

OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

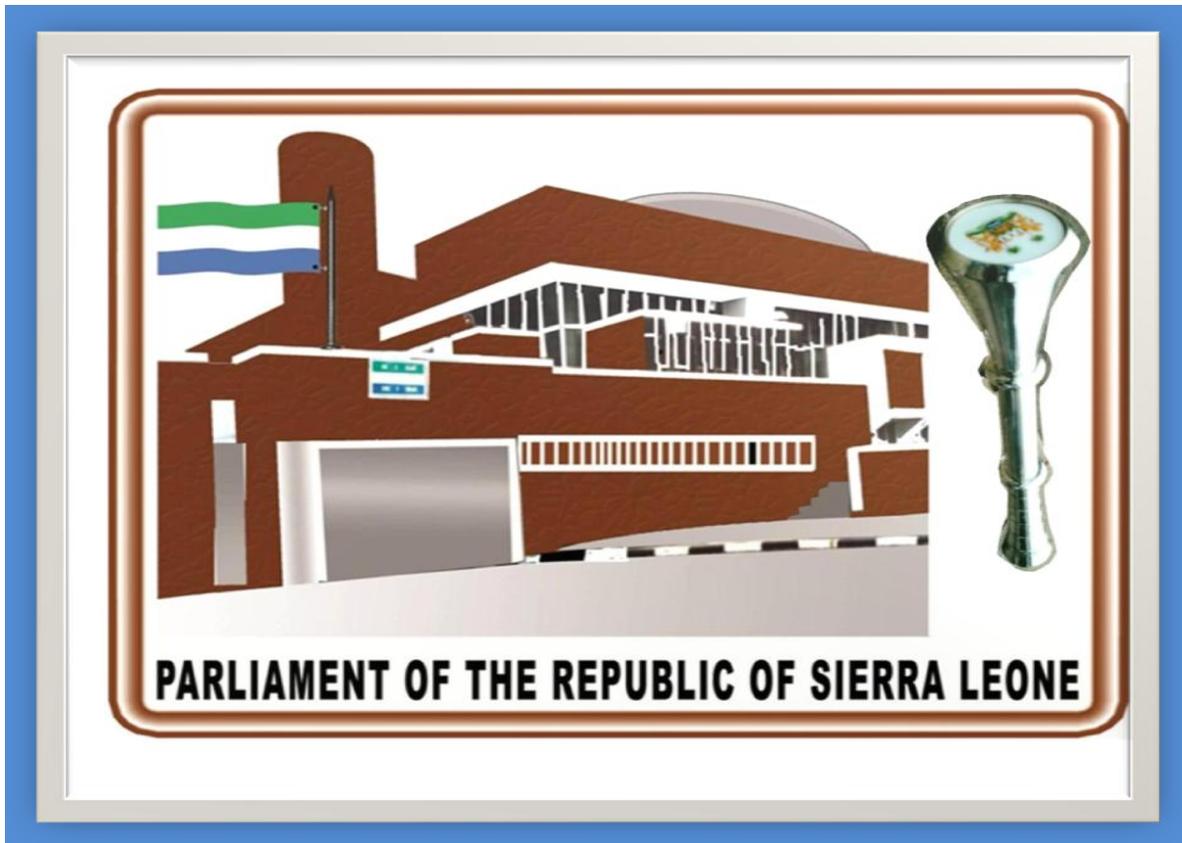
[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

FIRST SESSION - FIRST MEETING

FRIDAY, 3RD AUGUST, 2018

SESSION – 2018/2019



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMETARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

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First Meeting of the First Session of the Fifth Parliament
of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone.

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held Friday, 3rd August, 2018.

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THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

**FIFTH SESSION – FIRST MEETING
OF THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT
OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC**

Thursday, 3rd August, 2018.

I. PRAYERS

[The Table Clerk, Mrs Bintu Weston, Read the Prayers]

[The House met at 10:10 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown]

[The Speaker, Honourable Abass Chernor Bundu, in the Chair]

The House was called to Order

HON. SIDIE M. TUNIS: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, due to some technical problems, the record of Votes and Proceedings is not ready. It will be made available in the next sitting.

THE SPEAKER: In that case, you want the Order Paper to be amended?

HON. SIDI M. TUNIS: With the concurrence of the House, I want item II on the Order Paper to be expunged.

II. PAPER LAID

HON. SIDIE M. TUNIS, LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS.

HON. SIDI M. TUNIS: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I beg to lay on the Table of the House the following Paper:

Financing Agreement, Sierra Leone Agro Processing Competitiveness Project between the Republic of Sierra Leone and the International Development Association, Credit number 6299SM [*Applause*].

