



**FIFTH PARLIAMENT  
OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE  
SECOND SESSION, 2022/2023  
FIRST MEETING OF PARLIAMENT  
VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIFTY-SECOND SITTING**



**VP: Vol. 52**  
**[Ref: OP/5/5/52]**

**WEDNESDAY, 30<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2022.**

**The House Met at 11:10 a.m.**  
**The Rt. Hon. Speaker, Dr. Abass Chernor Bundu, Presided**

**I. ATTENDANCE:**

**THE FOLLOWING HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT WERE PRESENT:**

<b>NO</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>PARTY</b>	<b>DISTRICT</b>	<b>CONST.</b>
1.	Hon. Abdulai Osman Charles	SLPP	Bo	079
2.	Hon. Alhadi Lihadi	APC	Western Urban	123
3.	Hon. Alu-Conteh Alusine Kainde	APC	Western Urban	125
4.	Hon. Aruna Massay Ngahinteh	SLPP	Bo	085
5.	Hon. Bangura Ibrahim Aziz	APC	Pot Loko	076
6.	Hon. Bangura Rosemarie	APC	Tonkolili	055
7.	Hon. Banya Sarty	SLPP	Kailahun	004
8.	Hon. Bockarie Momoh	SLPP	Kenema	012
9.	Hon. Braima Zainab Kama	SLPP	Kailahun	010
10.	Hon. Bubu Ngbak IV P.C. Bai Farama Tass	-	Kambia	-
11.	Hon. Charles Sahr	C4C	Kono	028
12.	Hon. Conteh Abdul S. Marray	SLPP	Western Urban	130
13.	Hon. Conteh Ibrahim	APC	Tonkolili	053
14.	Hon. Conteh John Charles	APC	Bombali	031
15.	Hon. Conteh Samba Paul	APC	Bombali	035
16.	Hon. Edwin Moses Andrew	SLPP	Bonthe	090
17.	Hon. Fabbah Habib Keifa	SLPP	BO	078
18.	Hon. Fefegula Simeon	SLPP	Moyamba	096
19.	Hon. Fofanah Musa	C4C	Kono	023
20.	Hon. Gberek III P. C. Bai Shebora Sehba	-	Port Loko	-
21.	Hon. George Edward	SLPP	Moyamba	097
22.	Hon. Jabbie Alpha Fode Madie	SLPP	Falaba	040
23.	Hon. Jalloh Osman Wurie	SLPP	Western Rural	109
24.	Hon. Jorkie Moses Baimba	SLPP	Bonthe	091
25.	Hon. Juana Sahr	SLPP	Kailahun	002
26.	Hon. Kaisamba Francis Amara	SLPP	Kenema	020
27.	Hon. Kalokoh Mark Mahmoud (Dr.)	APC	Bombali	032
28.	Hon. Kamara Abdul Joseph Bash	SLPP	Bo	084
29.	Hon. Kamara Abdul Titus	NGC	Kambia	061
30.	Hon. Kamara Alieu Ibrahim	SLPP	Western Urban	122



