltedly dealt with the regulations in term of safety.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Leader of Government Business for that very comprehensive overview. Mr Minister, you have listened with rapt attention to the comments and issues raised by Members of Parliament, briefly try to respond to them and then we will conclude the debates.

MR TOMOTHY KABBAH: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I know you have the moral authority to plead with you to just make an adequate response to the sentiments expressed by respective Members of the House. Mr Speaker with your permission, S.O 2 "If you see Cow dea lick another Cow e bak, nor mean say na sweet e sweet oh, but na becos dem all comot futa." What does that mean Mr Speaker, Honourable Members? It means they have a common taste and that is what Honourable Members have demonstrated today in your collective support for this Agreement that is going to expand the Economic benefit of the people of Sierra Leone. Honourable Members, your sentiments and concerns are quite legitimate and I want to start with those concerns expressed, especially by one time class mate at Fourah Bay College, Honourable, Abdul Kargbo in relation to the concession of duty free waiver.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, those are contained in the Extractive Industry Revenue Act, complemented by the Mines and Minerals Act and the 2009, Mines and Minerals Act, which give the Government, automatically privileges and responsibilities

about the free waiver. So what was obtaining then in terms of the physical are the same things obtaining now. The companies still benefit from duty free waiver and in fact, there is an improvement. There is a Single Window System where companies apply directly when they get their consignments coming into the country. We get an electronic alert from NRA and response; we make our recommendations to the Minister of Finance, for the privilege of having duty free waiver in favour of those Companies. So nothing has changed and these opportunities and privileges are in consistent with the Mines and Mineral Act of 2009 and the Extractive Industries Revenue Act of 2018.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with labour issues, the Regulatory Infrastructure draws the responsibilities of different Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), It is the Ministry of Labour and Social Security that is responsible for labour issues. But we are working with them earnestly to make sure that Sierra Leoneans are not disadvantaged in their employment with these multi-nationals. Indeed, the infrastructure was constructed by 25% share which Shandon had in the African Minerals Arrangement. But I want to also state here categorically that a particular arrangement was not covered by any particular law in Sierra Leone. It was just a gentle man's understanding for the use of the Railway and Port that was why it was even difficult for us to treat the Railway Port under the Mines and Mineral Act. But Section 53 of the Mines and Mineral Act, only gives the Minister of Mines and Mineral Resources the power to cancel a mineral right and indicate to the Investor the inventory of the Machinery and fixed Assets and suggest the way the Government and the Company would choose or elect to dispose that Assets.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, unfortunately, when we got to the negotiation of the Railway and Port, no law actually covers the Railway and Port. So it was a good will on the part of the People's Republic of China and the Government of Sierra Leone that we were enabled to acquire these assets. Of course, we must be very grateful to the Investors and those who entertain and made sure the Rail and Port infrastructure were constructed for the benefit of the Mining Sector.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this new Agreement stands out because it gives the opportunities to other Sectors to make use of this particular infrastructure for the wider diversification of our Economy. The Leader of the Opposition made mention of the M.O.U between Shandon and the Government of Sierra Leone. I want it to be known that the Government of Sierra Leone did not cancel Shandon's license. In 2017, Shandon indicated to the Government of Sierra Leone that they were going into liquidation because they could not manage their operations as a result of the recession in the Iron Ore commodity market.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, however, Section [53] was enacted, which automatically cancelled the license and Shandon indicated that they were not interested or even had the capability to further with their operations, so that was how we amicably disengaged with Shandon with the caveat that even the Railway and Port, because the Railway and Port were initially operated by Shandon Railway and Port limited. The asset in Tonkolili was also owned and operated by Tonkolili Iron Ore Limited; both assets in the Tonkolili and Port-Loko Districts were subjected to reasonable compensation to Shandon. The liquidation process is on-going and it is a transparent and accountable process. So at the end of the day that will be gazetted and those third parties hands that supported the operation of Shandon, will be compensated with the money that will be obtained as a compensation for these assets.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the comments from Honourable Members were more of patriotic concerns that we should make sure that the Oversight Committee in Parliament works with the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources to provide oversight for the implementation of this particular Agreement. I am pleased because we have already been working amicably with our committee and the respective Members of this Parliament in making sure that we produce a Mineral Sector that is not partisan, a Mineral Sector that is not Regional, a Mineral Sector that is not tribal, but one that fulfils the transformational aspirations of His Excellency, the President under the New Direction Administration.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my doors are open to the Committee and all the Committees in Parliament to help us, you are a catalyst to our success, you are not filibustering our process, but enabling our processes. Mr Speaker, we are always open to your constructive criticism, Oversight and summons to be responsive to the concerns of our citizens.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House ratifies the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of the House on Monday, 10th May, 2021 on the "Railway and Port Agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and the Kingho Railway and Port Company limited."

