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PAC SCREENS MEST REPORT ON 2013 AUDIT

The Public Accounts Committee in Parliament on Tuesday the 21st April 2015 screened the officials of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology as per the Audit Service Report for 2013, in Committee Room No. 1, House of Parliament in Freetown.

The Audit Service among other things queried the Ministry of Education for withdrawals from various bank accounts without payment vouchers and supporting documents; e.g. in respect of Government's contributions to certain projects; payments without relevant supporting documents on overseas travelling; withholding taxes not deducted and paid over to NRA; non submission of expenditure returns for grants transferred to various institutions; progress reports for overseas awards not available for audit inspection; grants-in-aid documents not made available for audit inspection; items issued from stores without authorization; and salaries being paid to over-aged staff of the Ministry .

During the public hearings, the Committee recommended that all outstanding withholding taxes be paid immediately to the National Revenue Authority.

Responding to the queries levied against the Ministry on its finances in the Audit Report, the Permanent Secretary Mr. Prince E.O Cole said that during audit inspection most of the files were not in place due to misplacement of files within the office and clearly informed the Committee that 95% of the relevant documents were now available for audit inspection.

The Chairman of the Committee, who doubles as Deputy Speaker of Parliament Hon. Chernor R.M Bah and Members, have ordered officials of Audit Service to verify the said documentations and report their findings to the Committee for necessary action.