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, since there is no other item on the Order Paper, I want to encourage Members to make use of S.O.23.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I stand on S.O. 23. Mr Speaker, about three weeks ago, we had one day Consultative Workshop, organised by the Legal Aid Board and the National HIV/AIDS Secretariat. Three parliamentary Committees were invited to the workshop; i.e., the Legislative, Human Rights and Health Committees. On that day, certain issues came up. One of the outstanding issues is that there are certain drugs currently at the Queen Elizabeth II Quay that should be cleared and distributed immediately. But for some months now, there have been some administrative problems. So, the Legislative Committee and the two other Committees are on the move to invite the relevant authorities.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I got a message on Wednesday from Awoko News. With your permission, it says: "Shipping Company CMA, CGM says it will auction HIV,

TB and Malaria drugs given by Global Fund at the Quay for failure to pay demurrage amounting to **Le 125.1mln.**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, according to HIV/AIDS Secretariat, it is no hidden secret that the prevalence of HIV/AIDS is spreading very fast in this country. According to them, they projected approximately 65,000 people, but their records show that only about 23 are taking treatments. These drugs were given as gift by Global Fund. They also provided not only HIV/AIDS drugs, but Tuberculosis [TB] and malaria drugs. Looking at the proliferation of fake drugs in this country, especially malaria drugs, these drugs could be of help. We have more fake malaria drugs in this country that are causing more problems. I want to believe drugs given by Global Fund are very genuine and they are gift to people of this country. So, I wonder why these drugs are still at the Quay. I am just trying to appeal to Mr Speaker to ensure that the relevant Committees; i.e., the Health and Human Rights Committees, invite the relevant authorities to come and explain why that amount should be paid. As far as I am concerned, we should not pay anything for those drugs. We need explanation from the other side because they may have reasons. I want to appeal to this Honourable House to ask the shipping company to hold on to the auction, pending the investigation by this Parliament through the relevant Committees. With your permission, I would like the Legislative Committee to join the Health and Human Right Committees in this investigation. That is my humble submission Sir *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: The issue the Honourable Member has raised is very important. It is certainly a matter of national interest and I do not know whether the Leader of Government Business would like to respond. It would be a pity if genuine drugs for that matter that have been donated to this country are left at the Quay for such a time.

HON. SIDIE M. TUNIS: Mr Speaker, immediately after sitting, we would ensure that through the Chairman of the Committee on Transport and Aviation, we contact and invite the parties involved. I would like to meet with the Chairpersons of Finance, Transport, Legislative, Health and Human Rights Committee immediately after sitting.

Honourable Leader of the Opposition, I want you to join me to meet with them. I would also like the Opposition Chief Whips to join us.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, based on experience, some people are smart. I am saying this because what we are discussing now is on the public forum and by the time we could notice, they will come and tell us that they have done it.

THE SPEAKER: No, Honourable Member. I take due note of what the Leader of Government Business has said and I do hope the promise he has made will be fulfilled; and next time we hear about this matter, it will be to inform us that the drugs have been cleared, transported and deposited to the warehouse where it should go. However, we should not leave it at that and I would like to invite both the Leader of Government Business and the Leader of the Opposition and the Chairman of the Health and Sanitation Committee to engage themselves to follow up on this particular matter and report to this House in due course. I want you to come and inform this House that the drugs have been cleared from customs. Whoever is considered relevant to the task of ensuring that this is done, please include the person or group. Honourable Member, I hope that will satisfy you, but it a very important matter that we cannot leave unattended.

HON. JOSEPH W. LAMIN: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I stand on S.O. 23. I want to register my profound thanks and appreciation to Honourable Members of this House. I never dreamt to be a politician, but having participated in the activities of this noble House, from the day of elections to the induction, I want to express my profound thanks and appreciation. My constituents have heard about me, participating on various activities.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank all the staff in this Parliament, especially the Library. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I observed that there are vary degree of conformity with the dress code that I see is causing me some disquiet. Proper African attire with long sleeves is generally accepted, but Africa attire with short sleeves

appears to be rather casual. I do not think it meets the requirement of Section 97 in my opinion. I will not go to the extent of penalising any Member at this point in time, but I want every Member to bear in mind that when you come to this Chamber, please endeavour to be properly attired. If you wear a suit, let it be a suit with a tie and if you wear African attire, especially the gentlemen, please let it be long sleeves. For the ladies, I have no problems with them *[Applause]*. The ladies are as elegant as you can possibly imagine and am I fully satisfied with the appearance of the ladies *[Applause]*. I can strictly say that from what I observed, they are in full compliance with the provision in Section 97. My problem is with the gentlemen, especially those who come in short sleeves *[Laughter]*. I will forbear on this occasion, but take that forbearance as a warning. I will start by ignoring Members of Parliament who come in short sleeves. If you know you are in short sleeves, do not try to attract my attention.

HON. HASSAN A. SESAY: Mr Speaker, I want to draw your attention to an issue which has been raised severally in this House; i.e., the sloppy nature of how these documents are made available to Members of Parliament prior to sittings. Again, the Order Paper was made this morning. In the last sitting, the Deputy Leader spoke about the same anomaly and this has been brought to this House on several occasions. I want to draw your attention to this once more. The Leader of Government Business and the Clerk should make sure that documents are made available to Members of Parliament prior to sitting and giving us enough time, so that we understand the issue before we come to this House. Otherwise, it will not make for good debate and it will not provide enough time for people to understand or conduct research on issue we want to debate. I wanted to draw your attention to this. I thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I cannot agree more with the sentiments just expressed by the Honourable Member. I would like to add my voice to the several voices that have been expressed on this issue. I know there can be technical problems from time to time, but we should endeavour to ensure that Members of Parliament are informed and given the Order Paper in good time before the scheduled time of our

meetings. In keeping with the pronouncement I made just now, those in short sleeves take your sit *[Laughter]*.