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31.	<i>Hon. Kamara Alusine Bash</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Karene</i>	<i>067</i>
32.	<i>Hon. Kamara Bai Sama</i>	<i>NGC</i>	<i>Kambia</i>	<i>060</i>
33.	<i>Hon. Kamara Foday Mario</i>	<i>NGC</i>	<i>Kambia</i>	<i>057</i>
34.	<i>Hon. Kamara Rebecca Yei</i>	<i>C4C</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>029</i>
35.	<i>Hon. Kamara Saidu Babah</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Port Loko</i>	<i>071</i>
36.	<i>Hon. Kanneh Alusine</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Kenema</i>	<i>013</i>
37.	<i>Hon. Kanneh Mohamed</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Kailahun</i>	<i>006</i>
38.	<i>Hon. Kanu Ahmed Joseph</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Western Rural</i>	<i>108</i>
39.	<i>Hon. Kanu Alimamy Brun</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Port Loko</i>	<i>072</i>
40.	<i>Hon. Kanu Amadu</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Moyamba</i>	<i>093</i>
41.	<i>Hon. Kanu Rugiatu Rosy</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Western Urban</i>	<i>113</i>
42.	<i>Hon. Kargbo Abdul</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Port Loko</i>	<i>077</i>
43.	<i>Hon. Kargbo Papa Abdulai</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Tonkolili</i>	<i>047</i>
44.	<i>Hon. Kargbo Roland Foday (Dr.)</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Karene</i>	<i>064</i>
45.	<i>Hon. Kawalleh II P. C. Alhaji Kandeh Paria</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>Karene</i>	<i>-</i>
46.	<i>Hon. Koroma Abdul Karim</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Port Loko</i>	<i>070</i>
47.	<i>Hon. Koroma Issa Oye</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Port Loko</i>	<i>073</i>
48.	<i>Hon. Koroma John Telson</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Western Urban</i>	<i>127</i>
49.	<i>Hon. Koroma Manuel Allieu</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Bombali</i>	<i>036</i>
50.	<i>Hon. Koroma Meama Kajue IV P. C. F. H. Bintu</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>Moyamba</i>	<i>-</i>
51.	<i>Hon. Koroma Unpha Sorie Gbassay (Dr.)</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Western Urban</i>	<i>114</i>
52.	<i>Hon. Kumabeh Jebbeh Alice</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Bonthe</i>	<i>092</i>
53.	<i>Hon. Lahai Musa</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Kailahun</i>	<i>009</i>
54.	<i>Hon. Lamina Emerson Saa</i>	<i>C4C</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>030</i>
55.	<i>Hon. Lansana Abdul Muniru</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Western Urban</i>	<i>121</i>
56.	<i>Hon. Lansana Festus Mohamed</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Kenema</i>	<i>015</i>
57.	<i>Hon. Lansana-Minah P. C. Matilda Yayu</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>Pujehun</i>	<i>-</i>
58.	<i>Hon. Lavalie-Tshombe Dominic Jaybeh</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Moyamba</i>	<i>098</i>
59.	<i>Hon. Lebbay Ambrose Maada</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Bo</i>	<i>083</i>
60.	<i>Hon. Lebbie Nenneh</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Bo</i>	<i>086</i>
61.	<i>Hon. Mackery Yusuf</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Bo</i>	<i>087</i>
62.	<i>Hon. Makieu Josephine</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Kenema</i>	<i>014</i>
63.	<i>Hon. Mansaray Brima</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Kenema</i>	<i>017</i>
64.	<i>Hon. Marrah III P. C. Fasalie Kulako Demba</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>Falaba</i>	<i>-</i>
65.	<i>Hon. Moigua Peter Musa</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Kenema</i>	<i>011</i>
66.	<i>Hon. Munda Boston</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Kenema</i>	<i>021</i>
67.	<i>Hon. Rahman-Coker Mohamed Sheriff</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Western Urban</i>	<i>131</i>
68.	<i>Hon. Rogers Alex Mattia</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Pujehun</i>	<i>102</i>
69.	<i>Hon. Rogers Dickson Momoh</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Pujehun</i>	<i>100</i>
70.	<i>Hon. Salia-Konneh Quintin</i>	<i>INDEPENDENT</i>	<i>Kailahun</i>	<i>007</i>
71.	<i>Hon. Sanka III P.C. Bai Kurr Kanagbaro</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>Tonkolili</i>	<i>-</i>



