

OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

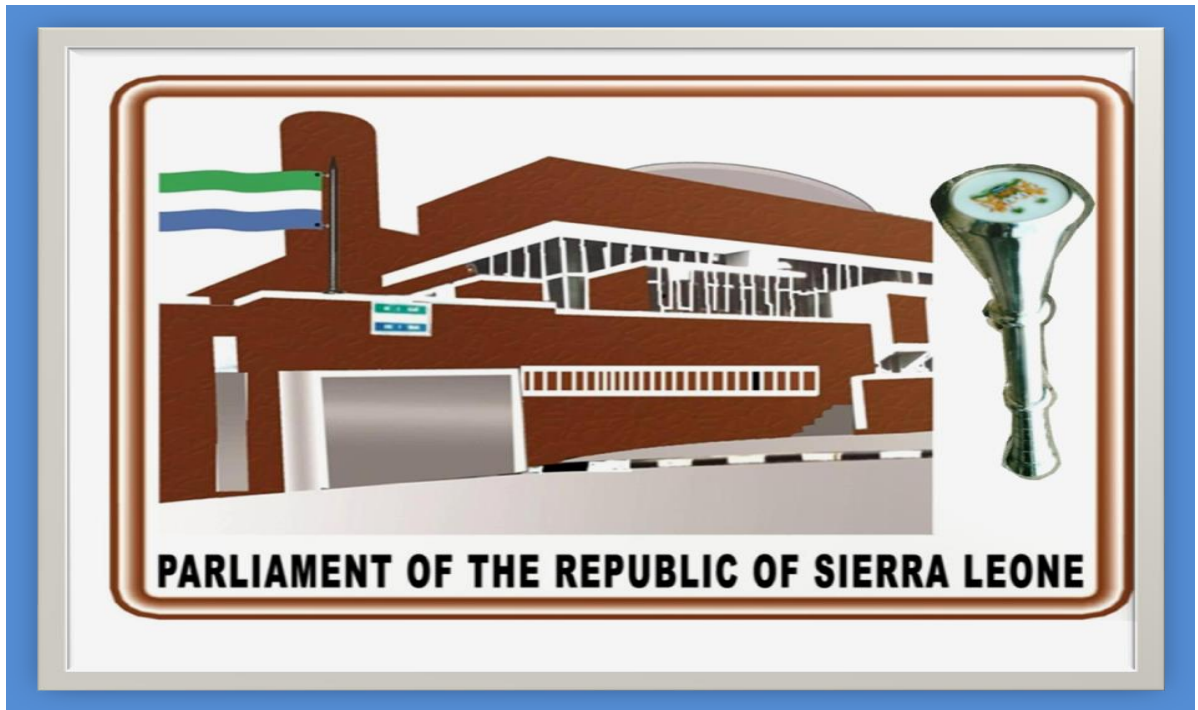
[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

FOURTH SESSION –FIRST MEETING

TUESDAY, 6TH JULY, 2021.

SESSION – 2020/2021



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

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First Meeting of the Fourth Session of the Fifth Parliament
of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone.

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held Tuesday 6th July, 2021.

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THE MINISTER OF TECHNICAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

**FOURTH SESSION – FIRST MEETING
OF THE FIFTH PARLIAMENT
OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC**

Tuesday, 6th July, 2021.

I. PRAYERS

[The Table Clerk, Francis Ernest Farma, Read the Prayers]

[The House met at 10:25 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown.]

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

The House was called to Order

Suspension of S. O. 5[2]

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I stand to amend the Order Paper. Item I, II, III and IV remain the same, I would want us to expunge item [i] on the Order Paper. For the edification of the House, being that we had consultations in Bo and other places in line with the Bill we have in front of us, we have to wait for the Committee Stage to discuss the document proper; so that is the reason I am taking it out of the Order Paper. So now, [j] becomes [i] and [k] becomes [j] etc. that is what I want us to do. But let me come to [k] that is now [j], I think that is a typographical error under Honourable Dr Roland F. Kargbo, which should be in conformity with the document you have at hand. If you have your document for this Oversight Committee on NaCSA, let me do the amendment. The paragraph below should be expunged and replaced with this one: ***"Report on the Oversight visit to NaCSA and NGOs Development Project in Port Loko, Bombali and Tonkolili districts from Wednesday 20th to Saturday 23rd January, 2021"***. Of course, it is just about the change of numbering; so Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the following amendments be accepted by the House.

THE SPEAKER: Any Seconder?

HON. BRIMA MANSARAY: I so second, Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

[Motion by the Leader of Government Business to amend the Order Paper has been adopted]

II. CORRECTION OF THE RECORD OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON FRIDAY 2ND JULY, 2021.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we shall now consider the Record of Votes and Proceedings of the 11th Sitting that took place on Friday 2nd July, 2021. We shall start from page 5, any corrections on page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Can someone please move for the adoption of the Record of Votes and Proceedings for the Parliamentary sitting held on Friday 2nd July, 2021.

HON. BRIMA MANSARAY: I so move, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any Seconder?

HON. BOSTON MUNDA: I so second, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

[Record of Votes and Proceedings for the Parliamentary Sitting held on Friday 2nd July, 2021 has been adopted as presented]

III. ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR SPEAKER

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, the announcement I am going to make has been prompted by the fact that, I came to my seat without a quorum being present in the Well and this problem is becoming perennial; and I am sure all of us understands that very well. But my attention has been drawn to two things that seem to contribute to the problem. [1] The services from the canteen: a directive was issued some time ago to the management of the Canteen, that no service should be made after 10:00a.m, which is the commencement of the Sitting of Parliament. In spite of that directive, I understand that the management of the Canteen is in the habit of serving food to Members of Parliament not only before 10:00a.m but after 10:00a.m. Let me advise the management that they are treading dangerously on a slippery slope of contempt of Parliament. Not the Members who are served, but the management because if they are not serving; I am sure all of you would be in the Well at the appointed time. I repeat; I hope this is the last time and this goes for the Whips, I

would want this to be conveyed to the management of the Canteen again that on my directives, no food of any description should be served to any Member of Parliament or the staff of Parliament after 10:00a.m. If they fail to adhere to that directive, their action would be deemed to be an act of 'contempt of Parliament'.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, may I be heard?

THE SPEAKER: You would be heard, if your contribution is going to help in making progress.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, you should know that.

THE SPEAKER: I know you are always helpful to Mr Speaker, so in that vein yes, I would allow you.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when I was in school; my principal used to allot one day for students to ask burning questions, and you are allowed to ask those burning questions without any name. One of the pupils asked a question about lateness; and he said Mr Principal, you are punishing us for coming late to school but the reason why you are not late is because you have a motorbike.

THE SPEAKER: A motorbike?

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Yes, a motorbike.

THE SPEAKER: Okay.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: He said because you have a faster means to take you to school that is why you are not late, and now unduly you are punishing us. You know what was the response of the Principal?

THE SPEAKER: I do not know.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Fine, let me tell you now. He said late coming is a habit, even if you have helicopter, if it is your habit you will always go late; that was his reply. Even if you are using helicopter to come for meetings and others are walking, you with helicopter would be late because it is habitual in you. So on that note Mr Speaker, you

will prove me wrong or right in subsequent sittings; that the Canteen has nothing to do with late coming of Members of Parliament. It is similar to somebody having a helicopter to go for meetings, others having vehicles to go for meetings and others walking to go for meetings; those who walk go there earlier than those with vehicles or those with helicopters according to that Principal. He is late now, may his soul rest in peace.

THE SPEAKER: Okay Honourable Member, I have heard you.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: So the Canteen has nothing to do with lateness and you will prove me right; so leave them alone.

THE SPEAKER: I would not.

HON DANIEL B KOROMA: Okay, you will prove me out.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Honourable Members, I think the canteen has a lot to do with what Mr Speaker was talking about.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Because even as I am speaking, they are still serving in the Canteen. A security went there to call them and they told the security I should go and call them myself because I am the Chief Whip. If the canteen is not in service, I think no Member of Parliament would be there eating. When you come in the morning, you can go and have your breakfast before 9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. but as long as it is getting to sitting time, they should close the service; that is what we are saying. As it is in the Standing Orders, after having a quorum you can walk out slowly to go and have your breakfast. What we are saying is, we should have a quorum before time.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, during the last Parliament...

THE SPEAKER: I have not given you the Floor.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: We are helping you.

THE SPEAKER: Do not help me now.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, we need to help.

THE SPEAKER: No! No! I do not need your help.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Well you will prove me, and I will stand in this Well at any time *S.O 5 [2]* is suspended to move a counter Motion.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I have not given you the Floor. Let me remind all of us, when we were anxious to come to this Parliament, some of us went to sorcerers; to "maraboos" and Pastors to help us with our effort to come to Parliament, failing to recognise that this is a fulltime job, not a part-time job. Whenever Parliament is convened, it is automatic that your presence is required here; know now that you are in Parliament and you have suddenly relaxed. Remember that, 2023 is not too far away and there are others outside of Parliament, who are just as anxious to come and take your positions. I will start naming names of those who are perpetually late, and you know what that means; when your opponent gets to know that you are a perpetual late comer.

Honourable Members, the second reason why we are always short of a quorum at the commencement of proceedings is; I am made to understand, that it is because of the so-called Committees oversights. There can be no Oversight Committee, once the Session has ended; you all should know that now. The life of a Committee is coterminous with the Session; new Committees have to be constituted. You can do unfinished business, but you cannot start new business at the beginning of a new Session. I understand for example, that the Local Government Committee is presently on Oversight.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: As the Deputy Chairman of that Committee, we are back for this Sitting.

THE SPEAKER: Did you go on Oversight?

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: I was in Kambia yesterday, we moved to Bombali and we are here again Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: And what did you go to do if I may ask?

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: We sent in a letter that we were going to follow-up on the European Union [EU] Project long before the end of the Session.

THE SPEAKER: And you were provided with finance to do that?

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Mr Speaker, we have been given finances long before now and we are still completing our job, because you asked for the reports to be submitted to this House within two weeks and we want to do justice to the money of the people of this country.

THE SPEAKER: Leader of Government Business, are you aware of any other Oversight Committee in progress right now?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, I want us to progress; deliberately, it has become a practice of Members to use your announcement as a platform to debate which should not be the case, but let me come to the point. The last time, we mentioned that people have received money to carry out oversight functions, we gave them ultimatum and a grace period. So I think without coming back to me as the Chairman of the Supervisory Committee, what they have done is to go covertly or unknowingly to the Supervisory Committee. But I am happy, they respected the order I gave which is; if you do not present your report for it to be laid here, it will be at your own peril. They know the consequences, so they are covertly now going for Oversight. For me, it is a continuation but in any case, we have come to the end of the last Session, and we are now at the Fourth Session. We should try to announce the Committees and those who are going to benefit from those Committees again; but those who will be going for oversights, should not do so when we have sittings.

THE SPEAKER: Exactly.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: They should not; it is completely out of order to go for Oversight when there is sitting. They know that very well; but I think it is now the situation that they are going covertly for oversights, because they want to fulfill their mandate. Thank you very much Mr speaker; can we progress for the sake of time?

THE SPEAKER: Yes. Before that again, I want to emphasise and I would continue to do so until those who have ears to hear. Please take the COVID-19 vaccine; you do not have to pay for it. I have taken mine - two doses, I am advising you for your own good, the good of your families and for the good of us all. Please adhere to the advice of the Scientists; take the vaccine.

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Mr Speaker, can I be heard please?

THE SPEAKER: On what?

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Just recognition of something. Today after a long time, I want us to recognise a retired Member of Parliament, and who is also Rtd. Brigadier General of the Military, the Honourable K.E.S Boya, who is in our midst today.
[Applause]

THE SPEAKER: You know sometimes, I am amazed at the rate at which people want to usurp my responsibility. *[Laughter]*

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Mr Speaker, I am sorry, maybe I was excited at seeing him here.

THE SPEAKER: Outside of this House, it is called a coup. That is my duty, not for you.

IV. PAPERS LAID

[A] HONOURABLE SAA EMERSON LAMINA

CHAIRMAN, SPECIAL SELECT COMMITTEE ON WATER POLLUTION

HON. SAA EMERSON LAMINA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise on *S.O 18[7]*. With your leave, "***a Minister or Member on tabling a Paper, may make a short explanatory statement of its content***".

THE SPEAKER: And please make sure it is short! *[Laughter]*

HON. SAA E. LAMINA: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: It should not exceed one minute!