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, the question is, that this Honourable House ratifies the Agreement which was laid on the Table of the House on Monday, the 10th may, 2021; namely, "the Railway and Port lease Agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and kingho Railway and Port Company Limited.

[Government Motion by the Minister of Mines and Mineral Resources has been ratified]

THE SPEAKER: I thank you Mr Minister. You may now take leave off us. Honourable Members, let us move on very quickly for the next ratification.

[B]. THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND AVIATION

THE SPEAKER: Is he here?

MR REX BHONAPHA (*The Deputy Minister of Transport and Aviation*): Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House here by ratifies the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of the House on Monday 10th May, 2021:

[i]. Amendment deal relating to the Bill, Built, Operate and Transfer Agreement for the Construction, Financing and Concession of Freetown International Airport, between the State of the Republic of Sierra Leone and Shuma Airport Sierra Leone Limited.

THE SPEAKER: Hold on! Mr Minister, I am compelled to take note that the holiday mood has already gripped the Well of the House and we are not yet in that holiday mood. I will ask for the doors to be shut very shortly. Carry on Mr Minister.

THE MIMNISTER: I thank you Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Let us try and make it short.

THE MINISTER: The Agreement between the Shuman group and the Government is based on Built Operate and Transfer [*BOT*] and it will last for a period of 25 years. After that all the properties enshrined in this Agreement will reverse back to the Government of Sierra Leone. This Agreement when ratified, we will see the expansion of our current Air Port to include new terminal buildings, new railway that will benefit International Standards. Currently, our Airport caters for 250 thousand passengers, but when we operationalised this Agreement and it comes into force, the new Airport will now cater for one million passengers a year. That tells you the colossal nature of this Agreement. We are actually here because this Agreement has been laid before this House. It will come at no cost to Government and it will come at no cost to Sierra Leoneans. The initial Agreement just spoke about the current work force at the Airport in passing, but once we ratify the Amendment, this Agreement will now take cognizance of the existence of the [*576*] workers presently working at the Airport and I guess you know what that means, when that is converted into monetary terms. Therefore, we have brought in the necessary amendment that will take into account the nationalistic nature that has always guided His Excellency, the President of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable members, we have done a proper survey of the banking on the concession area that will highlight the level of encroachment. Before this time, it was just in passing, but we know the concessional area and we equally know that it has been infringed upon. With the new amendment, it will take note of the level of encroachment for us to see. Actually, the rationale behind this amendment is to clarify any ambiguity that may arise in the interpretation of this Agreement.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Cap 4 of the contract has been expunged from this Agreement on the bases to fit our Democratic Constitution. The initial agreement spoke about decree, but then that stands invariance with our democratic nature. So we have expunged that from this Agreement and accommodate our democratic nature as a nation. It is only the Military that rule by decree and this is not a Military Government, it is a Democratic Government. We have equally expunged Cap 5 from this Agreement, because it gave the right to the Shuman group to develop the Sea-front area. Now that we are aware that they are not quite ready for that yet, we have therefore decided to expunge that from the current Agreement. Again, we have added another new building design of what we are expecting to see at the Airport and it will now be included in another annex to the new agreement. Like I was saying, we have upgraded the staff list. Before now, the Agreement just spoke about the current staff at the Airport in passing, it was not concretised. Therefore, the new Agreement is now saying, it should be enshrined in it that the 576 workers presently at the Airport be absorbed in the new Agreement so that when eventually the Shuman group takes over to implement, these staff will be part of the system. We have equally included again the current properties at the Airport, which includes the present Terminal building and everything that is being owned by Government. So that is what this Agreement is talking about. It is just an amendment to clarify the ambiguity that may arise in future for the interpretation of this Agreement.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House hereby ratifies the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of the House on Monday, 10th may, 2021:

[i]. Amendment Bill relating to the Built, Operate and Transfer Agreement for the Construction, Financing Concession of Freetown International Airport between the State of the Republic of Sierra Leone and Shuma AirPort Sierra Leone Limited. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Minister for his presentation.