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72.	Hon. Sankoh Hassan	APC	Tonkolili	049
73.	Hon. Sellu Mustapha Musa	SLPP	Moyamba	095
74.	Hon. Sesay Abdoul Hassan	APC	Tonkolili	050
75.	Hon. Sesay Abdul Latif	APC	Port Loko	075
76.	Hon. Sesay Jawah	APC	Tonkolili	056
77.	Hon. Sesay Kusan	APC	Koinadugu	045
78.	Hon. Sesay Osman Sallieu	APC	Bombali	038
79.	Hon. Shaw Mohamed Billoh	SLPP	Falaba	039
80.	Hon. Siafa Rosaline Hawa	SLPP	Kailahun	005
81.	Hon. Silikie Bashiru	SLPP	Bo	082
82.	Hon. Songa Wuyatta Bernadette	SLPP	Kailahun	008
83.	Hon. Tarawalie Issac	APC	Western Urban	118
84.	Hon. Tarawally Zainab Catherine	APC	Bombali	037
85.	Hon. Tholley James Ozan	APC	Tonkolili	054
86.	Hon. Thomas Segepoh Solomon	SLPP	Bonthe	089
87.	Hon. Tongi Lolloh Emilia	INDEPENDENT	Kailahun	001
88.	Hon. Turay Abdul	APC	Western Rural	105
89.	Hon. Turay Benjamin	SLPP	WesternUrban	128
90.	Hon. Turay Sheku Munirr (Dr.)	SLPP	Pujehun	099
91.	Hon. Williams- Lamin Joseph	SLPP	Bo	081
92.	Hon. Yumkella Kandeh Kolleh (Dr.)	NGC	Kambia	062

**THE FOLLOWING HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT WERE ABSENT:**

1.	Hon. Amara Haja Miatta	APC	Western Rural	112
2.	Hon. Bah Alpha Amadu	APC	Western Urban	115
3.	Hon. Bangura Mohamed	APC	Karene	066
4.	Hon. Bhendu Francis Saa	C4C	Kono	027
5.	Hon. Conteh Emmanuel Saidu	APC	Western Urban	129
6.	Hon. Conteh Ibrahim Tawa	SLPP	Western Urban	132
7.	Hon. Davies Kadijatu	APC	Western Rural	110
8.	Hon. Finnoh III P. C. Kandeh	-	Bombali	-
9.	Hon. Fofanah Abubakarr	SLPP	Kenema	016
10.	Hon. Gbekie Emmanuel Sahr	SLPP	Western Urban	116
11.	Hon. Gevao Moiwo Hindolo	SLPP	Kailahun	003
12.	Hon. Gondor II P. C. Foray Cyril	-	Kailahun	-
13.	Hon. Kabba Lamin Foday	APC	Koinadugu	044
14.	Hon. Kabia Mohamed	APC	Western Rural	106
15.	Hon. Kamara Abdul Karim	APC	Kambia	059
16.	Hon. Kamara Ibrahim	APC	Karene	063
17.	Hon. Kamara Ibrahim Bun (Dr.)	APC	Port Loko	068
18.	Hon. Kassegbama Aiah David Shek	C4C	Kono	026
19.	Hon. Kemokai Abu	SLPP	Pujehun	103



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20.	<i>Hon. Koroma Aaron Aruna</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Tonkolili</i>	<i>048</i>
21.	<i>Hon. Macavoray P. C. Kangbai Joe (Prof.)</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>Bo</i>	<i>-</i>
22.	<i>Hon. Mansaray Abu</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Port Loko</i>	<i>074</i>
23.	<i>Hon. Mansaray Hamidu Holla</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Koinadugu</i>	<i>043</i>
24.	<i>Hon. Marah Alusine</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Falaba</i>	<i>041</i>
25.	<i>Hon. Marah Lahai</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Falaba</i>	<i>042</i>
26.	<i>Hon. Pewa P. C. Prince Mambu</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>Kenema</i>	<i>-</i>
27.	<i>Hon. Sam Paul Saa</i>	<i>C4C</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>025</i>
28.	<i>Hon. Sama Musa Shiaka</i>	<i>INDEPENDENT</i>	<i>Pujehun</i>	<i>104</i>
29.	<i>Hon. Sandy Ishmail Sama</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Bo</i>	<i>080</i>
30.	<i>Hon. Sandy Tennyson Hindolo</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Western Urban</i>	<i>120</i>
31.	<i>Hon. Turay Alhaji Sorieba</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Tonkolili</i>	<i>051</i>
32.	<i>Hon. Vandy Christopha Keikura</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Bo</i>	<i>088</i>
33.	<i>Hon. Vincent Horace E.</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Western Rural</i>	<i>111</i>