HON. SAA E. LAMINA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you would recall that Honourable Jebbeh A. Kumabeh stood on *S.O [23]* at a time and complained about water pollution within and around her Constituency. As a result, this Committee summoned a Special Select Committee headed by my humble self, to visit affected areas including Mano-Daseh, Valunyyia, Taiama, etc. etc. The report is so detailed, but upon your instruction, I would summarise that; detail of this report will be read by Members. On this note, on behalf of members of the Special Select Committee, permit me to lay on the table of this House, Report of an Investigation on Water pollution of the Taia/Jong river and some communities in Bo and Tonkolili Districts from 20th to the 21st of March 2021, by a Special Select Committee on Water Pollution; thank you.
[Applause]

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I can vividly recall on that day when the Honourable Member on this side, Honourable Kumabeh from Bonthe, raised the issue about Water Pollution. It was very intriguing for us to know about the nature of Water Pollution, but members contributed to the debate without looking at the origin of the pollution; so it was in your good view and your leadership that you were asked to have a Special Select Committee to investigate the matter. I want to say thank you Honourable Emerson Lamina from Kono for doing an excellent job. Because of the sensitivity of that document lying down there, and the issues contained therein, I want to move a Motion that; that document be debated by this House. So that is a Notice of Motion I am sending through *S.O [25]*. I thank you, Mr Speaker. *[Applause]*

THE SPEAKER: Any Seconder?

HON. DR MARK M. KALOKOH: I second the Motion, Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

THE SPEAKER: Do the needful following the verbal presentation.

[B] HONOURABLE MUSA FOFANAH

CHAIRMAN, PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

HON. MUSA FOFANAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise on *S.O 18[7]*.

THE SPEAKER: Like the Chairman before you, you are accorded one minute.

HON. MUSA FOFANAH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on behalf of the Committee on Planning and Economic Development; I want to thank the Leadership for the Opportunity given to us to do this Oversight. And I want to confirm to this noble House that our Oversight was a huge one because we are a cross-cutting Committee and we were about to do **16** Geographical districts, we managed to do **90%** of this work and I want to thank the Committee so much. I just want to end by saying; this Committee learnt about the work of Partners in Health [PIH], an NGO that is dealing with health issues in Kono District and are doing well. I want to say their model is the best in this country which we believe; the government would respect and at the same time, will collaborate with them. We also want to say that, Medicine San Frontiers [MSF] Belgium in Kenema also, has a very good model and we believe those models are models that would urge the Ministry of Health to learn from.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on that note; I beg to lay the report of the Parliamentary Committee on Planning and Economic Development: Assessment of the Status of the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, Government of Sierra Leone donor supported Feeder Roads Construction Project in the Southern Province and other engagements within the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development in the Medium Term National Development Plan. *[Applause]*

[C] HONOURABLE HAFIJU MAADA KANJA

CHAIRMAN, PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE

HON. HAFIJU MAADA KANJA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on behalf of the Oversight Committee on Defence; I beg to lay the report on oversight visits to all Military Brigade Headquarters, Units and Commissions across the country.

[D] HONOURABLE CATHERINE ZAINAB TARAWALLY

CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON GENDER AND CHILDREN'S AFFAIRS

HON. CATHERINE Z. TARAWALLY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with your leave; permit me to lay on the table of this House report on oversight visits to Sexual and Gender based Violence on one stop centres in Moyamba, Kabala, Port Loko Districts and Western Area. *[Applause]*

[E] HONOURABLE YUSUF MACKERY

CHAIRMAN, PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT

HON. YUSUF MACKERY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise on *S.O 18[7]*. I want to thank and appreciate the Leadership for supporting us to do oversight during a critical time wherein environmental issues are a very big problem in Sierra Leone. We were able to visit some parts of Southern, Eastern and Northern Regions, and also Western Areas. We went as a Committee to enquire into Environmental issues like: compliance with Environmental Impact Assessment Licences, Staff Safety, Waste Management; compliance with CEDAC and also CSR.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we managed to numinously engage most of those people from the various companies and factories; and we were able to develop and do some recommendations. I hope the Ministry of Environment and its Agencies will look into those recommendations and issues that were really found in those localities. So on behalf of the Committee, I beg to lay the report of the Committee on Environment on this Table of the House. *[Applause]*

[F] HONOURABLE ALUSINE KAINDE ALU-CONTEH

CHAIRMAN, PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON SPORTS

THE SPEAKER: Do you want to make a short statement?

HON. ALUSINE KAINDE ALU-CONTEH: Yes Mr Speaker, very short one.

THE SPEAKER: It cannot exceed one minute, I noticed you have just walked into the Well.

HON. ALUSINE K. ALU-CONTEH: No! No! I went to the gents, I was here.

THE SPEAKER: Well follow the excellent example of your previous Chairmen.

HON. ALUSINE KAINDE ALU-CONTEH: I will do so Mr Speaker, in fact I would do even better.

THE SPEAKER: Good!

HON. ALUSINE K. ALU-CONTEH: Thank you. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise on *S.O 18[7]*. With reference to Section 93[3] Act No. 6 of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone, the Parliamentary Committee on Sports conducted oversight visits to Kenema, Bo and Makeni to assess the present state of sports facilities and engaged key

officials of the Ministry of Sports; National Sports Authority [NSA] and Heads of various Sports Associations to obtain first-hand information on the status of the various sports facilities and to ascertain the extent to which funds provided by Government and donor partners were utilized and accounted for.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as required by Section 17[3] of the Standing Orders of the Sierra Leone Parliament; I present the oversight report of the Sport Committee for the Third Session of the Fifth Parliament of the Second Republic of this House.

[Applause]

[G] HONOURABLE DOMINIC J. LAVALIE-TSHOMBE

CHAIRMAN, PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON BASIC AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

HON. DOMINIC J. LAVALIE-TSHOMBE: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I stand on *S.O 18[7]* to present this second report on oversight of the Committee on Basic and Secondary Education. A month ago, we laid the first report for which we had funding from the United Nation Children’s Emergency Fund [UNICEF]. The oversight really took place in November 2019 and we covered thematic areas that have to do with the supply of teaching and learning materials; the receipt and use of fee subsidies. In the operation, we had the stakeholder’s engagement which brought us to this second report. So we engaged the Ministry of Basic and Technical Education, EU, UNICEF and all key partners that support education.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on that note; I now lay on the Table, the second report of the Committee on Basic and Senior Secondary Education Oversight.

[Applause]

[H] HONOURABLE MOHAMED FESTUS LANSANA

CHAIRMAN, PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON TECHNICAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION

HON. MOHAMED F. LANSANA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, please permit me to stand on *S.O 18[7]*. As part of the bilateral relationship between Parliament and UNICEF, this Committee was able to solicit funding from UNICEF to undertake oversight visits across the country in all the public Universities and other Institutions, under the leadership of then Chairman, the late Honourable A.O Kamara may his soul rest in peace. Luckily, I was part of that Committee; so I was able to follow-up on the

activities. So the Committee visits were followed by post-monitoring after we had laid the first report, that was followed by post-monitoring seminar with UNICEF and other key stakeholders and the report is here for it to be laid on the Table. So with these few remarks, kindly permit me on behalf of Honourable Members of my Committee, to lay on the table of this House the report of our Committee on our visits to public Universities and Colleges across the provinces. *[Applause]*

[I] HONOURABLE VERONICA KADIE SESAY

CHAIRPERSON, PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND INDUSTRY

HON. VERONICA K. SESAY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, please permit me to stand on *S.O 18[7]*. Having conducted a successful oversight visits to Institutions to the North, South and Western Area on the scarcity and price increment of building materials and food commodities. Also, considering the bilateral relationship between Sierra Leone and the Chinese Government supported the country with a 'State of the Art' mobile scanning machines stationed at Gbalamuya border with; the aim of maximizing revenue generation for the Government throughout the scanning and evaluation of the goods. Unfortunately Mr Speaker, it has been abandoned for far too long, the Committee is now prevailing on the House to direct the NTI, NRA, and I.T.S, to immediately take the necessary action to put the scanning into use. With that Mr Speaker, I am asking that you allow me to lay the two documents on the Table.

[Applause]

[J] HONOURABLE DR ROLAND F. KARGBO

CHAIRMAN, PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL ACTION [NACSA] AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

HON. DR ROLAND F. KARGBO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, permit me to lay on the table of this noble House the report of the oversight visits of the Committee on NaCSA and Non-governmental Organisations conducted from the 20th to the 24th of January 2021. *[Applause]*

[K] THE MINISTER OF FISHERIES AND MARINE RESOURCES

AGREEMENT ON THE ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

HON. EMMA KOWA JALLOH [*Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources*]:

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with your leave; I beg to lay on the table of this Honourable House the following papers: Agreement on the Economic and Technical Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Government of the People's Republic of China. This is a grant under the Belt and Sea Code Initiative that is being granted to Sierra Leone for the construction of a fish harbour. I thank you. [*Applause*]

HON. DR MARK M. KALOKOH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise on paragraphs 2 and 3 of *S.O [20]*. Mr Speaker, whilst you were away on Friday, I did the same thing but unfortunately, the Table Clerks omitted that portion on the Votes and Proceedings; and I therefore used that as a compelling factor to rise again today because as the substantive Speaker of Parliament, you have been encouraging this House to utilize Question Time. And for some of us, we have done that but to our dismay nothing has been done towards our effort on the questions we have put out to the relevant authorities and that is why I said I stood on paragraphs 2 and 3 of *S.O [20]*. Mr Speaker, for the edification of the public, I read: "***Notice of a question may be handed by a Member to the Clerk when Parliament is sitting or maybe sent to or left at the Office of the Clerk at any time during the hours prescribed for the purpose by Mr Speaker. Every such notice must be signed by the Member giving it***". Mr Speaker, I have done that several times since 2019 and 2020. Mr Speaker, paragraph 3 states: "***A Member, who desires an oral answer to a question shall mark his notice with an asterisk and such a question, shall be put down for a day to be arranged by the Clerk of Parliament, being a day not earlier than 14 days***". Mr Speaker, I have done that and what is perturbing is that, after encouraging Members of Parliament to utilize this provision on the S.Os and for the efforts we have made, the questions we have put were not addressed. Therefore, it has been compelling that we are asking the House to

do the needful or else we have no alternative but to address the issue of such questions out of the Well of Parliament by using other means.

Mr Speaker, the question I put forward on the 5th of May 2020, was directed to the Minister of Internal Affairs to give to this House detailed explanation of an incident that happened on the 29th of April 2020 at the Pademba Road Correctional Centre. To reference Section 5[2b], and Section 16[1] of the 1991 Constitution, Section 5[2b] states: ***"the security, peace and welfare of the people of Sierra Leone shall be the primary purpose and responsibility of Government and to this end, it shall be the duty of the Arm Forces, the Police, Public Officers and all security agents to protect and safeguard the people of Sierra Leone"***. Mr Speaker, Section 16[1], if I may read again for the edification of the public, states: ***"No person shall be deprived of his life intentionally, except in the execution of a sentence of a Court, in respect of a criminal offence under this Law of Sierra Leone"***.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, Point of Order!

THE SPEAKER: Carry on.

HON. MATHEW S NYUMA: I really do not mean to cut off my colleague on the other side, whether he was the Deputy Speaker on the Opposition side sitting, he was the Speaker on that day and he had made his point. I just want him to realize that he has cited the provisions, which we are aware of in the Standing Orders and that of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone; but we have business of the day to deal with, on the Order Paper. I appreciate you as you started the whole business of Question Time, but the catchy statement there has to do with Mr Speaker. As he has made his point, I want him to allow you to make a statement so that we can progress with the business of the day. Points well taken note of, and we are aware of what you have said, that you have done it repeatedly and I want you to trust me that we will check with the Clerk's Office, to see and ascertain the veracity of what you have said, and to take the Clerk's Office on-board, based on what you have told us. So I just want us to make progress, thank you Mr Speaker.

HON. DR MARK M. KALOKOH: Accepted Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: My ruling then is that, all questions that have been addressed to various MDAs through the Clerk should be given effect to and should see the light of day, in the Well of this House without further delay. I know the Clerk is not here but Mr Karmoh Conteh [K.C] is around and the Table Clerks also, you are hereby directed to please progress with this matter, so that we can have Question Time, as the Honourable Member has requested.

[L] THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND PUBLIC ASSETS

TREATY ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DAKAR ABIDJAN CORRIDOR, AMONGST THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE REPUBLIC OF COTE D'IVOIRE, THE REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA, THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA, THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA BISSAU, THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA, THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND THE REPUBLIC OF SENEGAL.

PETER BAYOKU CONTEH [*Minister of Works and Public Assets*]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with your leave; I beg to lay on the table of this Honourable House the following paper: Treaty on the establishment of the Dakar/Abidjan Corridor among the Governments of the Republic of Cote D' Ivoir, the Republic of The Gambia, the Republic of Guinea, the Republic of Guinea Bissau, the Republic of Liberia, the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Republic of Senegal.