[Question Proposed]

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I do not expect this to raise any controversies. On that note, I will simply invite one Speaker from each sides of the House. Is the Leader of the Opposition here? I am sure the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is well briefed. Just summarise and state your position, then we will get the side of the Leader of Government Business.

HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the ratification which the Minister seems to achieve this afternoon has a lot to do with the development of the infrastructure of the state. Mr Speaker, before we even commence the argument truthfully, anxious Sierra Leoneans would want to ask a question with all the discussions surrounding this new Airport; what is the present status of the infrastructure? Because really Mr Speaker, we cannot continue to discuss about this Airport, if we are not briefed on a day to day, month to month bases, about the status of this Airport. Believe me Mr Speaker, we did not mistrust Government at all, we are merely stating that the public is very anxious to see the construction of this Airport. But to be true Mr Speaker, we are yet to see the physical presence yet.

Mr Speaker, few minutes ago, I had wanted to know where Honourable Abdul Kargbo was sitting to ask him as a Member of Parliament of that area whether anything is happening there; but he is not available now, he could have responded to the question very well. I have been told that he did not seem to see any strong presence of construction going on yet. Mr Speaker, we are not saying that we do not trust the Government, but we just hope a tangible structure commenced very soon.

Mr Speaker, Shuma is a company that can be trusted, because we have seen them operate elsewhere. They operated in other parts of West Africa where they helped to construct airports and these are airports that are very credible. Mr Speaker, that is the reason when they were mentioned as partners in our development in an effort to build a new airport, some of us agreed without even questioning their capabilities. We have seen them performed elsewhere. But what we are just saying Mr Speaker, is that we are anxiously waiting for that project to commence. We want quick results and these quick results can come only, if Shuma and the Government of Sierra Leone continue to

work together to make sure that the necessary funding is available and that is one area we must also discuss. Mr Speaker, we have been told about the fund and we do not know if the money is there already to commence this project.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we do not see any controversies in this Agreement, What we see is an anxiety in our parts to make sure that this whole structure commences and we make sure that we deliver it to our people of this country. Otherwise, we will continue to come here and talk about this Airport without seeing the reality on the ground. Mr Speaker, all we want to see from our side is that as long as it is a matter that is in the interest of the development of this country, we will always support it. But we want to see results and tangible ones as well. On that trajectory, I thank you for your attention.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank the Honourable Ibrahim Ben Kargbo, he made his point very clear. Indeed, I want to queue from what he said on this Agreement.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we want to know wher what is going with this beautiful Agreement? what is really going on with regards to this Agreement? Because we need to know something Mr Minister, so please brief us. It is our responsibility, otherwise we will set a Committee to do a proper Oversight. So you need to tell us where are we with regards this Agreement. That is why I want to re-echo what was said by Honourable Ibrahim Ben Kargbo. The Honourable Member talked about the staffing and the working environment to be very conducive. Mr Speaker, there is no way after ratification you go and gazette, you gazette before you ratify. But the Minister and his Team has done very well in other to making sure that the Ministry do a proper work. For us, after the ratification, we will give you the letter of confirmation certificate. So, I am happy that is one of the major amendments brought to the House for ratification. But let me bring you to speed in the responsibility of the Ministry. Mr Speaker, I would like to read from this section, so that everyone would have an understanding of this Agreement. Mr Speaker, Page 2, the last paragraph that has to do with [3.2]. *Mr Speaker with your leave, I read;* "Within 18 months, from an effective

date, the Public undertakes a clear, unavailable area to know the expenses, then makes the unavailable area available to private party, free from all encumbrances, links and right of third parties. If the unavailable area is not made available within 18 months of the effective date, in accordance with this Agreement, the private party will be under no obligation to complete the portion of work to be completed on the unavailable area. Namely: the construction of the taxi way and associated infrastructure set out in Annex 1 of this Agreement.” So, it is very clear that you have to take care of your responsibility and they have spelt it out that they are expecting you to do the clearance and that has to do with the taxi way. And you have mentioned that there are areas of encroachment, we cannot forge ahead if we do not take care of our own responsibility as Government. So Mr Minister, you really need to look at this one carefully. It is not about removing the Airport, changing to works or from gazette to confirmation that you are here for, but this provision in Clause [3.2] is clear and it is not in the obligation of the Private Sector or those who are going to implement the project to do clearance and they will not forge ahead if you do not do it.

