



# PARLIAMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

Parliament Building - O.A.U Drive, Tower Hill, Freetown | [admin@parliament.gov.sl](mailto:admin@parliament.gov.sl) | [www.parliament.gov.sl](http://www.parliament.gov.sl)

3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2025

## PRESS RELEASE



### **COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY APPRECIATES CONTRACTOR FOR THE TORMA BUM IRRIGATION PROJECT**

Following parliamentary summons, the Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and Food Security, chaired by Hon. Sallieu Osman Sesay (SOS) was on Saturday 03/05/2025 in Torma Bum on a joint inspection visit with the Minister of Agriculture with a view to examining and measuring the progress of work done so far by the contractor, PAVI FORT in the the Torma Bum irrigation and infrastructural project.

The Committee on Agriculture and Food Security realised, despite the enormous challenges associated with the Torma Bum irrigation and infrastructural project, appreciated and hailed the contractor for demonstrating commitment to doing the Torma Bum project in difficult terrains outside the design of the project.

At the initial meeting at Torma Bum prior to visiting the irrigation canal, including the funnel, which is under construction, the Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture and Food Security, Hon. Sallieu Osman Sesay said that the Committee was on a fact- finding mission to ascertain the current status of the project aimed at making the necessary recommendations to enhance the project, given the fact that

it is the flagship programme of the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, Dr. Julius Maada Bio for the realisation of food security in respect of feed alone.

The Minister of Agriculture and Food Security, Musa Kpaka, said that it was his fourth visit to Torma Bum and cited the project initiation and completion date in December this year, and noted the irrigation and rice mill components of the Regional, Rice and Value Chain Project (RRVCP). He also underscored that Torma Bum was critical, but that other places like Gbondapie and Kambia were pertinent to the realisation of feed alone, whilst emphasising the need for the completion of the project to multiply planting and harvesting during the dry season.

The project coordinator, Abdulai Bun Wai, said that the contractor was doing a good job amid delay in disbursement of much needed funds, weather conditions, and difficult terrains to facilitate the concrete works.

Regional Director for PAVI FORT, Joel Lawson told the Committee of the company's portfolios and presence in Africa, adding in an international competitive bidding, they emerged as the lowest and most responsive bidder for the Torma Bum project to the tune of \$ 10.9 million. Speaking on design variations, swampy soiling, burrow to filling outside the project scope, delays in approving contract variations, weather conditions, and possession of project sites have seriously affected the project. Amidst the difficulties, he said, PAVI FORT, being a Sierra Leonean Company, had spent over \$ 1 million on project variations outside the original project design. He also said that the company is seeking a \$ 2 million payment from the funders based on the progress of work done so far. Otherwise, they would stall their operations in Torma Bum.

In a continued meeting after the site inspections, the Committee was impressed with work done so far by the contractor, given the reality on the ground and recommended for payment to be approved in order to fast-track work at Torma Bum. The Committee had adjourned the meeting to Freetown at a later date to get all the parties involved for a conclusive hearing on the matter.

The Minister of Agriculture and Food Security also at the end of the meeting said that he was impressed with the progress of work done so far and spoke on the need for all the parties to work together assiduously for the successful completion of the irrigation and infrastructural project at Torma Bum.

The Paramount Chief, Town Chief Chiefs, Village Chiefs, the media, civil society and other stakeholders were present during the meetings and sites visitations.

Parliamentary and Public Relations Department  
Parliament of Sierra Leone  
+23278495023/+23278426851/+23278697776