V. BILL

THE UNIVERSITIES ACT 2021

INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

THE MINISTER OF TECHNICAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION

PROF. ALPHA T. WURIE [*Minister of Technical and Higher Education*]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled: the Universities Act 2021 be read the first time.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

[The University Act 2021 has been read the first time]

SECOND READING

PROF. ALPHA T. WURIE: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Sierra Leone is one of the few countries that can boast of being exposed to tertiary education for over a hundred years now. However, the Act of the University of Sierra Leone itself came into being after independence in the early 60's. What we call University of Sierra Leone incorporated Fourah Bay College and Njala University College; these were the two constituent colleges of the University of Sierra Leone then. Through the years, we have incorporated the Institute of Public Administration and Management [IPAM] and the College of Medicine and Allied Health Sciences [COMAHS]. As at 2005, these were the four constituent colleges of the University of Sierra Leone. I was opportuned to be the Minister of Education then in 2005, which came to this House of Parliament to ask that we open out and separate Njala University as an independent, autonomous one from the University of Sierra Leone. Members of Parliament then, were gracious enough to allow Sierra Leone to operate two public Universities. In 2014, this House of Parliament allowed a third Public University to come into being that is; the Ernest Bai Koroma University of Science and Technology. In all of these Public Universities, the Chancellor of all Universities remains to be the President of Sierra Leone. I am here again today 2021, I want to be bold to say colleague Members of Parliament, I can say so because I was in this Well in 1996 as No.13 in the SLPP list of Parliament and I actually signed the Parliamentary Book. So henceforth please continue to call me Honourable Member.

[Applause]

THE SPEAKER: Do not be afraid, a directive will soon be issued out from Mr Speaker on that issue. And I think what you have said will be taken duly into account, that once a Member of Parliament is always a Member of Parliament. *[Applause]*

PROF. ALPHA T. WURIE: Thank you so much Mr Speaker. This year 2021, I am here again to join you and to ask of you that the 2005 University Act be repealed, and we have come with a brand new one as the Universities Act of 2021; the reasons are as follows: It would be impracticable in the first place, for His Excellency the President to

now continue to be the Chancellor of all Public Universities. In this presentation, we want to ask of you that, the Milton Margai College of Education and Technology, a Polytechnic, which was created in 2001 be now transposed to become a Technical University. For me, the advantages are numerous. For too long in Sierra Leone, we have played second fiddle to Technical and Vocational education in this country, for far too long in Sierra Leone, kids do not see the value and virtue in accessing such education; as they do not see how they would access University education at the end of the day. To date, I am here to ask of you that Eastern Polytechnic that has also operated as such for 20 years now, be also upgraded to the Eastern Technical University. *[Applause]*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there would immediately be fear about how do we intend to run these Universities, when you look at the staff strength. Indeed, you would be correct to have that doubt but I want to let you know that already, the depth of staff strength in these two Polytechnics, have allowed us to make bold and start on the first run of the Technical University. I want to ask of you as well, that you allow the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education to prioritize staff upgrade; in other words, in this Grant-in-Aid which advertisement started yesterday; which interviews will start on the 12th of July 2021, that the very first crop of people that we would be supporting, are those of Master's Degree, that would want to vie for PhD, or those of first degree that would want to vie for Master's options as long as they are within the Public University System in Sierra Leone. We have been afraid because, for **194** years that we have started tertiary education, yet we have not taken the right steps such that we can get all cadres into academia in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are other administrative steps that we would ask of you. Three weeks ago, His Excellency commissioned colleges of Medicine and not Postgraduate Colleges of Medicine, Post Graduate College of Pharmacy, Postgraduate College of Surgery and Postgraduate College of Nursing; yet, these are all not recognized in the University structure. We have had the Law School in Sierra Leone, we may be talking about other Law schools in this country, with the numbers we are

talking about; yet, these are not interwoven into the Tertiary Education Commission of Sierra Leone. In this House, we will be coming with a Student Loan Scheme not too long from now, but the first criteria to be able to take a loan is to be in a Tertiary Institution in Sierra Leone, that is recognized by this Parliament and recognized by the Tertiary Education Commission. What we are trying to do to date is that we now have unintentionally but that is the case regional Universities in this country all but one, the North-West Region. It is time we create the opening that indeed, we will complete the phase of having regional Universities in Sierra Leone. *[Applause]* It should be expected that in a region, all layers of academia of higher education should be in that region; by that I mean, a University, a Polytechnic and a Community College. Why should our children with one or two credits in the West Africa Senior Secondary Certificate Examination [WASSCE] continue to take the WASSCE examination year in year out, hoping to get five credits; and by the time they get five credits, they would have done ten sittings and can still not go to University? Should the University be the only option of tertiary education that we have, or should we have the cadres such that every children at any time, can come into? *[Applause]*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled: the Universities Act 2021, be read the second time. *[Applause]*

THE SPEAKER: Before I put the question however, I would like to give recognition to the following personalities in our midst. I know there was an attempt to usurp my duties, by no less a person than the Chief Whip of the Opposition, but I think he had since corrected himself. Honourable KES Boya, former Member of Parliament, Constituency 024; *[Applause]* now your recognition is being done properly. *[Laughter]* The Honourable Justice John Kamanda, is the Justice of the Sierra Leone Residual Court; *[Applause]* Dr Sama Mondeh, former Minister of Agriculture; *[Applause]* Ambassador Sahr Sundu; *[Applause]* Ambassador Sahr Johnnie; *[Applause]* Dr Bailor Barrie, Chief Executive Officer, Partners In Health; *[Applause]* Sahr Nyama, C4C National Coordinator; *[Applause]* I have a name here, 'Callous Balaskei' I hope I have pronounced it correctly; Specialist, Maternal School of Excellence; *[Applause]* Momoh

Jimmy, Country Administrator PIH; *[Applause]* Madam Sittar Kaikai; *[Applause]* Madam Isata Sangbaya and there are others as well, that I will recognized as we proceed.

Honourable Members, I have already put the question, the debate would now begin; and the first speaker on my list will of course, be the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee on Higher and Technical Education; you have the Floor.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

HON. FESTUS M. LANSANA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Bill we have here before us, is not controversial. You all would agree with me that the flagship programme of the President that is; the 'Free Quality Education' for all, has started from Pre-School up to Secondary School. So that means, we are expecting more post-secondary school pupils to enter the Universities, and we only had about three traditional Universities as was mentioned by the Minister of Education. Sierra Leone has lagged behind for so long, as far as higher education is concerned, and that one has been reiterated by the Minister. The global demand for higher education if you check in 2001, it was around **97Mln**; now it has moved to **262Mln** globally, in 2015. So it means, Sierra Leone also needs to increase on the tertiary education because the demand for higher education is increasing globally and we are part of the global village. So it is against this background that the Technical Universities will emerge just as the Minister has said because there is huge gap between the demand and supply of the University. When you look at the Post-secondary Education, the demand has increased and at the same time, we are not able to absorb all of them. I would just give you few examples taking the Eastern Polytechnic as a case study. With your leave Mr Speaker, let me just cite some aspects of the report of the Eastern Polytechnic: ***"In 2017/2018 academic year, student's population was 2,250; we had 1,401 Males and 849 females. In 2018/2019, there was an increase of about 35% of 3,477 and 15% increase in the other academic year that was 2019/2020"***. So we expect additional increase in the student's population this academic year 2020/2021. Furthermore, we also noticed that this country is divided into five geopolitical regions and four already have Universities except Kenema, Kono and Kailahun; and we know

how Kenema, Kono and Kailahun contribute to the development of this particular nation. We usually refer to those three districts, as the bread-basket of this country. [Applause] Furthermore, at the 73rd UN General Assembly in New York, our President Retired Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, reiterated his vision for national development. In his words, with your leave Mr Speaker, I would want to read: ***"The human resource is the most important resource that we have in the world, and any attempt to embark on development without first embarking on making use of the human resource, will never work. You cannot develop a country if you do not develop the human capital"***. So the government's Flagship Policy for this Free Quality Education; is based on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals, which all of us are aware of. So the President is telling us that, the level of development of a nation is measured by the level of development of its Higher Education Sector; and the level of participation of its citizens in the Sector. So the government therefore, directs its policy towards ensuring that all citizens have equal rights to education, and ensuring that every citizen is given the opportunity to be educated in his ability, attitude and in decision-making; whatever he or she wants to go for. So therefore, there is need for us to expand especially on these Technical Universities as mentioned by the Minister. But with your leave Mr Speaker, I want to give you some statistics on the Global Technical Universities just for us to note. Globally, according to the International Labour Organisation [ILO], there are **15Mln** Engineers for a population of **7.5Bln** in the world; so that means, they have proportionated it as one Engineer for 500 people. But if you look at Sierra Leone's data, it is telling us that we only have **1,038** registered Engineers comprising of Civil Engineers, Mechanical Engineers, Electrical Engineers; Highway Water Engineers all of them put together. So if you check our **7.5Mln** population, that is telling you that, we need up to **15,000** Engineers if we are to go by the global figure. We also have only **25** registered Architects, and the global figure is telling us that we are supposed to have one Architect per **2,755**. If you check that one, it is telling you that we are supposed to have up to about **14,000** or so Architects. We only have 4 qualified or Chartered Quantity Surveyors countrywide. Only 8 fully qualified Town Planners in the country, then we only have 6 fully qualified Estate

Surveyors. So if you look at the relationship amongst each Engineer, they are supposed to have this kind of staff working with him. The ILO is telling us that, the Technologist is supposed to be **1** to every **525** Engineers; so it means, each Engineer is supposed to have **525** Technologists but then, we only have **5,190** Technologists. So it means, Sierra Leone is supposed to have **5,190** but when you look at the figure I have just given you, we are only having very few. The same thing for Technicians, according to the global information, we are supposed to have **25,000** Technicians to be able to work with these Engineers. So that tells you, there should be no more waste of time; and we are happy that the Minister is so pro-active that he had already included it. If you look at the Schedule at the back of the Bill, the Minister is now calling on us just as he had said, to transform these two Polytechnics to Universities, and to establish a new University that should be called Kono University of Science and Technology; and that is why the Well is full of the Konos. *[Applause]* This University is not only for the Konos, but also for my Constituency as I am also from Tongo. So I know Kono wants to train technical people for not only their companies out there in Kono, but for Tongo also to benefit from that. We have diamonds in Tongo, in fact, we have Capital Mining and that is why we do not even need unskilled miners, we want technical people who can be part of the mining companies. I just want to give you one example of the current Mining Company we have in Tongo; my colleague Honourable Member of the C4C, would attest to the fact that we do not have a single technical person who is a Sierra Leonean. All of them are expatriates that are paid thousands of dollars; that is because, we cannot provide any technical person and the type of mining they do is a specialized one. So with the introduction of this Science and Technology Institution in Kono, I am sure we will be able to train technical people who can be able to at least, absorb into the Mining Companies. So, I do not think we need to waste more time on this Bill because, it is going to benefit all of us across the country. So I am asking that this particular House speedily ratify this Bill into an Act; I thank you very much for your attention. *[Applause]*

THE SPEAKER: I would now recognise the following speakers: the Honourable Member from Port Loko and would be followed by the Honourable Member from Bombali-Makeni, followed by the Honourable Quintin Salia-Konneh from Kailahun, followed by the Honourable Abdul Karim Kamara [AKK] from Kambia in that order.

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is said that; only a Ninja can stop a Ninja. Most of us have gone through various Institutions, and have made our gains, and have learnt our pains, but I am grateful today; that those who are after us will benefit from what we did not benefit. I am one of the happiest Members of Parliament because today we are looking at transforming the Milton Margai College of Education and Technology to the Milton Margai University of Education and Technology. *[Applause]* I went through that Institution; I read Certificate, National Diploma and Higher National Diploma. And let me tell you what is most frustrating; after graduating with your Higher National Diploma, you are admitted into year 3 at Fourah Bay College, in the Engineering Department; and when you are there, all you do is a repetition of what you have done at Milton Margai on several occasions. *[Applause]* So you begin to ask yourself, why do I need to go to Milton Margi and come again and repeat at Fourah Bay College? It was a mere waste of time and lack of capacitation of our own Institutions. So I am very grateful that government has thought of improving the status of our own College to a University. And quite apart from that, I would say here unhesitatingly and without any form of politicisation that, the current Principal of Milton Margi has introduced enormous courses in the Institution *[Applause]* and with that kind of academic prowess that the Milton Margai is taking, I am sure it will lessen the burden on this nation. And quite apart from that, our human capital development, highly hinges on the number of educated people we have and the number of Institutions we have. I was shocked when I went to Abuja, I went for measurement and I learnt that the tailor is a University graduate in Abuja, how many of such people do we have in Sierra Leone? For you to be a University graduate you must have gone through several processes, the system was very difficult, very robust. It was not an opportunity, it was a privilege; in fact, very difficult. Most of us were very competitive in the field of

Engineering with even those who were at Fourah Bay College, but because of what existed at that point in time, we were subjugated to them because they had the onus to do degree in Engineering whiles we were only limited to do Higher National Diploma. I am sure our generation after us, are blessed to be exposed to this kind of facility; I am sure this is one good thing government has thought about, and this is one good thing Government has done. We have said, we are not in opposition because we are opponents to the development of this nation, we should be proponents to the development of this nation and wherever government gets it correct, we would say it is correct. *[Applause]* But most times, we become societal enemies because we pick on pitfalls of the Government and there are people who want us to be praising Government always.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, just as the Minister highlighted; there should be regional Universities. Mr Speaker, let me tell you what I went through just to gain University degree; I had to leave the comfort zone in Lungi to travel to Freetown. It was very difficult for me to even secure a room at Fourah Collage; I was even "gored" at Fourah Bay College; for those of us who had gone there knows the definition of "gory". Yes, so you have to leave your comfort zone to come to a very difficult zone. Some of us went through Fourah College just because there was no University in our regions; when we were at Fourah Bay Collage, to have what to eat for a day was very difficult, as we know the meal pattern in Fourah Bay College. We know if you eat in the morning, you eat in the afternoon and you eat at night it is called 111; if you do not eat in the morning, you do not eat in the afternoon but you only eat at night it is called 001; some of us had to do '000' a day, just because we migrated from our comfort zones. There are a lot of people who have had University requirement but cannot move because they are also faced with similar constraints. So if Government considers introducing Universities in all districts or regions, it will be very good for our nation. So we want to thank the President for the Universities he wants to create *[Applause]* and we want to plead to the Universities that are going to benefit from this to ensure that it is used for the good of the nation. Let us put in more effort to ensure that we go out

for qualified Lecturers, so that at the end of the day the quality of our people who go through our Institutions, would be quite different. Let me tell you, now people make comparative analyses of graduates from various Universities and at the end of the day, they would resolved on which graduate to always employ because they know the graduates from certain Universities do not live up to their expectations. So I want to implore the Principals and University staff, to ensure that in the midst of us having several Universities, quality should not be compromised. Let us have graduates who can positively influence the societal growth of our nation, who can impact our nation in a very right direction. So for me, I am extremely happy today Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Excellent!