Mr Speaker, as Honourable Ibrahim Ben Kargbo said, if you look at them, they have worked in Togo, and other countries and they did a fantastic job in those countries. So our responsibility is how best we can support them to do the same infrastructure for our Airport to be given a face lift. It is just a continuation of what you came here to do. Mr Speaker, what we did the last time is the same reason we are here again, so that we can do the various amendments. But the point raised by my Honourable Member is a salient point that you need to tell us about how far we are with regards to this project.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, talking about the maintenance and upgrading of our Airport, are we talking about the real thing that we are seeing or the physical work that is going to start at a particular point in time. Are we ready to do the clearance that is stated in Clauses [3.2]? Are we set to take care of our own obligations? So all of these are what we are looking for and we on this side should do our Oversight role in order to forge ahead with the business of upgrading the Airport. To get an International Airport, the best we can do is to give proper service to the people, so this argument is going to

be in your own domain and we expect you to follow it to the latter. If you do not do it, it means it has to be a disgrace and embarrassment to the state. So you people are charged with the responsibility, we are doing our own part, we have a bipartisan approach to this Agreement and we are looking forward, so that you enforce and implement this Agreement.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on that note, I thank you very much for bringing us to speed for the amendments of this Agreement. Mr Speaker, thank you very much for presiding over this particular Agreement. I thank you and may the Lord bless us all.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you to the Leader of Government Business. I am sure Mr Minister, you came well prepared to answer the issues and questions raised.

MR REX BHONAPHA: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am a very keen listener and when Honourable Ibrahim Ben Kargbo was making his presentation, I took note of almost every word. We are anxious to see the physicality of this Agreement. Like a hungry man, when they tell you food is available, you want the food to be ready. We want to ensure that we leave no stone unturned. We want to ensure that they give us the quality they have promised. But then I can assure you of one thing as I speak, they have secured an office space in Freetown already and they have employed their first skeletal staff that are working with us now. We have gone physically to the site and we have been able to ascertain the level of encroachment. For their visibility on the ground, I can assure you that they are on the ground now. I can equally tell you with effortless ease that they are currently mobilising materials and resources for the beginning of the construction of the State of the Arts Airport. I just want to allay your fears.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I like the sentiment expressed by the Leader of Government Business, but then, in tan dem with your question, he is anxious to know where we are and we are fine as a nation; that I can assure you. The staff are on the ground and they have secured office space and they have also gone ahead to employ their first skeletal staff that are working in collaboration with the Ministry. They have brought in equipment as we speak and more equipment will arrive very soon. You may

want to know how soon! They are on the high Seas and they will be here very soon and once they are here, we will be ready. The other development I will tell you is that we are in talks with those encroachers, because the initial concession was given to Sierra Leone Airport Authority that has been encroached by private parties. But we are in talks with them and we are at advance stage. Mr Speaker, very soon, we will settle on that and the physical work on ground will commence. But by and large, what you people have expressed here today is looking at this Agreement from a nationalistic point of view and that is good for our country. Mr Speaker, at the end of the day, we are all one people, one country, one nation and one destiny. Our destinies are tied together, they are entwined.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on that note, be it resolved that this Honourable House ratifies the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of the House on Monday, 10th May, 2021:

[i]. Amendment Bill related to Build, Operate and Transfer Agreement for the Construction, Financing and Concession of Freetown International Airport between the Republic of Sierra Leone and Shuma Airport Sierra Leone Limited. I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Minister.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Government Motion by the Minister of Transport and Aviation has been Ratified]

THE SPEAKER: Thank you Mr Minister, you may take leave of us. We have come very close to the end of today's proceedings.

HON. MATTHEW S. NYUMA: Have you released the Minister?

THE SPEAKER: Yes, the Minister is released unless you think otherwise. Do you have some unfinished business? In fact, I was going to ask for his Substantive Minister!

HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH: Mr Leader, it is just a short announcement with your permission. Mr Speaker, I want to inform this House through yourself that the

Honourable Amadu Kanu lost his son and Honourable Abubarkar Fofanah, your Sheik also lost his Mother yesterday.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable who?

HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH: The Honourable Sheik.

THE SPEAKER: Oh the great Sheik.

HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH: Yes, he lost his mother.

THE SPEAKER: The Philosopher and the Economist?

HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH: Yes sir.

THE SPEAKER: okay.

HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH: Thank you very much sir.

THE SPEAKER: With that information Honourable Members, may I invite all of us to rise and observe a minute silence (A minute silence was observed)!

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Speaker, in addendum to those announcements, we also lost the father of Honourable Allie Ibrahim Kamara [*Koyo*].

THE SPEAKER: We will then combine them, a minute of silence for the faithful departed please! May God Almighty forgive the mistakes of the faithful departed and grant their gentle souls eternal rest in his heavenly kingdom and grant the families of the deceased the fortitude to bear the grievous lost that they have suffered [*Amen*].

HON. CATHRINE Z. TARAWALLY: May I be heard, Mr Speaker?

THE SPEAKER: By all means.

HON. CATHRINE Z. TARAWALLY: Mr Speaker, I have a concern and I hope the Chairman of Transport is here, Honourable Madaa Lebby. I have an issue concerning the SLRSA Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: The SLRSA?

HON. CATHRINE Z. TARAWALLY: SLRSA that is the Sierra Leone Road Safety Authority Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, in this House, we ratified the Local Content Policy and Mr Speaker, if you could remember, for years now, Sierra Leoneans are working on number plates for our vehicles all over the country. All of a sudden, the SLRSA Authority wants to change these three Companies namely; the Sara Company, the Bihaq and IAS. These companies are owned by Sierra Leoneans, for a Company named Autospec. Mr Speaker, to your surprise the advisory authority has advised the SLRSA on this issue. The NPPA boss has written a letter to the SLRSA informing them about the poor work of this Autospec Company. They are advising SLRSA to reverse the contract they wanted to give to Autospec as a result of their bad working in producing number plates. But to our dismay, the SLRSA did not want to go by the letter from the NPPA and as a Member of Parliament, I am concern as a Sierra Leonean. These are Sierra Leoneans and Sierra Leonean companies ought to employ our people and they have been doing just that.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the company they want to give this particular contract to is not qualified by the NPPA. So why is SLRSA still sticking on having contract with Autospec that is headed by a Lebanese man? We have Lebanese Sierra Leoneans and we have Lebanese that are not Sierra Leoneans and we care for our own people. These are Sierra Leonean companies and we should pay premium to them.

Mr Speaker, I want you to use your good office maybe to have a Committee or to instruct the Chairman for Transport to do the needful, for our Sierra Leonean brothers that are in charge of these three companies, that is the Sara Company, the Bihaq and the IAS, that is my concern and it is very personal Mr Speaker. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Who is the Chairperson? Before I make a ruling on this, do you have anything to say as Chairman of Transport and Aviation Committee?

HON. AMBROSE M. LEBBY: Yes, Mr Speaker. I have listened carefully to the Honourable Member from Bombali and I have taken note of her concerns. We will investigate as a Committee and report accordingly.

THE SPEAKER: Frankly, it is a classic example of your Committee playing a more vigilant role here; you should summon the key players that have been mentioned; SLRSA, the Companies involved and who else wrote that letter?

HON. AMBROSE M. LEBBY: NPPA.

THE SPEAKER: The NPPA?

HON. AMBROSE M. LEBBY: And maybe the Ministry

THE SPEAKER: All of them should exercise your Oversight powers to summon them to Parliament and examine this issue and report to Parliament within the next two weeks.

HON. AMBROSE M. LEBBY: Very well Mr Speaker.

HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO: I have just again come up with a very clear case whereby Sierra Leoneans are always marginalised.

THE SPEAKER: Yes!

HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO: Mr Speaker, remember I discussed with you my ambition to come with a Private Member's Motion to the House to empower Sierra Leoneans in procurements and in the Local Content Policies of the State. I discussed it with you and actually, I did come up with a Private Member's position, seconded by Honourable Amadu Kanu from Moyamba. Mr Speaker, my belief was that it will be put on the Order Paper, so that all of us as Parliamentarians can discuss the merits and demerits. But up to this point Mr Speaker, we are moving to another Session, which means this current Session has lapsed, because definitely, it is not on the Order Paper for today and since it has lapsed Mr Speaker, I want to withdraw it formally at this moment. It has not been considered for the debate and I did not know the reason. Of course, I mentioned about the Bombali Member of Parliament and the concerns raised this morning, simply because this continues to be a problem for Sierra Leoneans.