**THE FOLLOWING HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT WERE ABSENT WITH EXCUSE:**

1.	<i>Hon. Bah Chernor R.M.</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Western Urban</i>	<i>126</i>
2.	<i>Hon. Bangura Cecilia Mabinty</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Karene</i>	<i>065</i>
3.	<i>Hon. Fofanah Abu Bakarr</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Western Rural</i>	<i>107</i>
4.	<i>Hon. Hafiju Maada Kanja</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Kenema</i>	<i>018</i>
5.	<i>Hon. Jalloh Timbo Wurroh</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Western Urban</i>	<i>119</i>
6.	<i>Hon. Kamanda Komba Mansamayao</i>	<i>C4C</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>024</i>
7.	<i>Hon. Kamara Abdul Karim</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Port Loko</i>	<i>069</i>
8.	<i>Hon. Kamara Alusine Osaio</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Kambia</i>	<i>058</i>
9.	<i>Hon. Kargbo Ibrahim Ben</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Bombali</i>	<i>034</i>
10.	<i>Hon. Koroma Daniel Brima</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Koinadugu</i>	<i>046</i>
11.	<i>Hon. Koroma Peter Yamba</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Bombali</i>	<i>033</i>
12.	<i>Hon. Manly-Spain Ajibola Emmanuel</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Western Urban</i>	<i>124</i>
13.	<i>Hon. Marah III P.C. Alie Balansama</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>Koinadugu</i>	<i>-</i>
14.	<i>Hon. Mbriwa II P. C. Sahr Youngai Kontanday</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>-</i>
15.	<i>Hon. Nyuma Mathew Sahr</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Kenema</i>	<i>019</i>
16.	<i>Hon. Samura Hajaratu Faith</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Western Urban</i>	<i>117</i>
17.	<i>Hon. Sesay Daniel Abdulai (Dr.)</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Tonkolili</i>	<i>052</i>
18.	<i>Hon. Sesay Veronica Kadie</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Moyamba</i>	<i>094</i>
19.	<i>Hon. Sheriff P. C. Alie Badara</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>Bonthe</i>	<i>-</i>
20.	<i>Hon. Tucker Tom Issic</i>	<i>APC</i>	<i>Kono</i>	<i>022</i>
21.	<i>Hon. Tunis Sidie Mohamed</i>	<i>SLPP</i>	<i>Pujehun</i>	<i>101</i>



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1. Prayers were read by Mr. Alimamy Lincoln Bangura (Table Clerk).

2. **Suspension of Standing Order 5(2):**

The motion for the suspension of S.O. 5(2) at 11:00 am was moved by **Hon. Dickson M. Rogers of Constituency 100, Pujehun District**. The motion was seconded by **Hon. Alice Jebbeh Kumabeh of Constituency 092, Bonthe District** and approved by the House.

3. **Adoption of Record of Votes and Proceedings for Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> November, 2022:**

The motion for the adoption of the Record of Votes and Proceedings for **Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> November, 2022** was moved by **Hon. Brima Mansaray of Constituency 017, Kenema District**. It was seconded by **Hon. Habib Keifa Fabbah of Constituency 078, Bo District** and adopted by the House.

4. **Bill: The Appropriation Act, 2023 by The Minister of Finance.**

**Third Allotted Day**

**Second Reading:**

**Continued Debate:**

**The following Hon. Members contributed to the debate**

No.	Names of Honourable Members	Constituency	District
1.	Hon. Dr. Sheku Munirr Turay	099	Pujehun

**Standing Order 34 (Raising of Point of Order):**

The Whip of Opposition who doubled as the Acting Leader of Opposition, **Hon. Hassan A. Sesay**, rose on a point of order and drew the attention of the House to the conspicuous absence of representatives from various Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to witness the debate on the budget speech.

The Chief Whip of Government Business, **Hon. Dickson M. Rogers**, totally agreed with the submission made by **Hon. Hassan A. Sesay**. He said that the absence of Hon. Members should not be a guarantee for representatives of various MDAs not to be present to witness the debate on the budget speech.