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Today, I will be going to my Alma-mater, the Institution I attended to see people there reading for a degree; where I did not have the opportunity to read for a degree. I was forced to attend two colleges, after Milton Margai, I was left with no alternative but to go again to Fourah Bay college. Had this opportunity exposed to me whilst I was in Milton Margai, there would have been no need for my shadows to have got to Fourah Bay College; *[Applause]* I would have just attended Milton Margai and graduated, but I was deprived. Thank God that this Parliament has stood the test of time and we have made it accessible to those after us to benefit.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on that note; I express my unreserved appreciation and thanks to the Executive and His Excellency for this drive; it is in the right direction. *[Applause]*

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution to the Debate; I would implore the speakers after him to follow his fine example.

HON. ZAINAB C. TARAWALLY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to join the Honourable from Port Loko to say I am one of the best products of Milton Margai. *[Applause]* We were at the Goderich campus and the Principal today, was our errand

boy. *[Laughter]* The Principal today was our errand boy because we were big girls, and as you know, most of the big guys were running after us and Doctor Philip Kanu today was always saying: "*Zainab if you survive make me survive oh*" S.O *[2]*. So thank you very much Doctor Philip, we want to appreciate you for a very good work done.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I went to Milton Margai some weeks ago; I was so happy seeing the nature of the campus that I went through before, and the status it is now; I am so happy *[Applause]* thank you so dearly. I want to say a big thank you to the educationists of this nation especially the Ministers that are always there to give us what we want. Like what the Honourable Abdul Kargbo said, I should have been a pro Miltonian if we had this opportunity to see Milton Margai as a University. I went through colleges, I am also a product of the Ernest Bai Koroma University and I happened to be one of the renowned presidents of that University. So I want to say thanks to you Professor Alpha T. Wurie for giving us what we had wanted for years; you have done it for us. We want to say a big thanks to other Ministers like; the late Minkailu Bah, tendering the same Bill again here which was to change the Northern Polytechnic to a University. Having series of Universities would make Education a common thing for our people. It is very disturbing for a young beautiful teenage girl to leave her parents to knock on the doors of colleges in Freetown, temptation and all other problems would not make you achieve your dreams. So today, seeing this document, we want to assure you of our supports; we are not here to critique but we are here to support when the need arises.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if the grammarians would permit me; I want to say I am the happiest individual, seeing today Milton Margai College changing to that name that we want to see "*a University*"; that we love our kids to attend. Thank you Mr Minister, we want to assure you of our supports. We will look into this particular document and give advice where advice is needed; we will comment where we need to and we will delete where we should delete. On page 44, it is just a reminder to the Chairman of Legislative Committee; maybe I am too early, but do not mind me, as you know me in the Committee. I am just seeing all of the six constituent campuses of

Universities having a "***D and E***", I am worried about the "***D and E***". Maybe in the Committee Stage, we will try to proffer something that would suit our country. We cannot give power to a particular individual to just take decision as and when they are to be taken, without reference to this wonderful and unique House of Parliament. Being the House or making laws, we have to always reference Parliament for the purposes of what we are here for. So I am just looking at it, maybe at the Committee Stage we will have a proper look so that at the end of the day, we will give better recommendations for the purpose of this document; as we have it now.

Mr Speaker, pages 44 and 45 of Section 2[1] and 29[1]. Just go through 'D and E', you will see what I am saying. Maybe I am too early, but do not mind me; it is because that is the way I am.

THE SPEAKER: It is Okay.

HON. ZAINAB C. TARAWALLY: Yes, it is just a recommendation to the Chairman, and Committee Members. But to be honest, I want to say thank you Professor Wurrie. I said it initially that you are a Medical Doctor, but you are not fit in the business of giving injection; you are fit into the business of Learning processes and because you are here, we are seeing what we call an increase in benefits for our kids having more Universities in Kono, Kenema, and having more campuses, will make the Education Sector a better place. We would not have what we call University mothers, teenage mothers, we would not have problems with Kids giving birth to Kids but we would have what we call better learning environment. You will be in your area like in Kono, and still attend a University and have friendly environment in speaking Mende, Temne, Limba or whatever tribe you may want to speak, if so desire. So having Universities like these, I thank you so very much; and as a proud Miltonian, I am so happy today. Thank you Philo, as I fondly call you always Doctor; Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity given to me. I want to assure you Mr Minister that, we will do the needful as we move to the Committee Stage for the benefit of Sierra Leone. We are here for Sierra Leone and we would work for Sierra Leone, we want to assure you. Thank you.

Suspension of S.O 5[2]

THE SPEAKER: I give the floor now to the Honourable from Kailahun.

HON. QUINTIN SALIA-KONNEH: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: And let us try to be brief.

HON. QUINTIN SALIA-KONNEH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I believe if not all but each and every Honourable Member here present has darkened the world of a University, and I believe with this kind of document laid before us by the Honourable Minister, it is seen to be non-contentious. So on that note, I want to recommend that, we possibly limit the number of speakers so that we can expedite the process.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is something about the Minister that I cannot quite understand; there is something attached to the way he does things, which more or less, is in a more positive way. It was during his era, that we had this kind of amoebic movement dividing the University into two that was when we had Njala University; and now again for the second time, it is like the Justice entering his Chamber for the second time that is what is happening. Now for the second time, he has brought to us this time not one, but four. And it is possible that in some other time, we might have eight. So there is something very good and I want to encourage him to roll out whatever expertise he has in managing the Education Sector because during his last tenure, we actually experienced improvement in terms of educational progress. Thank you very much Kortor, maybe it is because of the school he attended where he was groomed right at a very tender age.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, moving forward at this point, I want to recognise my Resident Minister, who is present here with us. I also want to recognise members from the Eastern Region with extension to Kono. I want to recognise the Peninsular Descendants.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in as much as this particular document is not contentious; I want to move that we speedily ratify this document. The reason being, as the Honourable Member on the other side was saying, before this time during our own era, we only had one University and that was what actually prompted some of us to move from Kailahun to come to Freetown in search of education. And I believe, if that was never the case, some of us would have got our full Education in the Eastern Region which is the same thing for most of us here as Honourable Members; up to **80%** of us, are residents of the peninsular in the Western Rural District, I stand to be corrected. Most of us are residents of that district, we might not have come from this area, but we are giving back to our children, who are now born citizens of the Western Rural District. So if they want the University very close to them in order to minimise the movement of their children from the district to far-reaching places; like people going to Bo in search of education, I believe moving the motion to have Milton Margai College as a University, and to have the Eastern Polytechnic as a University, is a laudable one we must all support. So without wasting the time of this House, I want to move that we quickly ratify this document so that we will have all of these constituent colleges to become Universities; thank you *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his Contribution. The Honourable Member from Kambia, you have the Floor.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: After that, you will be followed by the Honourable Member from Kono who is the Leader of C4C; and then we will begin to round up.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, please permit me to thank fellow Miltonians, who are in this Well today for such a wonderful achievement. When we came to this Parliament, we came together as Miltonians to fight for a dream that was not actualised in our time. Today if there is nothing I have achieved in my life, I have achieved my greatest dream *[Applause]*. I had to drive this morning far away from Bo, to be here because if I had not witnessed this day, I would not have been a

happy man for the rest my of life. Today we are here as Miltonians, we were taught to Learn, Labour and Live; and with that Motto, we are strong to be in every part of the world. We are proud products of Milton Margai College like my brother who was a Governor, I was a Miltonian full-time, and I was deprived of having a first degree from Milton Margai because at the time, we never had that opportunity; today we are here, I may want to thank the Minister. I remember at night, I used to move to the Principal, we engaged Journalists, to ensure that we have this day today. I want to thank the Journalists, especially the one from Standard Times, who stood by us to ensure our dream, is being achieved today, but I want to draw the attention of the Minister to a point that, when you were looking at the regional Universities quotas, I am sure you did not notice that the North-West which is our own region, do not have a University. Mr Minister, let me remind you that in the East, we are now having the new University of Science and Technology in Kono, and the Eastern Polytechnic will be transformed to a University; these two are from the East. In the South, we have Njala in Moyamba and we also have it in Bo. In the North-West, we are managing with the Ernest Bai Koroma University which is in Magburaka, Tonkolili and in Bombali; meaning the North-West, we have nothing at all. As a new region, I am sure Port Loko is benefiting from the Ernest Bai Koroma University, we are not proud of being an affiliate Institution to another University, we want our own in the North-West.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, Point of Order! I am not seeing the controversy you are raising, but let me take you to page 44 of the Schedule, just for clarification to the House. From paragraph 3, I would briefly read: "***The Ernest Bai Koroma University of Science and Technology, in his wisdom, got the campuses as listed: Magburaka Campus, Makeni Campus, Port Loko Campus, etc. etc.***" That is just for the records. I can understand the emotions but establishing a University is a gradual process, so I just want you to understand that we are in the pipeline and you are not left out. That is the correction I wanted to make; thank you.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Thank you Leader of Government Business. I acknowledge the fact that we have Ernest Bai Koroma Campus in Port Loko, but what I am saying is,

that, if we are having the Eastern University, there is nothing wrong to have a North-West University stationed in Port Loko, and having campuses in Kambia and Karene.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are happy and words cannot express our joy. I want to thank His Excellency the President, for making Milton Margai a University, after this Bill would have gone through this House. For most of us, we thought it was just a political campaign tool to win Constituency 110 elections. Although he was ignored by the people yet still, he is fulfilling that promise. I have never thanked His Excellency on such a matter but today, I want to thank His Excellency the President, for making our dreams come true as Miltonians. You know, sometimes, it is good to have products of certain Institutions to help them. It would have been very difficult, looking at the former Minister of Higher and Technical Education, and the ordeals we went through in his hands to have this; had it not been a Principal who was a product of Milton Margai, believe you me, that dream would not have been actualized today. I want to thank you Mr Principal, you have fought a good fight; you were resilient, nothing stopped you, and I know the sky will not be your limit. The sky will not be his limit means; he will go above the sky. For those who have flown, know the sky is not the end of it all; there is something above the sky. I know his ability, I am a product of Milton Margai College, do not doubt my ability in anything.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are here today and few months ago, I asked the Minister of Education, when he was just transferred to this Ministry. I told him, I have asked all the Ministers before him that the 'Free Education' has brought most kids to school; but with these kids, the product has not come out. We are expecting this product in the next 10 years meaning, we are going to have more school graduates meaning, we need more Institutions. It is for one to say, we have these Institutions, these new ones, but Mr Speaker, if you take a look at the rural areas stemming from Waterloo to Masiaka, you will see that the span is so vast; and the number of secondary schools around that area is enough to have another University, having a campus there. We are happy, and we want to inform other Institutions that, it is not just to have a University, but we want to see our Universities opening up, that is how it

was done in Ghana and in other Institutions. You can have another campus in the rural areas. Let me not end today without saying thanks to you Mr Speaker, I know you made several calls, we went to you many times to actualize this day; we will always be grateful; and in our next graduation, we will decorate many people who helped us in this fight. Thank you, sir *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution, emotional as it was but very meaningful and very poignant. Let me now give the floor to the Honourable Leader of C4C. Let me just say this; NaCOVERC team is here to apply the job, and it is specifically requested for Honourable Lahai Marah.