THE SPEAKER: Quite frankly Honourable Member, I do not mean to stop you in the middle of your presentation, but I am quite aware of that Private Member's Motion. It also have progressed to the point of it being debated in this House. Even myself cannot

explain why it has not come before the House and whatever the reason is, I agreed with the procedure you want to adopt of withdrawing it now and renewing it very early next Session. I will ensure that it progresses and sees the light of day on the Order Paper for a debate in this House.

HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO: In that case Mr Speaker, I hereby withdraw that Motion.

THE SPEAKER: You can give a notice now.

HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO: Mr Speaker, I want to give notice to this House that in the next Session, I will come up with the same Motion.

THE SPEAKER: I feel very passionately about that issue as you do.

HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO: Thank you Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I hope the Leader of Government Business and the Business Committee is listening. Empowering Sierra Leoneans should be a matter of priority for this House.

HON. MATTHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, it is not only to debate, we want to give it some amount of weight on the floor. So I hope we are going to do so.

THE SPEAKER: Let us start with a debate and then progress it further.

HON. MATTHEW S. NYUMA: Noted Mr Speaker! I will take it from there.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: So should I read these papers?

THE SPEAKER: Go ahead.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in the last Parliament, we ratified the Local Content Policy Act and we ratified the Local Contact Act. We are just encouraging the Administration of the Local Content Policy to enforce the Act that was passed by this Parliament to the latter. That Act gives a lot of powers to the Administration to make sure that Sierra Leoneans are employed and are given greater opportunities in businesses and activities that happen in Sierra Leone. So moving

another Motion to discuss employment or opportunities for Sierra Leoneans, It is not call for now, since we have the Local Content Act. So let, Mr Speaker and Honourable Members, read the internal Notice Paper. Please take note!

[1]. Laying of Papers, the Minister of Lands, Housing and Country Planning, the Government of Sierra Leone and the Land Registration Sierra Leone Limited, Government support agreement relating to the Procurement of our Biometric property registration project on a Built, Operate and Transfer base, dated 1st March, 2018. The Minister of Finance, Amendment to the Financing Agreement between the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the Republic of Sierra Leone in respect of the Agricultural Value Change Development project.

[2]. A letter of Agreement Transitions Support Facility ITSS enhancing efficiency and sustainability of antisana and small scale mining through Plan Climate Max Actions between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the African Development Fund.

[3]. Supplemental Agreement to the Loan Agreement signed on the 12th May, 1433H04042012G between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Islamic Development Bank [ISDB], concerning the construction of the Pendembu-Kailahun Road Project in the amount of \$10,000,000 (Ten million united states dollars).

[4]. Financing Agreement on the Freetown Wash Aquatic Environments Revamping Project between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Islamic Development Bank comprising of the following:

[i]. Agency Agreement Instalment Financing between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Islamic Development Bank, Freetown Wash and Aquatic Environment Revamping Project in amount of \$40,000,000 (Forty Million United State Dollars)

[ii]. Framework Agreement Instalment Sales Financing between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Islamic Development Bank, Freetown Wash and Aquatic Environment Revamping Project in the amount of *\$40,000,000* (Forty Million United State Dollars)

[iii]. Loan Agreements, construction of Tikonko Gbeteima-Mattru Jong Project between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Arab Bank Economic Development in Sierra Leone BIDA in amount of \$40,000,000 (Forty Million United State Dollars)

[iv]. **BILLS**-The Allied Health Professional Act 2020. The Wages and Compensation Act 2020; the Financial Services Amendment Act 2021; the wildlife Conservation Amendment Act 2021; the Forestry Amendment 2021; the Nuclear Safety Eradiation Protection Amendment Act 2021; the Best Milk Substitute 2021; the Court Amendment Act 2021; the Offences Against the Persons Amendment Act, 2021; the Larceny Amendment 2021; the Treason and State Offences Act 2021; the Professional Engineering Regulating Act 2021; the Universities Act 2021. I thank you for your attention.