HON. SIRAJIN M. KAMARA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to draw the attention of the House to a very important issue for us sitting at the back here. Mr Speaker, you will notice that each time a Member of Parliament wants to exit, he/she will have to disturb the others. This is very important and I think we also disturb the proceedings in the process. We are not adequately convenient here. Maybe, now that we are going on recess, I think there will be enough time for the Parliament to look at this issue and make us comfortable. Thank you very much Sir *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: In pursuant to the matter raised by the Chairman of the Legislative Committee, I think we should order the pending auction be concealed with immediate effect *[Applause]*. The relevant Ministry should be asked to ensure that the necessary work is carried out that would bring about the delivery of those drugs to their intended destination not by way of auction.

HON. ABDULAI O. CHARLES: Thank you, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I stand on S.O. 23. I want to talk about an issue from the Civil Society Consortium on community accountability and service delivery. This concern is about our national passport. The civil society calls for immediate termination of the passport contract and it has been addressed to Parliament and the Government of Sierra Leone. With your permission, I want to go through what has been sent to Parliament through this civil society organisation.

THE SPEAKER: Are you sure that this is in compliance with the S.O. 23? Please read S.O. 23, starting with the word 'but,' in the penultimate line. Be careful not to raise controversial issues here.

HON. ABDULAI O. CHARLES: Mr Speaker, thank you for that correction. I will therefore resume my seat.

HON. ABU KEMOKAI: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand on S.O. 23 to draw your attention to the microphones in this House. Many Members here are abstaining from

participating in the business of the House because they may not want to use the mobile microphone that is used by almost all Members of Parliament for the purposes of either health implications. I want to draw your attention that while we are going on recess, the leadership of the House should look into this issue, particularly this row. Our microphones are not working and we would like to be speaking from our microphones. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Is the Clerk here? In the absence of the Clerk of the House, I would like to remind this House about information that is already in your possession; i.e., the Government of the Republic of China has made a very significant donation to this House, which we hope will arrive very shortly. This will substantially affect the configuration of the logistics within the Well and outside the Well of this House in terms of improving the quality of our performance and delivery. I am assured by the Ambassador of the Republic of China that their donation is on the high seas and will reach the shores of this Country very shortly; and when they arrive, we shall see some remarkable improvement in the logistics here.

HON. IBRAHIM BEN KARGBO: With due respect to you, you spoke in riddles. We would like to know the content of the donations

THE SPEAKER: I would ask you to be a little patient. I will now invite the Clerk to give you detailed information about the donations. I am however informed that the public address system is going to be substantially improved by the donation that we expect to arrive shortly.

HON. MOHAMED KANNEH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am happy that the Speaker has explained to this House about the plans to improve the sitting accommodation in this Well. Presently, I cannot even stand properly to address this House because of the kind of seats we have here. We are seriously constrained here. This is why the three of us here have never caught your eyes. We have never spoken in this Well. I do not know if it is because of our location, but I want to draw your attention to this issue. We have made several attempts to participate in the debates, but we have not been opportune. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: That is a very interesting comment that you have made. In response to that, I know we do not have a full House right now, but may I ask whether there is any Member who is yet to make his or her maiden speech? I want to however state here that your location is not disadvantageous to you. I think on more than one occasion, I have invited Members who have not made their maiden speeches to rise so I can recognise them. Are they ready now? But there is nothing on the Order Paper that will merit you making a maiden speech. If you are ready to make a maiden speech, please take the Floor *[Applause]*.

HON. MOHAMED S. K. CONTEH: Mr Speaker, thank you very much for recognising me. I stand on S.O 26 as you previously stated about the wardrobe. In this Well, we have mentioned about the welfare of Members of Parliament and we are requesting that since we are going on recess, you kindly look into our affairs properly when we come back *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: That is the most powerful maiden speech that I have ever heard *[Applause]*. I will recognise the Honourable Member at the back of the Well.

HON. MOMODU E. MANSARAY: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Let me make something clear that I am the only Eskimo on the African continent *[Laughter]*. I am not as generous as the Eskimos in Greenland. Let me tell you one thing about the Eskimos, although I am unlike what I am about to say. With the Eskimos, whenever their male counterparts come to them as guest, they take their wives and offered the guest to do whatever they want to do with them. That is their culture. It is like taking your food and offer to your guests. That is why my own Eskimo is not as generous as those ones.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, maybe I do not have much to say because in any debate, if you do not understand what you want to talk, there is no need for you to stand. I tried several times to catch the Speaker's eyes today, but I thank God now. There are times when issues come to this Parliament, one may want to contribute. But today, I stood up because I want to handle this microphone for the first time. My Constituency comprises three chiefdoms; i.e., Wara-Wara Bafodea, Thamiso and Kamukeh Chiefdom. I want to remind this House that Thamiso Chiefdom is the most