HON. EMERSON SAA LAMINA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the government of Sierra Leone again has corrected historical injustice; historical injustice against the people of Kono for quite a long time. Sixteen years ago, I was privileged to sit at Senate in the presidency of Njala University, representing students for the 2005 University Act. And I did contribute on behalf of all the students representing the National Union of Sierra Leone Students [NUSS] at that particular moment. Today we are here, I am also privileged to box to the Bill that will give birth to three new Universities. It is sad to note that, our citadels of higher Institution which are actually created to groom citizens to be better product of this nation, are gradually fading away like a morning dew; and in as much as we have the creation of Universities, it is sad to note that nudity, examination malpractices; violence from students; disrespect for constituted authorities; and unfortunately, cultism is gradually marrying our Universities and new Universities will be born; three, for that matter. I must congratulate all the stakeholders that have contributed one way or the other to see this coming to life. I remember the many wrestlings with the erstwhile Minister for this University to be born. Today we are here; definitely, Sir Milton Margai will sleep in peace, joining Tafewa Balewa from Nigeria, joining Kwame Nkrumah who have Universities named after them. Sir Milton will also sleep today in peace, having a University named after him.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Latin maxim makes us to know that "*educare*" S.O [2] the meaning is: "*from darkness to light*". We from Kono without prejudice, we have never been in drought of the human resource. For many years, the invention of Bennimix was contested, contested that it is not from Africa. I am talking of the late Dr Amidu Matturi, after many years it came to past, he was compensated from Njala University that he was actually the propounder of the Bennimix that we enjoy today. We are about to have a University of Science and Technology in Kono, you would be surprised to know the human resource that Kono possesses in the area of sciences; many but not limited to Dr Sama Mondeh, Professor Gbamanja and Professor Gbakima. [Applause] These are brains, their names bring to mind my school song, my alma mater, second border, Magburaka Boys Secondary School in the third stanza of our school song: "***since that old boy gather round us tell us the old days, how easily they ran the race, how they lost and won, now the baton has reached us we press to new records, we keep that motto onward Magburaka Boys Secondary School***". That is it; their names bring to mind that; they would teach us the younger boys, how they fought and won; the baton will be passed unto us to press on.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Universities coming into being, have no shortage. Looking at the resume of Senior Lecturers and their research abilities, the campuses and even students yearning to access those Universities; Mr Speaker, I want to emphasize for the curriculum to be dynamic; Nigeria has a whole house for curriculum developers. Today, we see our young people having interest in filming, but there is no course in this country called "*Cinematology*"; they have great interests in gem, there is no course called "*Gemology*". Whilst the University of Science and Technology will be looking at typical science courses, we would recommend also for its sustainability because, I see the absence of education; and for you to be sustainable, let there be a School or a Faculty of Education to groom Science Instructors, so that they can give birth. During oversights to the various mining companies, we were made to understand that most of their expatriates are Ghanaians, Guineans and Philippines in

those mining sectors. If the young from those Technical Universities are actually groomed, they will take over those expatriates.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, few things I also want to note; by the time we come to the critical aspects of this Bill, we would have recommended already, from the reports that we compiled from the Bo Conference recognising that, the Maternal School of Excellence is incorporated. And the good news here is from Schedule [2], of this particular draft Bill, I see from page 45; "University of Science and Technology" Kono campus, and the B aspect, impresses me so much. ***"And any other Institution that may, on the advice of the Commission be constituted as a Campus by Statutory Instrument made by the Minister"***; this is very interesting.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, PIH; a non-governmental organization came here some four months ago and did a marvelous presentation, bringing case studies from the Haiti and Rwanda experiences on what they did. And they actually zoomed the same to us, about what they intend doing. I would tell you generously that, they have already donated **\$18Mln** for the expansion of the Koidu Government Hospital, to have a post-graduate cadre. Does it concern all of us here? Most times, our students would spend eight years in the Medical School; at the end of the day, they will fly to Ghana, Nigeria for post-graduate speciality in Surgery or Gynecology, and that is sad. PIH are willing to expand the Koidu Government Hospital for both academic and professional aspects. We will recommend as stated in page 19 of that recommendation from the Bo Conference, that this PIH Maternal School of Excellence with a fine CEO from Massachusetts, USA, Professor Paul Farma, that his dream come to pass wherein, many Sierra Leoneans will benefit from this aspect; we have no itch of doubt, that we will benefit and Sierra Leone as a whole. It will only be located in Kono, but I am sure that correcting this historical injustice against Kono; there have been Universities from the South, North and Western Area; the Eastern region has none. Today, I am proud and at the same time humble, to be part of history, in ratifying three new Universities. Milton Margai coming to mind, I am not a student of Milton Margai College, but I lectured there briefly. With my brief lectures there, I realized that they are having brains and

most of these brains, whenever they access Fourah Bay College to read Engineering; it is just like drinking cool water because, they are seasoned and they are gurus.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I call on all that we swiftly move, for the ratification of these three fine Universities Bill; I thank you very much *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution; and I would now give the floor to the Honourable Kaisamba.

HON. FRANCIS A. KAISAMBA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to take this singular opportunity to thank the Minister of Technical and Higher Education and of course the President, His Excellency Julius Maada Bio, for the repeal of the 2005 Universities Act and the replacement of the 2021 Bill, which will become an Act in a few moments from now. This is a fulfilling day for me, my Constituency, for the people of Kenema and by extension, the people of the Eastern Region. We have waited for this day for quite a while, and I could remember vividly; the formation of the Eastern Polytechnic was done under the leadership of the current Minister. He was the Minister of Education then, under the late President Ahmed Tejan-Kabbah. When the Bunumbu Teacher's College was displaced, they came to Kenema and the Government Technical Institute played the host to them on their campus but by then the Bunumbu Teacher's College students used to wear uniforms. Eventually, under the late Dr Sandy Bockarie, who was the Principal of the Bunumbu Teacher's College, the idea of merging the two to become a Polytechnic came up; and the Minister championed it and we had the Eastern Polytechnic. I went to the Eastern Polytechnic myself after I sat to my O' Levels examinations; by then, Bunumbu Teacher's College were wearing uniform, I refused to go to Bunumbu Teacher's College so that I could not wear the uniform after Secondary School, but when the Polytechnic was born; I went to Eastern Polytechnic to do my HTC. So the transformation from the Eastern Polytechnic to a University has been a very serious problem; we the stakeholders from Kenema, and the College Authorities struggled. In the last Parliament under the former President Ernest Bai Koroma, proposals were made. I and other Members of Parliament; like Dr Bu-Buakei Jabbie, Dr

Bernadette Lahai pushed, and the document was almost at a conclusion for the Executive to bring so that we can do justice like we are doing today; unfortunately, it did not happen. Under this administration, His Excellency Dr Julius Maada Bio when he went to do the 'Thank You Tour' in Kenema, the people rallied with placards with inscriptions that: "*they wanted University*"; and when he was responding, he did say and promised that definitely, you do not have to show me inscriptions that the Polytechnic will be transformed. He said you deserve it, because I believe the Eastern Region has been the only region without a University. So because of that, he said definitely, from that moment, he had expected the Minister then, to have taken that as a policy statement from the President, and ensure that those dreams are actualized. Unfortunately, we had series of stakeholders meetings, and there were challenges. At some point, the people of Kenema and the Polytechnic students themselves were very agitated because a letter came out which suggested that the Polytechnic Kenema and the Milton Margai College remains as Polytechnic Institutions. We had to go in, to quell people down by saying; for the fact that H.E the President, has promised that these Institutions will be transformed, we believe he has a nickname called "*talk and do*"; and it is just a matter of time, this transformation will happen. [*Applause*] The other day, I was made to understand that the Minister went to Kenema, specifically, the Eastern Polytechnic, and told officials, students and indigenes of Kenema, for them to go and lobby to their Members of Parliament; so that when this Bill comes to Parliament, it will be a success. When I went, I was told and I said, there is no point lobbying, this is our project we have been waiting for all this while, and believe you me; we will do it with all our zeal and strength.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, at this juncture; I want to appeal to Members of Parliament across the aisle, that for once, the Eastern region deserves a transformed University. This government has made a lot of strides to bring technical and vocational institutions, but at an advanced level, that is why I was made to understand that this College will be called Technical University. We do not have any problem with that, so that people who are going for technical courses will now do them at advanced levels.

You know, you have to do your BA, your BSc and so forth and so on; even at Masters Level, that is what these Universities are welcoming. At this moment once again, I want to encourage all that, when we go through the Committee Stage, let us do justice to the Bill; and approve it with alacrity. I thank you very much for listening. *[Applause]*

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. I would now give the Floor to the Honourable Dr Kandeh Yumkella, followed by the Honourable Marah, and that will bring an end to the debate; except for the winding up. I hope the Leader of the Opposition is around, because his moment is coming; bear with me a second, just to give recognition to a few more people: Mr Lahai Lawrence Leema, Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs, Mrs Nematulai Bachan, Deputy Minister of Water Resources and Honourable Rex Bonapha, Deputy Minister of Transport. I am reading out what is written here with the prefix Honourable; I am not too sure whether... but I will soon clarify that, do not worry.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, please we have objection. I do not really want to obstruct; we prefer the prefix of "Mr". For people like Professor Alpha Wurrie, we have the onus to call them Honourable because you have asked for clarification, you should not use it as you are justifying from your position of strength.

THE SPEAKER: I know; it is unfortunate, that I withdrew the word "Honourable".

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you!

THE SPEAKER: Mr Rex Bonapha, let me make one thing clear; only Ministers, who have come through the corridors of this House, must have been a Member of this House. If today you are a Minister, you must have been a Member of Parliament, before you go with the title 'Honourable' *[Applause]*. But if you were new to it, you were appointed under the 1991 Constitution directly, without having had the privilege of coming through this House; you are a "Mr" not "Honourable" *[Applause]*. It is not yet a ruling, I am going to come up with my ruling; do not worry. Mr Gilbert Cooper, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Technical and Higher Education; Alex Bonapha Esq.

Director, Decentralisation Secretariat; Joseph Egbenda Kapuwa Esq., Director General, SLBC; Dr Victor Massaquoi, Director TEVET; Mahmoud M. M. Kallah, Office of Presidential, Infrastructural Initiative; Dr Philip John Kanu, *[Applause]* current Principal of the Milton Margai College of Education; Alimamy Sattie, Logistics Manager; Andrew Fatorma, Resident Minister East; John Juana Registrar, Eastern Polytechnic; *[Applause]* Mohamed Sesay, Chairman Kenema District Council; *[Applause]* Dominic Aruna, Eastern Polytechnic; Abdurrahman Jalloh, Student Union President Eastern Polytechnic; Dr Mohamed Kombor Kamanda, Chairman Eastern Polytechnic Council; Victoria Musu Kanja, Administrative Assistant, Eastern Polytechnic; *[Applause]* Professor Mohamed Konneh, Principal Eastern Polytechnic; *[Applause]* Aminata Jimmy, Deputy Secretary; Amie Jusu, Administrative Officer, Ministry of Higher Education; Etta Cowan Administrative Officer; the Minister of information and Communications *[Applause]*. Honourable Kandeh K. Yumkella, you now have the Floor.

HON. DR. KANDEH K. YUMKELLA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I know we will have an opportunity at the pre-ledge, to go into the details of the Act. Honourable Minister, we are sure we will do due diligence as we supported the Honourable Minister of Information and Communications. We worked closely with him to enact the Cyber Security and Cybercrime Bill, and this one is so important. Mr Speaker, what the rest of our colleagues did not know is that, there was a quiet competition between the Kono and Kenema delegations. So some of us who are friends of Nongowa, decided to go out and call for Nongowa reinforcement, and suddenly, we saw Honourable Rado Swarray appearing with a whole contingent bus loaded, to counter the heavy Kono delegation, but it is all in good gest because everybody is proud that yes, decentralisation of Tertiary Education indeed is taking place; we want to thank all the pioneers for this. Honourable Minister, sometimes it is good for you to have the good [karma] that you are always asked to do these noble tasks, and we assure you we would work with you to do it well. We want to thank Dr Philip Kanu as well, as Honourable Abdul Karim Kamara [AKK] has said it was on his plate that this has to happen, and as a former UN man, we know he will deliver and he has delivered; we congratulate him. We also want

to recognise other pioneers, who have helped to make this day possible; especially in the context of Kenema. Professor Lahai and Honourable Bernadette Lahai played a key role over time, in lobbying for this working on the documentation, and all the assessment meetings with the Tertiary Committee, for the tertiary institution to be established in Kenema; we are very happy for that. And of course Honourable Emerson Lamina and others, we are happy for Kono as well, as AKK says; we look forward in a few years, to also host one in the North-West, and we assure you, we will work with you.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, about academic excellence; there are some countries, where the proliferation of Universities have caused problems because unfortunately, there are not enough resources to back them. We pray that the economy improves over time, so that we can resource these Institutions well. We also hope there will be some specialisation; some of these regions have comparative advantages for which skills are needed. Kenema was famous in our days, for good furniture industry; those dreams can be revived with some specialities. Of course, for the University in Kono, we are dreaming that we start polishing our diamonds, it is not complicated but we need the skills. Also, for the Eastern University because, I do not know when we will have one down in Sulima; maybe, they will look at also the oil and gas industry if indeed, some of the indications we are getting about significant oil and gas are being deposited in our country, all of their skills required alongside the value chain that will create jobs and also wealth for this country. In some countries, in the Oil and Gas Sector, they even had cause to import Welders, for them to do specialised in welding; and cost hundreds of millions of dollars for such industry. So we hope that in these Polytechnics and advanced Universities, some skills will be structured to help us with the comparative advantage in those regions.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I just want to assure you that in the pre-ledge; if we had known the date ahead of time, we would have engaged in order to improve on the Act and the governance structure. I also commend His Excellency the President; I see you are waiting for that praise [*Applause*]. We do commend, it has been a while; on

Friday, I did it ten times, backed with criticism as well. *[Undertone]* I commended him because he promised something in the Manifesto which I promised, that one way we will begin to depoliticise tertiary education is to handover this Chancellorship to academics, and I think the Honourable Minister mentioned that. I commend the President for considering that as well; let us have academics do their jobs and we pray also that the Ministry will allow them to run these Institutions. Once politics creeps in, then quality drops, everybody now begins to lay belle *S.O [2]*; we want academic excellence, we want real professors. Professor Wurie, we also need some more PhDs, I saw statistics recently; it was shocking that we have only a tiny number of PhDs in our Universities. To create more knowledge, to push for academic excellence, we need more PhDs; it is not easy to get but yet, it is necessary. The government has to help, for some of these specialised areas, we have to sponsor people whether in Nigeria, Ghana, or even Kenya and Uganda; nowadays, even in Rwanda, to get good PhDs to come back so that they can inspire students aspiring for higher heights and academic excellence.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on this one; I would say kudos to the government. Honourable Dickson, you do not have to whip me anymore on this one. We are genuine, we give credit where it is due; thank you very much.