**Continued Debate:**

2.	Hon. Rebecca Yei Kamara	029	Kono
3.	Hon. Sallieu Osman Sesay	038	Bombali





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**5. Suspension of Standing Order 5(2) at 12 Noon:**

The motion for the suspension of S.O. 5(2) at 12:00 pm was moved by **Hon. Alusine Kanneh of Constituency 013, Kenema District** for the proceedings to continue during lunch. The motion was seconded by **Hon. Abdul Kargbo of Constituency 077, Port Loko District** and approved by the House.

**Continued Debate:**

	<b>Hon. Sallieu Osman Sesay</b>	<b>038</b>	<b>Bombali</b>
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**Mr. Speaker's Ruling:**

The Rt. Hon. Speaker, **Dr. Abass Chernor Bundu**, pronounced his ruling on **"The November 23<sup>rd</sup> Attack on the Chamber of Parliament."** Please see attachment at the end of this document.

The Deputy Speaker, **Hon. Segepoh Solomon Thomas**, thanked Mr. Speaker for pronouncing his ruling on **"The November 23<sup>rd</sup> attack on the Chamber of Parliament."** Based on Mr. Speaker's ruling, **Hon. Segepoh Solomon Thomas** asked that all strangers or visitors should leave the chamber at once.

**Mr. Speaker stood down the House for lunch at 1:00 p.m.**

**The House resumed at 2:30 pm**

**Continued Debate:**

<b>4.</b>	<b>Hon. Ibrahim Aziz Bangura</b>	<b>076</b>	<b>Port Loko</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Hon. Moses Andrew Edwin</b>	<b>090</b>	<b>Bonthe</b>

**6. Suspension of Standing Order 5(2) at 3 pm:**

The motion for the suspension of S.O. 5(2) at 3:00 pm was moved by **Hon. Alusine Kanneh of Constituency 013, Kenema District** for the proceedings to continue after 3 pm. The motion was seconded by **Hon. Moses Andrew Edwin of Constituency 090, Bonthe District** and approved by the House.

**Continued Debate:**

	<b>Hon. Moses Andrew Edwin</b>	<b>090</b>	<b>Bonthe</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>Hon. Peter Musa Moigua</b>	<b>011</b>	<b>Kenema</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Hon. Dr. Unpha Sorie Gbassay Koroma</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>Western Urban</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>Hon. Festus Mohamed Lansana</b>	<b>015</b>	<b>Kenema</b>

**7. Adjournment:**

**Mr. Speaker adjourned the House to Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> November, 2022.**

**The House rose at 4:15 p.m.**



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**Ruling by the Rt. Hon. Speaker of Parliament, Dr. Abass Chernor Bundu,**

**On**

**The Riotous Behaviour of Some Members of Parliament in the Chamber of Parliament on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2022**

**A. Background**

1. At its sitting on Wednesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2022, Parliament had before it a Government Motion for the laying on the Table of the House two Statutory Instruments Nos. 13 and 14 of 2022 respectively published in the Sierra Leone Gazette on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022. These Instruments contained Regulations by the Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone (ECSL) designed to give effect to the District Block Representation System, a form of Proportional Representation enshrined in section 38A of the Constitution of Sierra Leone 1991. Section 38A had become part of the Constitution in 2001 by way of a Constitutional Amendment through Act No. 15 of 2001 and had in fact been applied once in the General Elections of 2002. It was now being proposed by the ECSL to apply it again in the Parliamentary and Local Council Elections slated for the 24<sup>th</sup> June 2023. The Motion was brought to the House by the Deputy Attorney-General & Minister of Justice, Umaro Napoleon Koroma, Esq.

2. However, even before the Minister could move the Motion in the House, Hon. Hassan Sesay, Opposition Whip who on the day doubled as the Acting Leader of the Opposition in the absence abroad of the substantive Leader, rose on a point of order. He proceeded to proffer an elaborate argument on why the Motion should not be entertained by the House. This was followed by a response from Hon. Mathew Nyuma, Leader of Government Business, who was equally expansive on why the Motion should be allowed. I intervened to stop them, advising both Honourable Members to hold fire and not to put the cart before the horse. The arguments advanced by both sides were more germane to a Motion for Annulment of the Statutory Instruments after they shall have been laid as provided for in subsection (7) of section 170 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone 1991.