HON. DR UNPHA S. G. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, I rise on *S.O 23* and it has to do with the present NCRA verification process going on in the country and it started up in the Western Area of which I am a Member of Parliament. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we can all note that this process is very important and as I want to start with what happened here with Members of Parliament yesterday, when we tried to verify for each Member of Parliament, it took 20 minutes to verify one person. The Western Region is being used as the first area that will start the verification process. So it is very important. He emphasised the Tax implication that this may have on the citizens of this country. And as I speak, in the Ward that I lived, which is Ward 402, with over 20 thousand people, only have 2 stations for a Constituency of such number. For my whole Constituency of over 70 thousand people, we only have 8 centres to verify and today is the 5th day of that verification process. So, Mr Speaker, I am calling on this House and I am calling on your good leadership to see how we can press on the Director General of

NCRA to see how they would extend the verification process, because of the number of machines they are using in the field.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the process is very important for all Sierra Leoneans and even non-citizens. This process was fully endorsed by our side if you could recalled in 2012, the former Government called on the UNDP to sponsor this project of which we understood and acknowledged that the mission was under-scope and we need to put more money into it and that it was truncated and disconnected. If we are going to have a system that is coordinated wherein Sierra Leoneans all across this country even non-residents will be having a national identification number that they can use for work. As the President said in his statement yesterday, even the Chairman of the National Revenue Authority (NRA) said this may have tax implications for all Sierra Leoneans and corporate entities, if this process commenced. Mr Speaker, it would be injustice to the people of this country if we can only give them 10 days to do a verification process for something with so much implication. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, for now, if you take the percentage going into the fifth day of people that have been verified, their identification is probably not up to 2%. And it is really ridiculous and our people are complaining about this process. We as Members of Parliament are getting all those complaints and we are trying to see how we can ameliorate this challenge.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is really a disservice to the people of this country for them to be placed in that situation and eventually, this will go to the provinces and if they use 2 centres in one Chiefdom, let us think about the transportation implications. How would they move from one place to the other to ensure that they are verified? If you ask me, this is a process that should go on for months, not 10 days.

HON. DR UNPHA S. G. KOROMA: Thank you Mr Speaker, for catching my eyes. Mr Speaker, this is what I want to bring to the notice of the House and your good leadership in this Parliament. I thank you Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member, he has made a very pertinent observation. Which Committee does NCRA falls under for Oversight? Internal Is the

Internal Affairs here? In his absence of the Leader, the Deputy Leader of Government Business is here and can take full responsibility of the proceedings.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Thank you Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I want to direct now that you lead the Committee of Internal Affairs to have a very serious discussion with NCRA. I myself-observed some computer hitches yesterday, when they were trying to verify my own particulars. And I presume a lot of other Members have suffered the same delay that I went through. In light of that, the Directive is that we are inviting NCRA before things get worst to actually revisit their timetable, to make a very critical review of their own programme of work to see how it can be best adjusted to enable them capture the details of every Sierra Leonean and Non-Sierra Leoneans in the country. But at the rate they are going, we foresee a lot of problems and difficulties ahead, so the sooner they address the better.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Noted Mr Speaker!

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. I will take just two more Members before I adjourn, yes Honourable Member.

HON. JAMES O. THOLLEY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to draw the attention of this noble House on the Health Status of this country, especially in the city, Freetown.

THE SPEAKER: What?

HON. JAMES O. THOLLEY: The Health Status.

THE SPEAKER: Yes.

HON. JAMES O. THOLLEY: Mr Speaker, when you take a work along Kissy Road going to the East-End, the garbage deposite or the dump at Ferry Junction is a threat to the health of the people of this country.

THE SPEAKER: What is Freetown City Council doing? I sort out the matter long ago and delegated the issue to the Government and the Local Councils.

HON. JAMES O. THOLLEY: Mr Speaker, since we all know that that dump site is a threat...*[Interruption]*

THE SPEAKER: I do not know.

HON. JAMES O. THOLLEY: I know.

THE SPEAKER: I do not know.

HON. JAMES O. THOLLEY: Mr Speaker, this is very important and I suppose you know about the situation.

THE SPEAKER: I do not know.

HON. JAMES O. THOLLEY: Well, I am informing you now and the general public on that issue.

THE SPEAKER: What I do know.