THE SPRAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. I now recognise the Honourable from Falaba, my good friend, the Honourable Marah; and then, you will be followed by Honourable Marray Conteh, as my last speaker before we wind up.

HON. LAHAI MARAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am particularly happy today for this particular Bill. I am coming from Constituency 42 which comprises of: Delmadugu, kolosaradu, and Neiya chiefdoms. We border with Kono District - Sandor Chiefdom and Leh, together with the Tholley Chiefdom; majority of the Korankos in Kono, are from my Constituency. From Kroobola to Kabala is one hundred and ten miles, and from Kono to Kroobola is 36 miles; in some other areas, you would

shout out someone's name in Kono and he/she would answer. So for us to have a University in Kono, I must say we are grateful indeed *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when you look at the last page of the document and that is the University of Science and Technology, with only one campus which is the Kono campus; I want to say when you go to Kabala, and you visit the Blind School area, we already have a very solid structure that was constructed by the late Momoh Conteh. That particular structure was intended by the late Momoh Conteh, to be a University. I do believe we can incorporate that in the University of Science and Technology for Koinadugu also to have another campus *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to join the Honourable Leader of the NGC to congratulate His Excellency the President, the 'talk and do' President *[Applause]*.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, I want to crave your indulgence for Professor to be bringing more Bills to Parliament, so that we can have more people praising the President *[Laughter]*.

HON. LAHAI MARAH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the 'talk and do' President, when he said in 2018 that he will relinquish the position of a Chancellor for the University of Sierra Leone, he has done that *[Applause]* but Mr Speaker, let me take you to Part IV on page 8 of this document where we have the introduction of another new word and that is "**visitor**". Let me read with the leave of Mr Speaker: "**that the University shall have a visitor who shall be the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone or His appointee**". I am particularly concerned with [ii], when you go to [ii] it says: "**the visitor may as and when convenient for him, visits a University or campus and to intervene into the general governance of academic and non-academic programmes**". Mr Speaker, this is something we have to look at as the Honourable Leader mentioned, that we have to make these Universities apolitical, and if we look at also the structure of the University Court, it is much more important that we look at it in details so that we would not see a situation

wherein the Minister, who is a political representative having skillfully, domineering powers.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, having said that; I want to say that indeed it is a very good Bill, and I want to appreciate the Minister on behalf of my Constituency, for having a University in Kono; thank you so much.

HON. P.C. BAI KURR KANAGBARO SANKA III: Mr Speaker, nobody from the Paramount Chiefs has contributed, and it will be a great disservice if I do not contribute to this great Debate, as former Chairman of the University of Sierra Leone.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Marray Conteh, you have the Floor.

HON. ABDUL S. MARRAY CONTEH: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I first of all want to thank the President for fulfilling another Manifesto promise; and I also want to thank the Minister of Technical and Higher Education in his second reign, to prove that we produce document that will help to ensure that tertiary education gains its rightful position in the development raider of this country. Globalisation and digitalisation are interconnected more than ever before, so we must ensure that our local plans have a global mind-set. As a country, we have missed in the middle; you either be right at the top or right at the bottom with very silent middle level manpower, but we are on the right direction of revamping Technical and Higher Education in this country; Technical Universities are the right way to go. We have had Universities with no disrespect maybe, that had focused more on theory; but this is the time that we have to ensure we tailor our curriculum to the needs of the market. This is the time we need to have Technical Universities that are demand-driven research industry. The other time, I talked about creating new generation of game changers, students that can compete with Nigerians, Ghanaians out there; and with this global mind-set of establishing Technical Universities, we would be able to succeed in doing that *[Applause]*. Technical University brings new knowledge, and it would help to bridge the gap that we currently have. In as much as government is making relentless effort to create jobs, we still have a huge number of unemployed and the unemployable; so we need the skills, the

education that can be linked with those skills. Before going into this proper, I just want to encourage the Universities that would be created, to tailor their curriculum to the needs of the market. We have people that have studied Greek history which is very important, Roman history also very important; but we are still missing the current trend as a nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to bring to our attention that, the Legislative Committee together with the Technical and Higher Education Committee, worked closely with the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education in different consultative meetings to look at some of the grey areas in this Bill. And I believe, with the various inputs made in these consultations, I want to suggest that we produce the report tomorrow and then push this Bill to the Committee of the Whole House for further deliberation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, at this juncture before taking my seat; I want to encourage colleague Members of Parliament to maintain the bipartisan spirit, as we have done in all the previous Bills recently, as this is a Sierra Leonean issue. This is the time we have to revamp our educational system; and by doing that, we will regain our lost glory and go back to being the 'Athens of West Africa'. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution.

HON. ABU KEMOKAI: Mr Speaker, Point of Order!

THE SPEAKER: Point of Order from whom?

HON. ABU KEMOKAI: Mr Speaker, there is something I want to bring to your attention and to the notice of this House, which I think it is very important.

THE SPEAKER: What is the Order you are standing on now?

HON. ABU KEMOKAI: Mr Speaker, I am standing on *S.O [34]*. There is a report that talks about Africa in terms of contraceptive pills, which women do take in order to

prevent them from being pregnant; and that report says: contraceptive fails in Africa because of the misuse. For example, if you are given pills to take on a daily basis, some people would take it today and the other day they would not take it and when it fails them they blame the medicine; and that also brings my memory, to the use of the face masks. We have been advised scientifically that, one way to prevent the spread of the COVID virus is by using face mask; but when you look within the Well, you can see some people are using the masks on their chins instead of covering their nose and mouth. I do believe we have to set the brightest example here; that instead of using the mask on our chins, let us use the mask properly.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much. On that note, NaCOVERC staff are here, they are waiting for you to take the job.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Paramount Chief, can we limit the contribution please?

HON. P.C. BAI KURR KANAGBARO SANKA III: Yes Sir, it is a very short one.

THE SPEAKER: Alright.

HON. P.C. BAI KURR KANAGBARO SANKA III: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I think we are extremely lucky for this Bill to come in at this time through the Minister. It was the same Minister that brought it here as the Universities Act of 2005, which we tried to amend many times but was not possible. So if he comes again to bring in this Bill to Parliament, I have to commend him because he had seen what he did in 2005; what needs to be done now, and what needs to be changed. So I have to stand up here to say congratulations, and I am sure we will do everything possible for us to have a good Bill that will be signed by His Excellency the President, that will serve the people of Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I could remember vividly in the Universities Act of 2005; the time limits proposed for the Deputy Vice Chancellors [DVCs], was of a problem. In the old Bill that we are now trying to repeal, a DVC will only have two years tenure in one of the Colleges, and you can only be given a second chance for a total of

four years tenure. With that, how can you take a young Professor and make him a DVC and just after four years, he would have to go back as an ordinary Professor or Lecturer? I am sure you must have addressed that. Now, we are appealing to the Minister to come in and educate us very well, and see that the Bill that we are going to pass now, will serve the interests of the Universities very well.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the last speaker from Constituency 130 or 131 said it clearly; where are we in technology? Where are we in the field of manufacturing? Where are we as a nation, to compete with the modern sectors? How can we produce students who cannot produce anything, but are ready to consume? If we go to our Universities, you will find most of the students either doing History, Government, Home Economics; Sociology and Peace and Conflicts Studies etc.; we need people who can come in and produce. How many Doctors do we have here who are neurosurgeons? How many Specialists? The specialists we have now are very old and retired. They are doing a good job, but who are going to replace them? So Mr Speaker, you are an educationist in terms of being highly educated and highly exposed. We expect you to take the lead when we come to the Committee of the Whole House, for us to put in something that this government intends to do. We are happy that the Government of the SLPP brought the Universities Act in 2005, and today again, they are amending it; so we accept that and we congratulate you. As Chairman, we have done so many Committee meetings headed by Professor Ngevaio and others, for us to amend this Universities Act of 2005. Now that you thought of repealing it in its entirety, I say congratulations; to know that will serve your Universities well. When we were there, we built the new IPAM building with no government funding, not a single cent but from the fees of the students and the courses we were putting together; today look at it. If you go to the Amphitheatre, you would see what we did. We performed, and we expect that you will perform better and do better because you have great experience, you being a Professor, there is the possibility of being a Minister of Education for nearly 20 years; as you have come in for the third rounds, we support you and we hope to work with you. I thank you very much as this is a good Bill and it came in timely for us to promote

technology in Sierra Leone. May God bless us, and Mr Speaker, I salute you for giving me the late chance to speak, thank you. Mr Speaker, I have ended; but how do you go about getting people, and you do not get people from the Honourable Paramount Chiefs? The methodology that you are applying is good for us, not to be standing. If you give us, let us say two speakers, I am sure we have great speakers here who can do it.

THE SPEAKER: I have taken note, for next time.

HON. P.C. BAI KURR KANAGBARO SANKA III: Thank you, Sir.

THE SPEAKER: And I thank you for your contribution. I will now call on the Leader of the Opposition to wind up please.

HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH: Mr Speaker, not to wind up but to contribute. I am yielding my right to wind up to Honourable Hassan A. Sesay.

THE SPEAKER: So you are dividing your time?

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: I would just take one minute, not more than a minute. The first statement I would make is to confirm that on this side, we would support this Bill; that is the first statement I would make. *[Applause]* And secondly, to commend the President and the Minister, for putting this document together at this point in time. And finally Mr Speaker, in future just to guide the Minister because the draftsmen are not here; the Bill came in without the Memorandum and Objects; usually, we would object but we are not going to do that this time round but in future, make sure it is entailed in the Bill. I thank you very much *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Over to you, Honourable Hassan A. Sesay.

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. And thank you Leader for giving me the opportunity to wrap up on this very important Act that we have in front of us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when issues come that are development oriented, there is very little variance in what people say on both sides of the aisle because we are all for development. We all know that with the growth in the population of our country, and the proliferation of schools, there is supposed to be an increase in the number of higher Institutions that will help the process.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me first of all talk about the University of Milton Margai. When we were going to school, Milton Margai College used to produce the best English and Literature teachers for our high schools; we benefited from that, tremendously. I can still remember teachers like the late AOD George, Dwight Caulker, Macauley, Theodora Dougan etc. etc. a host of them came from there, those were all very good teachers who helped a lot of people that are now benefiting this country, some have passed on. Fast forward, Milton Margai College having produced teachers, now to be transformed to a University; I think this is long overdue. Let us give them the respect for what they do because, if they have produced people that produced educationists, they deserve to be given the right place in society.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, people might underestimate the advantages of going to school that is very close to your home, but there are inconveniences that you suffer when you are away from home; these challenges will be minimised when you are close to home attending a University or a school of higher learning. So Mr Speaker, we would not say much about that, but the Milton Margai College deserves to be established as a University, and we will support that more and more as we go.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, not only talking about Milton Margai College but the University of Kono and the Eastern Polytechnic also, because according to the Act here; we are to have the University of Sierra Leone, Njala University, Ernest Bai Koroma University of Science and Technology, the Milton Margai University of Education and Technology, Technical University of Sierra Leone and the Kono University of Science and Technology. We are not thinking about the new age, we are diversifying; we are going into the era where we are now exploring oil and gas. Like the Honourable

