



# PARLIAMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

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## PRESS RELEASE



### PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE PROBES ENERGY GENERATION SITES

The Parliamentary Oversight Committee on Energy chaired by Hon. Keikura C. Vandy on Wednesday 14/08/2024 inspected the Newton Solar PV Plant and the Black Hall Road Power Station.

The Committee Members were accompanied by the Deputy Minister II of Energy, Ing Edmond Benjamin Nonie, the Director General of Electricity Generation and Transmission Company (EGTC) Ing. Milton Gebai and Head of Renewable Energy, Ing. Mohamed Marrah.

In his serial statement, the Chairman said the Committee is probing the sector to know their challenges, and successes and proffer solutions and recommendations in light of their findings.

"When we complete the oversight tour, we will write our report and present it to the Plenary for further consideration" he stated.

The Chairman disclosed that it was the Committee's first time to visit the Newton Renewable Energy Station.

During the oversight, the Committee Members observed that the Newton Renewable Energy Station is a 6-megawatt solar plant and is the biggest solar station and the installation was completed in 2021.

The Committee observed that the Newton Solar project is a novelty and the first of its kind.

According to the EGTC Director General, the plant has various facilities including office space and substations for power collection, retention, and transfer, and can integrate power from Bumbuna to Freetown. There are also facilities for spare parts and tools. The Committee discovered that the plant installed capacity during the rains is 4.3 megawatts maximum and during the sunning above that. Currently for Freetown Government own sources are the 6-megawatt solar, Bumbuna, and thermal generators at Black Hall and Kingtom.

Challenges According to the Director General there are works in progress regarding faulty inverters and batteries for the solar plant.

It was also discovered by the Committee that similar renewable projects bigger than Newton Solar Plant are underway with support from the World Bank to boost Freetown and Lungi. The Newton Community is currently benefiting from the Plant during the day not at night.

The Committee Members observed that the Black Hall Power Station comprises two auxiliary plants each with 8 megawatts amounting to 16 megawatts. The machines were installed in 2010 to ease the power distribution network in the east end of Freetown and onwards to Waterloo and the Peninsula Communities.

It was also observed that these machines are not running and require huge capital-intensive maintenance and Government is working on modalities to fix them.

The Committee further discovered even though the plant machines are not running, but require the frequent attention and observation of engineers in order not to go beyond repair.

The Deputy Minister also reaffirmed to the the Committee that Government is working very hard to improve power generation with the support of partners. "As Government we are trying hard to bring the dynamic of different generations to address electricity challenges in the county.

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