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**PRESS RELEASE**

**PARLIAMENT EXPOSES SCAMMER**

Following a citizen's arrest of an alleged scammer, Parliament in an emergency press conference today Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021 presented a suspect named: Vandy Von Kallon, a Research Manager at Sierra Leone Maritime Administration to Members of Parliament and the press. This came in the wake of several allegations pointing to Members of Parliament of demanding monies from presidential nominees before approval. This Parliament is happy for the nabbing of a member of a criminal cartel soliciting funds from the unsuspecting and gullible members of the public by using the names of the Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Leader of Government Business and the Clerk of Parliament.

You may recall that a lot of public notices had emanated from Parliament asking the public not to yield to the demands of either scammers or swindlers extorting monies from them by using the names of Members of Parliament on false pretense.

The Hon. Speaker of Parliament, Dr. Abass Chernor Bundu told newsmen that the unwarranted conduct of the scammers have perpetually put the image of the House into disrepute. Following the arrest of the alleged swindler, Hon. Speaker said in spite of the powers of Parliament, it would forebear and allow the investigation by the police to reach its logical conclusion. Speaking on natural justice, he noted that Parliament would do a thorough follow-up on this matter bordering on its image and reputation. He also congratulated Dr. Austin Demby, proposed Minister of Health and Sanitation for playing a huge role that led to the arrest of the suspect. Explaining the scenario under which the suspect was arrested, Dr. Austin Demby said he received an anonymous call in United States from someone in Sierra Leone. According to him, the caller introduced himself as the Leader of Government Business demanding \$500 from him as humanitarian assistance to finance his mother's funeral. He complied and wired via Western Union.

On arrival in Sierra Leone, the swindler persistently requested under the same pretense as Leader of Government Business for Five Million Leones to attend his uncle's funeral in Bo, but this time he said he could only assist with Three Million Leones. Since he could not do orange money transfer, he asked the alleged fraudster to collect the money himself at Radisson Blu Hotel. The suspect in question appeared for the money and was arrested and handed over to the police for investigation. He also said that Vandy Von Kallon is one among a criminal network that should be brought to book for damaging the reputation of Parliament.

The Leader of Government Business, Hon. Mathew Sahr Nyuma said on receiving calls from Dr. Demby, he rushed and met the suspect at Radisson Blu; where he argued that he was sent by the Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Segepoh Solomon Thomas. The Deputy Speaker was informed via calls, he denied having knowledge of the matter and suspect was handed over to police for investigation.

The Deputy Speaker said he was very passionate about the matter and vehemently promised to personally prosecute the suspect, once it is charged to court. Cognizant of the powers of Parliament, he warned the police not to compromise the matter as he would ensure it reaches its logical conclusion.

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