Member from Kitchon was saying, when you talk about oil and gas, you need specialised skills to handle such an Industry. I hope, now that we are establishing such Universities, and particularly so thinking about Sulima, there are people now who are interested in exploring oil and gas in Sulima; I think I am aware of a company called Net Oil, that are now trying to come and have a licence to do just that. We also have another company from Nigeria that we have just approved here, that is coming to explore oil. So if we have all of those coming, let us have the preparedness within our country to provide the necessary manpower that they require, just so that they will not be importing every expatriate that they would need to service that Industry; I think we must take that into consideration when establishing these Institutions. That is why the government must also be prepared to provide enough funding, enough equipment for these Institutions so that we do not only have them in name, but they must be very practical in terms of serving the purpose for which they are established. One thing I know about the Minister of Education; I do not want to flatter him, but I know that he is man who has a penchant for thoroughness, and care about results. So I am sure the Minister will ensure that this government provides all that it takes to make these Universities really function as they are supposed to be functioning.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, coming to the University of Kono; we all know what Kono has done for this country in terms of producing minerals. So when we are talking about the University of Kono, let us think of infusing into that University, a department that will teach particularly about diamonds and gold because sometimes, people buy gems in Sierra Leone and go to Brussels, the man who produced the gem would get a pittance and then the buyer would tell you I have to go to Belgium to polish, cut and remove the black etc. etc. If we can do all of that here definitely, it will increase the value within and that is all what we talk about value chain. So I think all of those things must be taken into consideration.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me draw the attention of the whole House again to an aspect which the Honourable Member from Falaba pointed out that is, the area of having the word "**visitor**" in this Bill. If we want to depoliticise these Institutions, let us

depoliticise them completely. Let us establish them as academic Institutions devoid of politics, so that nobody would interfere with those Institutions. Quality education requires that; you go to school without interference, you pass your exams and you get out of school and go home, without talking to anybody about what you write on your papers and what you do in your exams. Let us not have political interference in those Institutions, we want to be very effective and efficient; I think that is how we will improve on the quality education Mr Speaker, Honourable Members.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Chairman of the Legislative Committee was talking about a report. We know consultations have been held before now, but that was not a mandate of the House. What we know is, when we come to deal with this issue that the Committee of the Whole House will address, I think the meeting stated that; we are supposed to guide the process and to ensure that members of this House will have enough to work with when it comes to passing this Act. But as I said, and my Leader said it earlier on that we are in for development; we will support whatever that is good for Sierra Leone because we are Sierra Leoneans first, before belonging to Political Parties, so it is not a partisan something. We support these Institutions, and with the creation or establishment of them by this Act, we will give whatever support that is needed from this side of the aisle, as long as it is meant for the progress of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me not stop without saying thanks to His Excellency the President, Retired Brigadier Julius Maada Bio; for making it possible for us to have this Act in front of us today, to approve Institutions because the more Institutions we have, the better it is, for the quality of our country. People from Kenema will no longer have to travel to Freetown or to Njala to study, but they will study in their respective areas; people from Kono, would now study in Kono, and that will make it better for them.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let us also consider the quality of staff that we will have in these Institutions; because those are the ingredients that makes Institutions

work. That is why today, people that taught us at Fourah Bay College, are still remembered. Let me also make reference to one who has just passed on; Professor Magbaily Fyle of blessed memory now. He was our History teacher, we will always remember those kinds of people and we would want a lot of them to be in these Institutions. That is why we say, Milton Margai College having produced so many teachers, now deserves to be given its respect in society because, it had produced so much that now it must be supported to be a University on its own; to be serving both the Western Urban and Rural areas. I hope when we come to the Committee of the Whole House, we will address some of the issues that have been raised. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Whip who for this purpose, doubles as the Leader of Opposition for his contribution; over to you now, the Leader of Government Business.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we acknowledge today as a new dawn in the history of our Educational system, especially the Tertiary Education. We are so happy for His Excellency the President, for saying in His Presidential Statement that, human capital development is not a political slogan; we have to go after it because, it is the only way we can transform this country from where we were to a better place in this 21st Century. It is through Education we can use to transform people, it is through Education we can use to kill tribalism, it is with Education that you can use to accept the Social Contract we have with our people. What is the Social Contract we have as Government? Our Social Contract is our Manifesto.

Mr Speaker, in my last speech, I said let us judge President Bio on his Social Contract that is, by what we should do; and I told the members of the Fourth Estate to go after him, let them do Investigative Journalism. These are some of the things I have been talking about, but I am happy that he is making us proud as Sierra Leoneans. Like I said philosophically, it is only positive thinkers that can bring in solutions in solving their problems in society. Because we recognise a societal problem, that is why we have

President Bio, who has the hindsight, I repeat my words; He has the hindsight, so it is not by any mistake to have Professor Alpha T. Wurie. It is by no mistake, we have given you a whole lot of accolades and praises for me, you are my mentor; you lectured me Chemistry when I went to Fourah Bay College. What I observed is that the Environmental and Educational background you are having are from your great grandfathers, from your Father; and today, you are a Minister of Education. By your behaviour, you have now really associated yourself with the Educational system and you are an academic material, and I can tell you for free, you are an academic doctor; so keep in that line. This is a history-making event for all of us; we have heard generally, Members talking about how they suffered when they went to Fourah Bay College, Njala University etc., etc., but that was what happened in the past. In this new direction, we have said; let us take the new path-way to Sierra Leone's trajectory and today that is the general aspect.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I listened to a Doctor at the Milton Margai as you have mentioned a lot of things about Milton Magai College; they have been yearning for this for far too long, so I want to link myself with Professor Kowama, who gives public lectures. I followed him carefully as I read some of the contributions made by him in his public lectures, one of the things that I want us to look at in this Educational sector which he highlighted. Mr Speaker bear with me, I need to say this because Human Capital Development as I said, it is not a slogan or a political tool; but a way of changing Sierra Leone. Mr Speaker with your leave, I would read the provision in page 5; he was trying to define Management Training and Human Capital Development and he said: ***"The last element that is central to a University of Technology is Management Training, and a development of Human Capital. In the development in so-called industrialised countries, and absence of sophisticated management capacity translate to poor use of existing technology and existing skills and therefore, a failure to understand and manage the acquisition of capabilities and opportunities to grow. It is indeed for this reason that MIT, one of the world leading Universities of Technology,***

has world-class business school at its heart". Mr Speaker, it is deliberate in reading this one out; Members were talking about technology, but there are three factors of Science which are: Chemistry, Biology and Physics. So we need Science Education and in doing Science Education, we have to talk about the curriculum; we should develop it to match with the trend of the 21st Century. We have failed in three of the Industrial revolutions, but the fourth industrial revolution which is development of technology, we cannot afford to fail. It has to do with digital transformation, it has to do with Technology and it has to do with highly industrialised countries like; The United States and the Western World, that deals with advanced systems of advanced development in terms of Industry. So he highlighted all of those things and we are also following that path, for us to catch up with the fourth revolution in terms of industrial development. Since we have failed in the First, Second and Third but Mr Speaker, Honourable Member; why we should make sure we do not fail in the Fourth is because, we have the available knowledge. If we have the available knowledge, we are now looking for partnership in this business of Science and Technology; we should now look for the available technologies, the right policies that we can put in place; Leadership and incentives. You cannot talk about the establishment of a University of Science and Technology without talking about incentives; and if we put all of these together, we would now have a very comfortable link, from where we are coming from. Because of that system, we have been able, and we are putting in place all of the structures we have today in our Educational system, which I put forward to this House in the form of a Bill so that we can understand and take the pathway to the trajectory we are going. It is good for us to understand the context of the University itself from the Bill.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me again reference the learned Dr Patrick who said, and I will join that one with what we have in the Policy Fiscal statement that was before this House during the Budget Hearing. The fiscal Strategy Statement which is in a form of Policy, that he gave us was a projection that; if we want to succeed in the business of putting across our development strides, we should have our GDP which talks about Domestic Revenue Mobilisation to 20%. This is because, if we increase the

domestic mobilisation of revenues in terms of expenditure, that is the only way we can support our own projects like Education, which speaks to Human Capital Development. We have to align our development strides with this Educational business because; it has to do with funding. Whatever development project you might want to undertake, you have to get funding, incentives and other things. So let me quote him again on paragraph 2 of page 11. He was given both the plausible sides of the Educational structure we have, and also looking at the disadvantaged sides; so let me read his words, he said: ***"While there is need for more Universities that is technology, to accommodate the growing number of youths that are aspiring for University Education, I would caution against establishing one such University, in the five Regions"***. He had cautioned us, and given extensive explanation as to why we need them in the Regions; if such are to be funded by Government. So that was why, I made reference to the projection from the budgetary statement we have in front of us, about increasing our domestic revenue mobilisation to 20% come 2023. If we have to put this Policy into effect, and if Government has to put in place funds to support these Universities, it will be a challenge; and that is the reality. He went on to say: ***"although there is a will, the huge financial support provided by Government, the strain on the budget for the Universities, is a point worth considering seriously. It is a fact that resources in many African Universities are really over stretched"***, we are suffering from this now. My colleagues on the Opposition side, I understand your position when you talked about Limkokwing University; and today, there is a problem there but the Government came in and gave some funding which is not captured in the law. So what they did, they gave a bailout of **Le2Bln** but that is not the end; what they have done in this Bill, is to capture that particular problem they had experienced with Limkokwing University. As I said Mr Minister, one of the things we need to do is not to kill an entity; the aspiration, the spirit of that particular entity is to get more people educated in terms of Science and Technology, but what we are pushing for now is how we are to sustain Limkokwing. So in that provision, if we go to page 43 of the Bill, let me just take you there Honourable Members, it starts from page 42 to 43. I would read this one

specifically for the purpose of Limkokwing, and why they decided to capture it in this particular Bill. The caption is: ***"Establishment of Private University"*** if you go to Clause [2], you would realise that they are talking about two sets of Universities that is; the Public University that has to do with Government structures, and the Private University under which Limkokwing University falls, which features are under Clause [43] of this Bill. Mr Speaker, with your leave, let me read Clause 43[3]: ***"A person who wishes to establish a private University, shall apply to the Commission with particulars of the company referred to in sub section 1 and the business plan showing the object of the company as a University and the resources available for its operations"***. This one can also fall within the ones that we have.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you go back to the Schedule; people have highlighted and said a lot about this University and we are happy and clamouring all over the place that we are going to have Universities, but the question we should ask ourselves is, are we financially ready? So that was why I referenced Dr Patrick when somebody raised concern about that. Dr Patrick said, in as much as we are yearning for the aspiration of young people that wants to go to Universities which is the reason why we need more Universities in the five regions, we should consider the need of having finances. If we are going to depend on Government alone for funding these Universities it would collapse. So because it is very difficult to sustain Universities, that was why I made reference deliberately to the Strategic Policy Statement made by the Ministry of Finance; for us, if there is a need, let us increase our domestic revenue mobilisation in terms of GDP, come 2023. And the projection I am drawing your attention to today is, we are talking about single digit inflation under the micro-economic budget performance, it has to do with alignment to the single digit inflation they have achieved but it is not the end. If you follow some of these economic principles, we can succeed with what we are about to do here today; it is not to make pronouncement Mr Minister, but it is for us to succeed sustainably, in our Educational structure. I said it earlier that, it is not a slogan for us, we want to maintain some standards in that of our Educational system.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the credibility of our Universities is very key. Mr Speaker, you went to Cambridge and you went to very good Universities; the seal of every University is very important. We are not going to water down standards because we want to open a University in Kenema and Kono, we do not want to water down the standards. In as much as we are talking about developing curricular in various Universities, those curricular we are going to develop, will be very significant for us to understand this because, we are talking about quality Education in our Secondary Schools and Tertiary Institutions which has to do with radical reforms, and the radical reforms has to do with how we can train our teachers. Since we do not want to water down standards, it has to do with the curriculum that we develop.

THE SPEAKER: So I think on that note otherwise, you are going to excite some of the Members of Parliament behind you.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Can you give me few minutes to wrap up? Mr Minister, I am drawing your attention for us to maintain standards. In this Bill, the way you treat people in terms of relieving your staff members of their duties, there is what we call 'Principles of Natural Justice'. There are so many entrenched clauses in this Bill for students; we have to seek this relationship with students, Lecturers and Junior Staff Association. We need to have that relationship, you know why? It is to maintain the free flow of the Universities; that is the only way it would work for us to succeed in this business of education. In those days, when I was in college, there was a big gap between students and Lecturer relationship. But in this Bill, they seem to address all those structures we have put in place to create the relationship between students, the Lecturers with that of the junior staff. Without the junior staff, there is no way you can succeed as they are the supporting staff.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, like I said; I want the students to read this particular Bill that we are going to pass into law. After the enactment of this Bill, they need to read it because, for any increment in the fees, there is a way to go about it; and for students to be disciplined by the Senate, they have to be given the platform for them to

defend themselves. So that was why I was talking about the natural justice system, to be put in place for the Universities.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is a total challenge in this Bill, that has to do with discrimination. As my Lecturer, you cannot discriminate against me because I belong to a different Political Party, and you belong to another; as there is now a platform for that. Thank you very much Mr Minister; as I said, I do not take environmental issues in line with Education, but you really know how to go about the Educational structures in looking at the present day circumstance to solve the problem by Law, not by manufacturing it. We can only distinguish ourselves from the chimpanzees in the jungle with the Rule of Law and that is why we are enshrining this one in the Bill. I am encouraging all the students that are going to benefit from the creation of these Universities, to read the provisions embedded in this particular Bill, we are going to enact.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, last week we were discussing the Gender Policy; and I have just highlighted the natural justice system in terms of protection for students that is students, Lecturers, Junior Staff relationship; they are going to be in most of the Committees that would be formed even in terms of accommodation because, this is the 21st Century and we want to have sanitised Universities and not the draconian ones we had during the 70's and 80's when people can just do things the way they feel; this is modern time. So in that direction what they have done is to look at the Affirmative Action for women. If you go to Part V Clause [11] on page 12, let me read cluster 1 under the Court Senate and Committees of the Universities. This is very important for us because, we are coming from the dark ages when people deprived our women from going to school and today if we want to transform that, the Universities need to recognise that the Ladies who are working in the Universities need to be protected; and they need to be in Committees not because you have to put them there but because they should take Affirmative Action. Let me read the Clause cited earlier on page 12[b]:
"Eight representatives of the Senate nominated by the Chancellor on the

advice of the Minister in charge of Technical and Higher Education four of whom shall be women". So it is a mandatory Clause given.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as we have just highlighted some of these areas that we think we can make reference to; it is good for us to understand why we need to follow the trend of Education in our system, to change the landscape of our Human Capital Development. We should also look at what we do in terms of conforming ourselves with the Rule of Law and that is why we are giving provisions that have to do with a lot of Affirmative Actions given to women so that in setting up of Committees, these Affirmative Actions can be recognised and put in place.