backward Chiefdom in this country. I am not making any mistake and that is why I did not say 'one of.' It is one of the de-amalgamated Chiefdoms before now, Kasongo, Thamiso and other chiefdoms were brought together during the de-amalgamation. Thamiso Chiefdom is now Chiefdom on its own. It is the most backward chiefdom in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the most disheartening thing in that Chiefdom is that people do not know names like 'Jesus' or 'Prophet Mohammad' [peace be upon Him]. If you call any of these names there that will be their first time of hearing such names. There is only one community primary school in the entire Chiefdom and one community secondary school. Religion is an issue in that Chiefdom because the people do not even know who is Jesus or Prophet Mohammad [Peace be upon Him]. I wanted to tell the ambassadors yesterday not to forget this Chiefdom. We all know that civilisation came to Sierra Leone through the early missionaries. Bafodia Chiefdom was developed by the Wesleyans, some areas by the Catholics, the Ahmadees, etc. I was about to tell them yesterday to think about certain places, in terms of constructing schools, churches and mosques. If you want to get to Thamiso, which is located immediately after Fadugu, you walk about 300fts. You will never see any other road, but there are people living there. Old people are just waiting to die.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, let us get to the integrities. You said there is only one primary school?

HON. MOMODU E. MANSARAY: Yes, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Is there any health centre?

HON. MOMODU E. MANSARAY: There is one at Kasanikoro.

THE SPEAKER: Is there a 'Court Barray?'

HON. MOMODU E. MANSARAY: No, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: No other public place?

HON. MOMODU E. MANSARAY: No Sir. They do not even have a 'drying floor.'

THE SPEAKER: A drying floor?

HON. MOMODU E. MANSARAY: They do not have it sir.

THE SPEAKER: Is there a mosque?

HON. MOMODU E. MANSARAY: Mr Speaker, there is one in Kasanikoro. Well, I can call it a mosque because it is a holy house, but built with palm fronds. The last time I checked, there were twenty worshippers.

THE SPEAKER: Is there a Church?

HON. MOMODU E. MANSARAY: There is a Church built with palm fronds. There were thirty members in the church.

THE SPEAKER: Well, I am sure Honourable Members of this House are in great sympathy with you and your people. You carry a very special responsibility in this particular case. I think you made your point and you do have the sympathy of the House. I think you should now intensify the representation that you make to the Government to ensure that your people are not left out. I hope you understand what I am getting at. In light of the number of Honourable Members that rose when I asked the question which I want to repeat again, is there any Member in this House who is yet to keep company with the mike? You have never spoken? Are you sure? *Honourable Member*, are you saying you never taken the Floor before? Let me ask your colleague for confirmation. Honourable Haja, can you confirm please?

HON. HAJA: He has never spoken sir.

THE SPEAKER: Then, you have the Floor.

HON. ISAAC TARAWALLY: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am here to make a representation of the people that sent me here. Basically, there are certain amenities 'Freetoneans' are benefiting from, but my constituents do not have those facilities. One of those facilities is water. During my campaign, there were lots of promises made. There were lots of things that the people wanted within that constituency. The people are in need of water. They are in dire need of water in Constituency 118. Having sent

me here to represent them, I believe it is my utmost duty to represent them very well. I would like members in this Well to know that my people need water and I have made bogus promises during my campaign. I have made lots of promises and I need to represent them in a better manner.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I am sure you did not mean that you made promises, but they were not bogus. Just say it is rather unfortunate that you made promises you have not been able to deliver.

HON. ISAAC TARAWALLY: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I know I am protected. What I am trying to say is that there are lots of promises I made with regard to the provision of water. I want this noble House to help me where necessary for that particular situation to be laid to rest. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Today, we shall exhaust all the maiden speeches before we take our adjournment. I am going to focus first on the Members to my left and then I will turn to the right. Mohamed Bangura will help me identify them.

HON. BAI SAMA KAMARA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker for catching your eyes today. First of all, I have a problem. The entire Kambia District is boasting of having international market centre, which is Bamoi Luma, but the days allocated to that Luma are very unusual. Bamoi Luma used to operate on Saturdays and Sundays and that gave Church Members, school children and Government workers the opportunity to participate. It is however unfortunate to state here that those two days have been substituted with Mondays and Tuesdays. These days are working days and this is affecting the students, pupils, teachers and workers. I am asking this Honourable House to look into this issue and try to reverse this decision.

THE SPEAKER: Let me ask, who made that decision in the first place?

HON. BAI SAMA KAMARA: The decision started during the Ebola period by the past Government.

THE SPEAKER: Are you sure?

HON. BAI SAMA KAMARA: I am quite sure, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I am sure there is a Chiefdom Council.

HON. BAI SAMA: There is a Chiefdom Council, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: With a Paramount Chief?

HON. BAI SAMA: Yes, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Why you have failed to take this matter with the Local Council and the Paramount Chief?

HON. BAI SAMA KAMARA: We have tried, including the Paramount Chief, but due to the announcement made by Members of this House and the leaders, they used Sunday, which is a resting day. We want to use Saturdays and Sundays as our market days. So, I want to ask this House to plead with the leader to reverse back to Saturdays and Sundays as market days.

THE SPEAKER: I think I would give the Floor to the Leader of the Opposition. He may have information that could elucidate this issue.

HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I want to support your position in making sure that they address it locally because those rules and regulations were only in existence when there was a State of Emergency. We are no longer in a State of Emergency. Since the state of emergency has elapsed, everything went back to normal. The Sunday trading which was stopped in the Western Area, but the President made pronouncement and that was also lifted. That issue has nothing to do with this House, Mr Speaker *[Applause]*

THE SPEAKER: I tend to agree with the Leader of the Opposition. I think that is a local issue that should be addressed locally by the authorities there. Please go to the Chiefdom Council, including the Paramount Chief. There is a Chiefdom Council that should have the authority to designate a day as a market day. I would advise you to follow that path. The only way to satisfy me as a maiden speech marker is to ask your

colleague sitting next to you to confirm. The gentleman with the red shirt, are you sure?

HON. MOMOH KAMARA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I have attempted several times to contribute, but to no avail. I have continued to observe and note certain things. I hope with my determination and commitment to this House, I would work towards representing my people. Thank you *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you for your generosity. That is the shortest maiden speech I have ever heard *[Laughter]*.

HON. JOHN S. KARGBO: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Let me first of all congratulate you for your steadfast effort in making sure that the promises you made to us when you were sworn in as Speaker are realised. You promised to be objective and constructive and we have realised that promise *[Applause]*. I want to recognise the democratic elections that we went through. It is not by aristocratic by birth or plutocracy by wealth, but a demonstration of true talent skills in our community that enable us to become Members of Parliament. So, that is the core reason why I stand here today to explain the problems my people in constituency 111 are going through. My Constituency covers Hastings, Deep Eye Water, White Stone. One of the problems my people are facing has to do with the heavy duty trucks. Yesterday, we were with the Minister of Works and his deputy at the Toll Gate to explain about the risks and damage these heavy duty trucks are causing in my Constituency. It is so serious that even the alternative route they are using from Hastings to Yams Farm Junction has caused a lot of problems. In fact, I was very disappointed with some of the relevant stakeholders, especially those timber loggers.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when I made a regulation in my Constituency the last time, they went ahead and said all sort of things. I may want to crave your indulgence for this House to intervene, so that the heavy duty trucks that are disturbing my constituents find another solution or be stopped. I thank you all *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Member. Is there any other maiden speech? We have two more. I start with the gentleman in the red tie.

HON. IBRAHIM CONTEH: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I feel honoured this morning for giving me the platform to be heard. I am finding it difficult to see how best I can promote the education of the girl child in one of the sections in my community, which is Makong. That part of the country is not accessible. It is very difficult to get to Makong, and there is no way you can get these kids to go to school because of the bad roads and damaged bridges. Makong is populated, but without health facilities. There is no hospital, no better schooling and no good roads. I have made promises that I would use this House to ensure that roads, medical facilities and schools are provided. I want to crave your indulgence, since I have got a very soft spot for you, Mr Speaker, to ensure that you add your voice, so that this House will see how best we can work out modalities and get these girls to school.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is not that we do not want to contribute, but we are finding it extremely difficult to catch your eyes. I however thank God for this opportunity today. It is indeed another birthday for me I thank you very much *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I really want to thank the Honourable Member. I am prepared to give you whatever support is needed to talk with the relevant authorities of Government, particularly with regard to the road issue that you raised and the lack of schools in that area. I say this because we all know that it is the avowed policy of the 'New Direction' Government that education should be free and concomitant with that. In order to fulfil the obvious objective to lead this Nation, education will be made compulsory *[Applause]*. Making education free is the first step and the second step should be making it compulsory. I know in certain countries outside of Sierra Leone, it is the parents who bear the penalty if the school going children do not go to school. I can see great wisdom in Sierra Leonean adopting that kind of policy in due course. So, it behoves you as the Member of Parliament to ensure that there is a school in that part

of the country and that school is accessible to the school going children. I am ready to give you whatever support you need to talk to the relevant authorities.

HON. IBRAHIM CONTEH: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Let me now turn to my right. Any maiden speech makers? One more on this side? I want to exhaust the left before I go to the right.

HON. HASSAN SANKOH: I thank you, Mr Speaker for giving me the opportunity this morning to speak. I represent Constituency 049 which is located in Tonkolili District. It covers three Chiefdoms.

THE SPEAKER: Does this mean that the Tonkolili Members of Parliament are all clustered in one area of the House?

HON. HASSAN SANKOH: Yes, Mr Speaker. We were clustered here *[Laughter]*. For those who do not know, the three Sections in Tonkolili District are Mabang, Malal and Mabuta. Mayorsor section is very close to Magburaka. I want to also toe the line of my colleague in terms of the road conditions in Mabang. Mabang is the Chiefdom Head Quarter town. If you drive to that Chiefdom, you can hardly go to the other villages at this time of the year. The second part is the education in those areas. I was called to provide food for those who sat to Basic Education Certificate Examination [BECE]. They will have to relocate from their various towns and come to Mile 91 or go to Magburaka to take their exams. Sometimes these children are exposed to other unfavourable conditions. It means this Constituency need some attention with regards to the Free Education.