3. The Acting Leader of the Opposition persisted in making his presentation despite several exhortations and warnings to cease and desist as all his arguments at that stage appeared to be premature. His persistence eventually gave rise to a pandemonium in the House when all hell broke loose and a riot ensued with even strangers in the gallery participating in the fray by throwing a dagger and other objects at the Members of Parliament below in the Well. Altogether it culminated in a violent and devastating attack on the Chamber mainly from the Opposition Benches, with huge flower vases used as decoration being turned into missiles for throwing at each other. Injuries were inflicted on some Members of Parliament, tables and chairs unhinged and damaged, communication equipment and other property belonging to the House and valued at NLe380,000 also maliciously damaged and the sitting for that day temporarily disrupted. I myself was compelled to seek refuge in my Chambers until the situation quietened and was brought under control through the removal of the Members of the Opposition from the Well of Parliament by the Sierra Leone Police. After calm was restored in the Well, the proceedings of Parliament resumed and the Deputy Minister of Justice was able to lay the two Instruments on the Table of the House. In accordance with the provisions of subsection (7) of section 170 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone 1991, these Instruments will mature into law after 21 days or sooner if there is a motion calling



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for their annulment in which case they will take effect immediately after the motion is voted upon and is unable to obtain the affirmative votes of two-thirds of the Members of Parliament.

4. The incident in the Well was variously captured by the official CCTV cameras of Parliament as well as in private videos that have been widely circulated and shown on social media around the world.

5. From the Report tendered and read to the House by the Clerk of Parliament immediately after the incident, there is strong evidence pointing to at least three Members of Parliament, among others, as the main perpetrators of the attack on the Chamber of Parliament. They are:

- (i) Hon. Aaron Aruna Koroma - Constituency 048
- (ii) Hon. Lahai Marah - Constituency 042
- (iii) Hon. Abdul Karim Kamara - Constituency 059

6. The Inspector-General of Police wrote to me on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022 requesting that I release these Members of Parliament to assist the Police with their investigation into the incident.

#### **B. Characterisation of the Incident: Contempt or Crime**

7. The questions that immediately arise from this incident are as follows:

- (i) Should the incident of 23<sup>rd</sup> November be treated as constituting ordinary criminal offences and as such be referred to the Sierra Leone Police for investigation and prosecution under the criminal law of the land? Or
- (ii) Should it be treated as a matter of contempt of Parliament and as such kept within the exclusive domain of Parliament for punishment?

8. In addressing these questions, it is pertinent to draw attention to the provision of the Constitution in section 96. However, that provision seems to embody some element of double punishment usually referred to as double jeopardy in criminal law. It reads as follows:

“Where an act or omission which constitutes contempt of Parliament is an offence under the criminal law, the exercise by Parliament of the power to punish for contempt shall not be a bar to the institution of proceedings under the criminal law.”

#### **C. Contempt of Parliament**

9. For present purposes, this House will confine itself only to the element of contempt of Parliament. With the utmost regret, it has to be admitted that the history of this Fifth Parliament has been replete with irrefutable evidence of disorderly and riotous behaviour by some Members of Parliament bringing dishonour, disrepute and





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disdain to the dignity and image of Parliament. Thus, not only is our history in this Parliament apparently moving in reverse, impunity is also incrementally gaining the unenviable status of companion to some Members of Parliament. For example, there was the attack on Parliament and its properties on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018. Again, on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2021, a similar attack on Parliament took place at the Freetown International Conference Centre at Aberdeen. And again here in this Well there was an attack on the Chamber on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2022. The last two attacks came about as a result of some Members of Parliament, all of them from the Opposition Benches, violently refusing to adhere to the simple rules of decorum of the House when Statutory Instruments are about to be laid in the House by Government Ministers. Altogether, infamously, the impression is inescapable that our democratic values are tumbling down and are being made to look like the *reductio ad absurdum*.