HON. DR. KANDEH K. YUMKELLA: Point of Order Honourable Leader! We were hoping that we get into the nitty-gritty of this at the pre-leg, and in the Third Reading. So we were just hoping that you wrap up and then we gear up to come Clause by Clause.

THE SPEAKER: The point is, we have to be understanding Honourable Member from Kambia; the Leader of Government Business is from Kenema and that is why he is going on and on, and on, and on. I am waiting for him to finally conclude.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I do not know why you decided to raise the Point of Order; because when I started, I gave an analysis of Dr Patrick and I told you I am going into the Bill so that we can understand some of the provisions, so that when we come to the Committee Stage, we will just look at it Clause by Clause and we do the corrections. They need to understand what is in there, so you are not going to look at Affirmative Action, I did not go to the Clause; I was talking about Affirmative Action. His Excellency the President, wants to combat the dark ages of our educational system, so you need to hear that.

THE SPEAKER: We have all read it.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, thank you very much. We want to move on; and as I said, we will continue to move and we will continue to take the right trajectory in terms of our educational system. As I said, we have failed in some of the

developmental strides in the 21st Century, but we cannot afford to fail in addressing some of these factors. If we are talking about the Industrial Revolution, if we are talking about the Human Capital Development, we should all be aware of the fact that, some of these laws need to be put in place and some of these commitments we have now; we need to put them in place by presenting our own part of the agreement, by putting them into law; and that is what we have done. So the people have yearned for diversity in education as said by some of my colleagues, and today we have realised that. This is a new dawn, so we need to highlight some of these things; we need to bring out those who have the advantage of doing A and those who have the advantage of doing B, in this Bill. So I thank you very much for arbitrating us, you had the opportunity to go to Cambridge, some people do not even had the opportunity to go to Fourah Bay College; we need to highlight some of these things so that they can understand why we are doing it, because it is good for us Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: With that!

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, I am now wrapping up; but as you know, I have to take some steps. It is good for us to understand that it is no more of our own comfort, but the rights of citizens to get educated, so that they can be part of this exercise. It is no more business as usual, to take resources meant for the people and use it elsewhere; so that is the reason we have this one today. I want to thank His Excellency the President, for making it possible for us to have these Universities in our different localities. Thank you very much, may God bless us all *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I just want to thank you; and then ask the Minister for his reaction to various comments and issues raised.

PROF. ALPHA T. WURIE: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am indeed overwhelmed by the positive and supportive reactions of Members of Parliament from all sides of the aisle *[Applause]*. You know, this makes me very hopeful as an elderly man now in Sierra Leone to say; we do have a chance as a people in this country for us to gravitate and come together whenever we are convinced, that we are indeed on the

right path. My earlier presentation focused on Institutions that were transformed by the 2001 Polytechnic Act—Eastern Polytechnic and Milton Margai College of Education, knowing very well that there are people that would be in the House of Parliament that are graduates of these Institutions. But really, we should take this afternoon to end by evaluating ourselves with the direction His Excellency the President now wants to take on creating a University in Kono *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this country has grounded itself on extractive minerals; and diamonds have been the mainframe of the economy in this country. Yet, through the years, we may not have given as much back to the District that have got all of us to be educated. Today, the main direction here is that, we are going to put all the contributions by Members of Parliament to address what could happen in the University of Science and Technology that is to be located in Kono. I feel the passion that, how are we going to get the right staff? I feel the passion that, do we have the right funding for facilities, equipment and personnel? I just want you Members of Parliament, to cast your minds back just a few months; it is in this Well of Parliament that you passed the Education Sector Support Project that is supposed to support Bunumbu Teachers College, part of the Eastern Polytechnic, Milton Margai College and four Secondary Schools. Basically, what I am saying here, we already stand on the fact that we are going to lift up the physical infrastructure and the equipment availability in both Milton Margai College and Eastern Polytechnic. But it was in this very Well of Parliament, that we also passed that through the Exim bank and ECOWAS. We now stand to access starting this September, **\$32Mln** to start from scratch the University of Science and Technology in Kono. *[Applause]* Yes, that has been in fact the gap in Sierra Leoneans that we are afraid of taking the step, we are very tentative in taking a step but this time Members of Parliament we have already taken the steps that will ensure that indeed, we require one Engineer for **500** people, though in Sierra Leone we still have only **1,038** Engineers for **7.5Mln**. It has been said, we require **14,000** Architects though we only have **25** on ground; we do have **4** Chattered Surveyors only, and **8** Quantity Surveyors. You have already presented all what it takes that we need to expand as to

how we can address these Institutions but I just want you to note that years ago, we have already accepted funding from Badia, which allowed us to create a Technology School, an Architect and Petroleum Engineering Schools at Fourah Bay College. So we now have chance of where we can be able to get the tutors we require for these other institutions we are creating. What we need to do is, to just tie in the various projects that will go through Parliament and to see how one relates to the other. Just last week, we were discussing about a programme that was talking about National Qualification Framework. In that programme, we will be talking about equivalence - how people can move from one Institution to the other, be it a trivet Institution or other Colleges. This is funded by two programmes: that of Sphere and that of the World Bank, and all of those will allow you to move from one Institution to the other without feeling disadvantaged. We have also indicated that indeed, we deserve to have various cadres of Tertiary Education in each Region of Sierra Leone. As of now, some may have a University College only in place but the intention for the Bill and the Act is for you to create the space such that when you want to change a University College to a University itself, you do not have to come back to Parliament to do that *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I felt touched when I heard the Honourable Member from Kambia, getting emotional of being a Miltonian and on shedding tears for that. But I also felt touched to recognise that Leadership shows transformation in many ways and accolades were given to Dr Philip Kanu for the way he has transformed the physical infrastructure of Milton Margai College and the possibility of the academic programmes as well *[Applause]*. So I want you to recognise that, it is on that note that we have selected Dr Mondeh to act as the Administrator and Pioneer, in bringing in the new students.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, note that we are going to start the Access Programme for the University at Kono this September in Kono, *[Applause]* even though the infrastructure would start physically in the early part of next year, but we start nurturing the students now. It will be based in Kono, but it will be for all Sierra Leoneans in the areas of Engineering, Architecture, Oil and Gas, and in the area that we

think we need to ensure we can be able to outreach for Extractive Mineralogy that we want in this country *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also note the contribution of the Leader of Parliament in saying that, technology has to be blend with management; that indeed, for you to be able to get the virtue and value of technology; it has to be managed and managed well. Indeed, Sierra Leone does not want to be late again for the Fourth Industrial Revolution and that is why artificial intelligence has to be the way; digital technology has to be the way; but all of those would be tidy if indeed we have management abilities.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also note the contribution made by the Honourable Leader of C4C in saying that we have been normal with examination malpractices and student cultism; but for you to note that in the last 1 month, we have been engaging the various Colleges: Njala University and University of Sierra Leone with regards to quality assurance. For the last one month, we have been working towards standardizing how we would assess examinations in all these Institutions, but this Bill is also asking you for us to have a National Framework for admission; you know, we have like the Ucas in the UK, this Bill is asking you to do that. When you pass this Bill, you would in fact, be giving us the tool that we require for quality assurance in the system where there will not be subjectiveness in getting people to access these Institutions; where there will be a clear rationalisation as to why you should go to Institution A or Institution B. But it has been said by Honourable Kandeh Yumkella that, there must be specialization in options. We cannot have each University doing everything under the sun, we must go towards certain Universities producing people of high quality, excellence in certain course options; this is the way we hope to go. Academia without people is nothing; the building, the equipment will not do well without people. And he rightly said, in Sierra Leone today, we only have **16%** of our Lecturers with PHDs, we have **62%** with MSCs but even those MSCs or MAs are taught MAs not Researched MAs or MPhil. It is clear that we have to be bold enough to be able to support the Tertiary Institutions to transform it into the quality that we need.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it was also said by Honourable Marah that indeed, we should be talking about the needs of the market; we should not go and produce people only, but we should produce people slanted to what we need; we should be led by industries, and education has to be linked to skills. Whatever we do, we should not forget the fact that we have to train our teachers in Sierra Leone; whatever we do, we cannot transform the needs of these Institutions to a level that we forget the fact that Teacher Training is core. We would not be able to access the Science and Technology if people fail Science from schools, we would not be able to access the Management School if people fail Economics, Business Studies, from schools. It is clear that these Colleges that are traditional education Colleges, have to continue and strengthen the Teacher Training components. The Act as well, is also saying that we have not recognised Post-graduate Training in the Universities Act before, and the PIH is about to put in place Post-graduate Training outside the Western Area, and it is time for the Act to be able to allow Post-graduate Training to happen outside of the Western Area.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you would recalled; when **50** doctors graduated from the College of Medicines and Allied Health Sciences, all of those Houseman-ships tend to be done in Western Area because, that is where you have all your specialists existing, and they have to be trained under specialists. So it is only when you have specialised Institutions outside of the Western Area, that you would allow specialists training to go on; but we would come back not as merely as Minister of Technical & Higher Education, but to support the Minister of Health. The Ministry of Health and Sanitation, will come back and ask of you two things: one, to support financially the Post-Graduate School of Medicine and Surgery, including that of Pharmacy and Nursing as well; two, for this Honourable House to also pass the Bill for Community Health Officers that are trained through Njala University, that are vital to our public health Institutions. I say these things because, the Ministry of Technical & Higher Education is the Ministry that should produce the skilled personnel we require for the country - be it health, be it legal, be it theology as well; and it is for us to tie it with the various Sectors and Ministries. As you note, the Ministry of Tourism supported Milton Margai

College Brookfields Campus, in ensuring that we put the infrastructure together for Tourism. It is in the same vein, the Ministry of Technical & Higher Education would engage the Minister of Agriculture, for us to go back and look at the Faculty of Agriculture at Njala; *[Applause]* as we supply tractors, we must note that training the students would lead the way. It is for all of us, to recognise that we cannot be talking about Animal Husbandry without Veterinary School; and the Veterinary School at Teko, has to be brought back into play. *[Applause]*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I move that the Bill entitled: The Universities Act 2021, be read the second time.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

[the Bill entitled: The Universities Act 2021, being an Act to repeal and replace the University of Sierra Leone Act 2005 Act No. 1 of 2005, to provide for the continuation of the University of Sierra Leone and the establishment of the Milton Margai University of Education & Technology and the Ernest Bai Koroma University of Science & Technology, the Technical University of Sierra Leone and the University of Science & Technology; to provide for the appointment of the chancellors of the universities by the President, to provide for the establishment of other public universities and private universities and to provide for other related matters has been read the second time]

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I stand on *S.O 51[i]* to commit this Bill to the Whole House.

THE SPEAKER: What are you standing on? I am sorry, it is not necessary at all. Go to *S.O 51[i]* and read it out please.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: It is clear Mr Speaker; we know that it is for Committee Stage, but since we cannot reach Committee Stage now as I told you earlier, we are not going to do it now.

THE SPEAKER: We do not need a Motion for this.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: No, I did not move a Motion.

THE SPEAKER: That was what you did.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: No, I did not move a Motion Mr Speaker; I said, we will commit the Bill to the Whole House.

THE SPEAKER: Very well.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: That was what I did, it was not a Motion. Honourable Daniel Koroma, please take your seat; I did not move a Motion.

THE SPEAKER: The Bill is committed to the Committee of the Whole House. Yes, do you have any announcements?

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HON. DR. KANDEH YUMKELLA: Mr Speaker, Point of Order! Some of us are confused, we need a help about *S.O 51[i]*.

THE SPEAKER: There is no need for a Motion; the Bill is committed to the Committee of the Whole House.

HON. DR. KANDEH YUMKELLA: For some of us we are fresh men, is there no pre-ledge for this process, is it direct?

THE SPEAKER: No pre-ledge, it is direct.

ADJOURNMENT

[The House rose at 1:55 p.m. and adjourned to Wednesday, 7th July, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.]