Having said that, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will like to thank the Speaker for giving us this opportunity. Personally, I would have been disappointed to go back home without being heard in this Honourable House *[Applause]*. I commend you, Mr Speaker for your wisdom to look around and say no, I have not heard certain people in this Well and I will like to hear from them *[Applause]*. I would also like to draw your attention to the condition of our seats. We are not comfortable at all. Most Members of Parliament

have spoken about it. With your wisdom and powers, please ensure that all of us are comfortable in this Noble House. I thank you very much for your attention.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you Honourable Member. Your point is noted.

HON. IBRAHIM BEN KARGBO: Mr Speaker, before you move to the right hand side of the House, I thank you very much for allowing our Members of Parliament to take a bite and to have their say in their maiden speeches. I want to thank you very much for that position which you have introduced. It has also given a little bit of confidence to our people. It has also made us knowledgeable about the fact that we have very good Members of Parliament, but you have not recognised that because they never had an opportunity to speak. So, I want to congratulate all those who have made their maiden speeches and we the leadership are very impressed that they understand the issues. It is important because a good number of our colleagues lost their seats simply because they never uttered a word for five years. You have however removed that possibility because almost everybody from our side has made a speech and they can now go back and say I have contributed to the development of this country. I thought I should thank you.

THE SPEAKER: I am very pleased quite frankly with the last observation made by Honourable Ibrahim Ben Kargbo. All of you Members of Parliament on my left, during the recess you can now emphatically say to your people that you represented them and you made your speech on their behalf in the Well of Parliament [*Applause*]. Now, let me turn to the right. I see the Honourable Paramount Chief. Tradition demands that I give preference to the Paramount Chief.

HON. PC CYRIL FORAY GONDOR II: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker for giving me this opportunity to talk for the first time in this Well of Parliament. I have however made several attempts, but to no avail. I want to believe that this House comprises different political parties, SLPP, APC, etc. but there are also other Members of Parliament who do not belong to either of those parties. For example, we have Independent Members of Parliament and Paramount Chiefs. Constitutionally, Paramount Chiefs do not belong to political parties, although by nature as Shakespeare said:

“Every human being is a political being.” Therefore, I want to appeal for equal treatment. I have observed that when asking people to contribute, I stand to be corrected, but you give preference to Members of political parties, leaving out Paramount Chiefs. I want to however state here that Paramount Chiefs constitute larger constituencies than the ordinary Members of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to believe all of them belong to us or all of them are our subjects. Therefore, I want to appeal to the Speaker that in future, please give preference to Paramount Chiefs to be heard. Some of us have been paid for teaching and talking for over twenty-five years before we became Paramount Chiefs. When we come here, we want to be talking because that is why we are here. As one of the Members of Parliament said earlier that Parliament comes from the French word ‘Parley’ which means to talk. If we come here and we do not contribute to issues and debates in Parliament, then it will not go down well with us. And few days ago, one of my children asked me; S.O. [2] ‘papa a nor de yeri u na Parliament.’ I told my son that I have not been given that opportunity to talk. Therefore, I want the Speaker to look at this in future. We want to be contributing to the debates in this House. I said earlier that some of us are being paid for talking and there are some Members of Parliament who have been contributing. Some of us taught them the queen’s language they speak here. So, if we see some of them talking and we do not talk or contribute, we will not feel good at all. Therefore, I want to appeal that in future, preference be given. We are not Paramount Chiefs of yester-years, but Paramount Chiefs of the 21st Century. We want to contribute to the development of this Country. Thank you, Mr Speaker
[Applause].

THE SPEAKER: I want to thank the Honourable Paramount Chief for that observation, but let me also assure the Honourable Paramount Chief that if until now you have not been able to catch my eyes, it was really not intentional. I can assure you that I will try to be as reasonable and fair in ensuring that Members of Parliament make their contributions to the debates in this House. It was definitely not deliberately intended to

exclude you from participating. From now on, I will be stretching my neck beyond the limit, so that I can catch or see which Paramount Chief wants to catch my eyes.

Honourable Members, let us try to exhaust this, so that everybody can comfortably go home during the recess and say they have indeed spoken in the Well of this House. I say this because as the Honourable Ibrahim Ben Kargbo reminded us, we have been in this Well before, I was down there some decades ago. In fact, we know what it meant to our people to hear their Members of Parliament speak. There was one notable Honourable Member Tomboyeke was the name. He kept quiet for such a long time and immediately inspired the anxiety in every Member of Parliament to hear him speak. The day he stood to catch the eyes of the Speaker, everybody was saying, let the rest take their seat because Tomboyeke wants to catch the eyes of Mr Speaker. So, I know how important it is, Honourable Paramount Chief. You know something? Discretion is the better part of valour. If you want the history, come to my Chambers.