10. If manifestations of high emotions were restricted to the rhetoric alone, the decency of which must predicate all debates in the House, all would be forgiven because the framers of our 1991 Constitution themselves had accepted it as wholly consistent with hallowed parliamentary practice the world over and accordingly had endowed it as absolutely privileged in the language of Section 99 of the Constitution, which reads and I quote:

“Subject to the provisions of this section, but without prejudice to the generality of section 97, no civil or criminal proceedings shall be instituted against a Member of Parliament in any court or place outside of Parliament by reason of anything **said by him in Parliament.**” (Emphasis added).

11. This provision of section 99 in effect reinforces the freedom of speech and debate granted to the Members of Parliament by section 98 thus:

“There shall be freedom of speech, debate and proceedings in Parliament and that freedom shall not be impeached or questioned in any court or place out of Parliament.”

12. However, to this freedom to Members of Parliament there are corresponding responsibilities imposed on them. These responsibilities are clearly enunciated in section 97 as follows and I quote:

“The responsibilities of the Members of Parliament shall include the following-

(a) All Members of Parliament shall maintain the dignity and image of Parliament both during the sittings in Parliament as well as in their acts and activities outside Parliament.

(b) All Members of Parliament shall regard themselves as representatives of the people of Sierra Leone and desist from any conduct by which they seek improperly to enrich themselves or alienate themselves from the people.”

13. Returning once more to the terms of section 99, what it protects wholly and absolutely is anything that is **said** and said decently by the Members of Parliament in Parliament and not what they say indecently, recklessly



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or maliciously. The latter is completely outside the protection of that provision. And where a Member transgresses beyond its permissible boundaries, and the Speaker so opines, the matter must be committed to the Committee of Privileges for inquiry and the findings of the Committee must be reported to Parliament within 30 days. Where the statement of a Member of Parliament is adjudged to be defamatory, that member is liable to render an apology at the bar of Parliament within seven days. If he refuses to render an apology the Speaker shall suspend the Member for the duration of the session of Parliament with the consequential loss of privileges, immunities and remuneration.

14. All of what I have stated so far relates solely to what is spoken by the Member of Parliament in Parliament and is adjudged to be defamatory. This begs two questions: first, what about conduct other than the spoken word of a Member of Parliament? Second, what is the jurisdiction or mandate of the Committee of Privileges in such circumstances? And here, in respect of the incident of 23<sup>rd</sup> November, we are dealing with not just what was said by the Members of Parliament; we are dealing also with several other things like actual assault, physical fighting, throwing of missiles, throwing of knives and destruction of property belonging to Parliament. Is such action or misconduct entitled to protection under section 99? I think not. Is it within the ambit of contempt of Parliament as defined in section 95 of the Constitution? I should think so. That section defines “contempt of Parliament” as “any act or omission which obstructs and impedes Parliament in the performance of its duties, or which obstructs or impedes any Member or officer thereof in the discharge of his duties or affronts the dignity of Parliament, or which tends either directly or indirectly to produce such a result shall be a contempt of Parliament.” Does the Committee of Privileges have jurisdiction to handle such matters? The answer must be in the affirmative as Standing Order 70(11)(a) lists Section 95 as among the provisions of the Constitution that fall within the mandate of the Committee of Privileges to investigate and report to the House.

15. The Constitution itself does not specifically address the issues currently in hand but arguably they come within the rubric of contempt of Parliament. The silence of the Constitution is one that is not difficult to understand. The framers of our Constitution never anticipated that a person so highly exalted and called honourable, indeed a law maker for that matter, could ever even think of shedding his high exalted endowment and descend so low to the level of a vagabond or a street fighter. So today we are faced with a situation that is entirely unique and probably never contemplated by the framers of the Constitution. An honourable man turned vagabond but who surely cannot and should not go unpunished.

16. Parliamentary privilege is the sum total of certain fundamental rights of Parliament and its members which are generally accepted as necessary for the exercise of their sacred constitutional functions. Parliament and its members must be seen as complementary to each other because the House cannot perform its constitutional functions without the unimpeded use of the services of its Members. This ancillary character is the distinctive mark of a privilege. Though part of the law of the land, it is to a certain extent an exemption from the ordinary law. From the import of the provisions in section 99 of the Constitution, it is clear to me that the intention was to grant to the Members of Parliament a certain degree of protection when they make statements in Parliament but it does not and cannot afford protection to Members of Parliament for statements that are found to be reckless or malicious; still less can it afford any protection to a Member of Parliament for acts that constitute



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assault or malicious damage to property. Such acts properly constitute contempt of Parliament because they obstruct and impede Parliament in the performance of its functions as well as an affront to the dignity of Parliament. Fighting, throwing of missiles and malicious damage to Parliament's property fall into that category.