HON. JAMES O. THOLLEY: Yes Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: What I do know is that that particular responsibility had been devolved to the Local Council long time ago. So what are they doing?

HON. JAMES O. THOLLEY: I am not shifting the problem to whosoever that is responsible, I am reporting, because the lives of people in that area is under threat.

THE SPEAKER: Then your first recourse is to the Freetown City Council. You want the Mayor summoned here?

HON. JAMES O. THOLLEY: Of course Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: No problem, in the New Session, we shall.

HON. JAMES O. THOLLEY: Yes, I am still on my legs Mr Speaker, the appropriate authorities to handle that problem should be called to book not necessarily the Mayor, because there is another senior officer that is responsible for that.

THE SPEAKER: Responsible for what?

HON. JAMES O. THOLLEY: For the dumps, I do not think those sites are necessary to be located in the city. The outcome of those sites affect the lives of people in those areas.

THE SPEAKER: Which grounds?

HON. JAMES O. THOLLEY: The Smoke Mr Speaker! Mr Speaker, it is because you are not affected, you do not want to pay attention to this. If you work along that road you will know that even when you are passing if there is traffic...*(interruption)*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member!

HON. JAMES O. THOLLEY: Yes Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: The issues that you are raising rightly belong to the Freetown City Council. We have agreed here that in the New Session, the Mayor will be invited and you will have the opportunity to address these issues directly.

HON. JAMES O. THOLLEY: Since we have the Committee, I think that is the responsibility of the Committee.

THE SPEAKER: Fine, so engage the Committee, but that does not substitute for the invitation of the Mayor. We are going to bring her here.

HON BASHIRU SILIKIE: Let me just say this to the Honourable Member that your concern is very genuine. Mr Speaker, we are fast approaching the end of this Session, which means committees are going to be dissolved and reconstituted; like you rightly said, the next Committee that will be responsible for Local Government when once we have the New Session, will definitely summon the entire Leadership of the Freetown City Council to come and explain to us why these dumps sites are on the street. They are very risky for passers-by. So your concerns are very legitimate and like the Speaker said, when once we have the new committees that will be constituted in the next Session, I expect the next Session to start next week plus or minus 21 days the new Committees will be set and we expect the Local Government to summon the Mayor and her team to come and explain to us. On that note, I thank you.

HON. JAMES O. THOLLEY: Yes sir, I am still on my legs. Mr Speaker, on the same health issue, if you visit Connaught Hospital, the emergency ward is very deplorable; small as it is with the number of cases that are coming to the Connaught Hospital is a major concern also.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, finally, I am bringing to the notice of this House for a life that is about to go. I have a relative of mine whose son fell from a Mango tree and the X-tray report stated that he has a spinal injury and no such surgery can be done in Sierra Leone, because we do not have a specialist. I am now bringing it to the notice of this House and to the Government for us to put hands together in order to save the life of Osman A. Tholley, who is the victim of this circumstance. I thank you Mr Speaker.

HON. FODAY M. KAMARA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I can recall bringing to the notice of this House, the state of the Billeh-Samu Road last year.

THE SPEAKER: What?

HON. FODAY M. KAMARA: Billeh-Samu Road is in the Samu Chiefdom, the road from Rogbere to Kitchion or Kasire. Now Mr Speaker, it will surprise you to note that that Road is still in a state of say 20%, because what has been done actually is bush clearing. The culvert for that Road has been changed, some twice, some three times now, whereas these culverts are broken by perhaps first or second vehicles. There is a culvert that I made, which they brought a bulldozer to destroy.

Mr Speaker, my fear now is that the rains have started and that Road will be cut off from traffic. It will not be possible if the slow rate at which this people are working continues to go unchecked; that means no vehicle will be able to ply that Road within the course of this Rainy Season.

THE SPEAKER: I will advise you to engage the Works Committee.

HON. FODAY M. KAMARA: Mr Speaker, it is your duty to tell the Works Committee to take up this matter, because last year, I brought it up and I am bringing it up again. I cannot tell the Works Committee directly to take up over the matter.

THE SPEAKER: I direct that the Works Committee looks into the problem.

HON. FODAY M. KAMARA: I thank you Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: And with that Honourable Members, any announcement? Ok, go ahead.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr Speaker adjourned the House to Tuesday, 18th May, 2021 at 10:00 am.

The House rose at 2:46pm