HON. ALOYSIUS B. ANSUMANA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker for giving me the opportunity to say a word in this Well today. As if it is a coincidence because the Honourable Paramount Chief has just spoken about what I wanted to say. For four months now, some of us have not been given the opportunity to say anything. Sometimes people want to know why you have not spoken. Well, I usually tell people we do not just talk in Parliament until the Floor is given to you. I usually say you have to catch the eyes of the Speaker first. For the past four months, you cannot continue to say that *[Laughter]*. It will appear as if you do not have the competence to say anything here. I want to thank you very much for what you have done for us today. I also want to thank Honourable Mohamed Kanneh because he actually raised this point that all of us here have not been given the opportunity to contribute in this Parliament before. With his magnanimous leadership, the Speaker decided to make sure that all of us make our maiden speeches today.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, before this time, there were points I really wanted to talk about in the presence of our Presidential nominees. For example, when the Minister of Education was brought here, I wanted to talk about a thorny issue in my

constituency. We had a problem in our Chiefdom and the Paramount Chief and I went to the Ministry. We do not have an examination centre. We have the Pendembu Vocational Secondary School.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is a Reverend Sister from Ghana who is qualified. She has been in that School for over two years. She applied to be approved by the Ministry of Education. The Paramount Chief can confirm what I have just said. For over three years now she has not been approved. I really wanted to talk about those issues when the Minister of Education was here. We met him before this time to raise this issue with him.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also wanted to talk about NaCSA projects. In my constituency, for instance, NaCSA constructed a local market for the past five years, but it is 'a white elephant project' because nobody goes there. It is a complete waste of resources. It is supposed to be a community driven project. You cannot construct a structure without conducting needs assessment. You have to ask them what they want. If NaCSA had asked the people, the people would have appreciated the gesture. If you constructed a market, but the people are not using it, it appears as if they did not ask for it. I am sure we have this problem in other Chiefdoms. In our meetings, another Reverend flagged it up. I wanted to talk on that in the presence of the NaCSA nominees.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also instructed some people to conduct an assessment survey in my Constituency about water points. It was discovered that over **30%** of those water points have been damaged. When we talk about water, it should not be water for just the urban towns, but safe drinking water for every Sierra Leonean. So, attention should be given to those water points in the rural areas.

[Suspension of S.O. 5[2] being 12:00 p.m.]

SPEAKER: You may continue, Honourable Member.

HON. ALOYSIUS B. ANSUMANA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I conducted the survey because I wanted to prepare a development plan for my constituency. I wanted

to do that with facts. Like I said, Mr Speaker, I would have loved to talk about this in the presence of the SALWACO nominees. This would have also guided them in doing their work. They are not here now, but I appreciate this opportunity given to me today to contribute in this Well of Parliament. I want to say many thanks to the Speaker for realising that some of us or all of us at the back have been deprived and we cannot continue to give excuses to our people. Sometimes you do not even have the opportunity to put up any defence because they will start backbiting that this man has been in Parliament for four months, but he has never said a word. Some of us can talk if we are asked to talk and we will talk sensible things *[Applause]*. Like I said earlier, it is a coincidence that the Paramount Chief too has spoken today for the first time. Thank you *[Applause]*

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member. We have three more people on their legs. He actually asked for a special dispensation and I am still considering it.

HON. SIMEON FEFEGULA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start by extending my thanks and appreciations to this noble House, my colleagues Honourable Members and all those who have participated this morning. My Constituency, Constituency 096, Moyamba District, comprises Fakunya, Kayamba and Kondowa Chiefdoms. Moyamba District is one of the biggest districts in the Southern and Eastern regions of this country. Again, Constituency 096 is one of the biggest constituencies with a population of sixty-three thousand, seven hundred and twenty-two. I want to thank the Speaker for given me the opportunity. This opportunity will enable my constituents to hear me for the first time. We are now going on recess and this will give us the opportunity to spend time with our constituents.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to admonish Honourable Members to ensure that we keep in touch with one another during this recess period. We have to ensure a cordial relationship amongst ourselves and the Local Councils. I am saying this because the Constituency Development Fund that Members of Parliament used to receive will no longer be provided to Honourable Members. Therefore, all the development activities are now going to be led by Local Councils. As Honourable Members, our responsibility

now is to make laws and ensure that we develop our communities through proper monitoring of projects implemented by these Councils. We have to make sure that some of these developments flow to our constituencies and districts. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker for giving me the audience this morning to participate in this debate *[Applause]*.

HON. SARTY BANYA: Thank you very much. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I represent Constituency 004, Kailahun 'Court Barray.' We are now the king makers of this present government. I first of all want to start by expressing my sincere thanks to the Speaker for endowing such responsibility to me. At last, my constituents will be privileged to listen to their Honourable Member today.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in Constituency 004, there are lots of dissatisfactions expressed by my constituents in terms of road network, water resources, agriculture and the Local Council. I want to start with the road network, especially the trunk road. Before this time, this road was contracted long since by the previous government to a Chico Company, but what is presently happening is that the people in my Constituency are expressing dissatisfaction about the way the Chico Company is constructing that road. They are making comparison to ISU, which initially worked on the road from Pendembu to Kenema. The ISU used to remove all the clay soil that was on the road and replaced it with laterite soil. However, the Chico Company is doing something different. They are using the clay soil, compressing it on the road, which is against the wish of the people. I have expressed this concern to the parliamentary Committee on Works. The Committee should call the SLRA and engineers of this Company on how they go about constructing this road. This issue has not been addressed.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the other concern I want to bring to the attention of this House is the township water project. If you look at the Kailahun township, you will find out that the standing pumps are concentrated on a specific area, leaving the other quarters. This is a major concern to my constituents. We have quarters within the township that are without standing pumps.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the other aspect of the township water project is that the reservoir we have within the township is very small. It was constructed before the war and now the population in Kailahun township has grown. So, the people are demanding that the reservoir be rehabilitated properly, so that it can accommodate more water for the township.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the other issue is the local farmers. Our local farmers are always complaining about price control on their cash crops. In most cases, you hardly see the Lebanese coming out with prices for their cocoa and coffee except at the later part of the season. So, this is a concern to the farmers within my constituency. The government needs to say something about the actual price of cocoa at the start of the season, instead of waiting till the end of the season.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the Local Council. We know that since the inception of this government, Local Councils have not received their allocations. For Kailahun District Council, we do not have other sources to generate revenue. I spoke with the Chief Administrator yesterday and he told me that they have not received anything. I want to say thanks to Mr Speaker for giving me this opportunity to express myself today in this Well. I hope these concerns will be taken into consideration *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. I will now recognise two more speakers under S.O. 23 and after that I will ask the Leader of Government Business to move a motion which I will invite the Leader of Opposition to second. Immediately after that, I will put the question to the House for vote on the matter we started early this morning. I will now call on Honourable Abdul Turay of Constituency 105 who has a burning issue in his constituency. I will give you the opportunity to bring that forward.