17. Accordingly such gross misconduct in the House is deserving of the most severe punishment including the loss of status as a Member of Parliament, withdrawal of privileges and immunities as well as loss of remuneration.

18. That said, as we count down the months and days left to the next General Elections on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2023, there has been a noticeable escalation of the crudest profanity and most incendiary political rhetoric ever which is excessively overheating the political space as if they are foretelling an even bigger crisis ahead in the few months and days remaining to the General Elections. No civilized society can accept this unsavoury development and it must be condemned without reservation and stamped out at once. The failure to do so is in effect to continue to encourage the subversion of the political climate; a climate that is likely to grow exponentially unstable, riven with mistrust and mutual intolerance, fuelled by wild accusations and innuendoes and online bullying, a dialogue of the deaf drowning each other out with heavy noise and shame; and, in a sense, making democracy to look unhinged and outlandish. We cannot and must not allow this to prevail in our society. They are most unworthy of the quiet and peaceful people or the country we call like our Sierra Leone. The extant images and landscape of the darkest years of the 1990s should provide a stark reminder to all of us of the consequences of the failure of democracy in yesteryears; and we certainly cannot afford another failure. Therefore the people we elect as our representatives to Parliament must learn to listen, to be tolerant of one another and to play the game of politics strictly by the rules. Those who feel they cannot play by the elementary rules of decency and civilized behaviour do not deserve the people's trust to be elected to this Well nor to call themselves honourable. And I would like to reaffirm to this Parliament and the nation at large that under my watch this House of Parliament will have no room to accommodate those who degenerate to the abyss of renegades and hoodlums and pose a serious threat to our democracy and the safety of our citizenry.

19. The privileges of this House would be entirely ineffectual to enable it to discharge its functions, if it had no inherent power to punish offenders, to impose disciplinary measures against its Members, or to enforce obedience to its commands.

20. Taking all the facts and circumstances of the inglorious incident of 23<sup>rd</sup> November into account, and in exercise of both the powers contained in S.O. 43 and those vested in me as Speaker and in order to provide a deterrent against similar action in future, I have decided as follows:

1. That Hon. Aaron Aruna Koroma of Constituency 048; Hon. Lahai Marah of Constituency 042 and Hon. Abdul Karim Kamara of Constituency 059 shall withdraw indefinitely from all proceedings in the House until a final determination is made by the House from the recommendations of the Committee of Privileges to which their misconduct is hereby committed. Until then all their privileges, immunities, remuneration and allowances are withdrawn;



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2. That they pay equally to Parliament within two weeks the total amount of NLe380,000 being the cost of the properties of Parliament damaged as a result of the attack on the Chamber on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2022 and that if they fail to pay the said amount within the time thus stipulated that it shall be deducted from any gratuities due to them at the end of the life of this Fifth Parliament;
3. That with immediate effect no strangers be allowed into the galleries of the Well of Parliament except by official invitation from the Office of the Speaker and all strangers so invited shall be subjected to proper search before admission;
4. That with immediate effect no strangers be allowed to enter the premises of Parliament with mobile phones, drinks and food items;
5. That with immediate effect all drivers to Members of Parliament shall only be allowed to stay in their vehicles or in the vicinity of where their vehicles are parked.
6. That for the avoidance of double punishment no further action shall be taken by the Sierra Leone Police against the three Members of Parliament aforementioned;
7. That appropriate action shall be taken by the Sierra Leone Police against all the strangers who participated in the incident of 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2022.

Hon. Members, this is my Ruling.

Rt. Hon. Dr. Abass Chernor Bundu

Speaker of Parliament

30<sup>th</sup> November 2022