HON. ABDUL TURAY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am very happy to stand before you this morning. I have a concern I want to bring to your attention. Tombo population over forty thousand people. It will interest you to know that there is only

one health centre with just three beds for patients. On that note, I want this House to improve the health facility in that area.

THE SPEAKER: I want to thank the Honourable Member for his maiden speech and for the concern he has brought to the attention of this House. I will now call on the Honourable Sahr Juana, who wants to bring an issue to the attention of this House. I am giving you the Floor under S.O [23] and I would ask that you carefully read S.O. [23] before you start.

HON. SAHR E. JUANA: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Do not introduce anything controversial.

HON. SAHR E. JUANA: I will limit myself to S.O. [23]. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I had problem in landing because there was bad weather. However, I managed to land safely. I am delighted this afternoon to be here and to address my colleagues Honourable Members of Parliament. Some will definitely say he has made his maiden speech. Well, I have made my maiden speech, but not with the substantive Speaker. I did that when the Deputy Speaker was acting. I want to be very candid with the Honourable Speaker and Honourable Members of Parliament. We must be very cautious with the activities of the media and the social media. The Speaker rightly said that rumours going round Social Media tend to damage the reputation of individuals and communities. You will now agree with me that the same Social Media that caused the horror on me was the same Social Media that told you that the President was paralysed. The same Media will tell you that a reputable ex-President of Sierra Leone has been deported from a former French Colony. Let us be careful with the Social Media. We must be very careful, Honourable Members. For those in galleries, I know that we have credible journalists, but few of them are composition writers. Instead of writing for Magazines, they write elementary composition.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it will be a pity to acknowledge the fact that when the veteran Ibrahim Ben Kargbo and other very powerful journalists were writing, some of us were encouraged to read their publications. We were attracted by their choice of

words and we were moved to buy their Papers even when we were in schools. Today, the newspapers have become mere passers-by where one person would buy and thirty-three others will just read the headlines.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to take this opportunity to state here that news going round Social Media is a complete miscalculation intended to smear my reputation. There is a saying which state: **"Thou shall not bear false witness against thy neighbour"** [Applause]. If you bear false witness against thy neighbour, it is sin and the 'wages of sin is death.' I decree and declare today those.... I hold my peace, Mr Speaker. I know without saying it, the Lord has spoken and the actions the Lord will take will definitely justify the situation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to remind this House that the Honourable Ibrahim Ben Kargbo is a professional and a veteran journalist. Today, I know he is disappointed at the writers of our newspapers. Most of them, as I said earlier, are elementary writers. If you write composition, it does not attract the reading populace. I am not saying the journalists are not doing a fine job. I told you from start that there are credible journalists amongst us, but some, for some reasons, have taken up to blackmail others. For this reason, they have dumped the institution of journalism into disrepute.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my colleagues are urging that enough is enough, but it is better to say the good things and to caution these journalists. Let me be very frank with you that I appreciate the Honourable Ibrahim Ben Kargbo for the second time for what he demonstrated in the past. He is an epitome of a good leader. He has been saluting all those who made their maiden speeches. He recognised and saluted them for a job well done. I expect the leadership to emulate his good examples. We must be seen taping the backs of others for a job well done.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to take this golden opportunity to thank the Speaker for given me the chance and attention to clarify this issue. Indeed, as the Honourable Paramount Chief said, Parliament is a place where we air out our views. We

must be given equal opportunities to demonstrate our qualities and characters. I want to say thank you Honourable Members for your attention and God bless you all.

THE SPEAKER: I want to thank the Honourable Member for his contribution. I picked up one very important point from the contribution that has just been made by the Honourable Member. We have a webpage and I think Honourable Members are aware of it. What perhaps we need to do is to streamline our debate, so that it can be viewed live and make this Parliament less dependent on what is written about your contributions by journalists and other media practitioners. I have just been advised that indeed that is possible by my own teacher in the internet intricacies who happens to be my last daughter. She has just paid me a visit and I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the presence of Miss Aminata Bundu [*Applause*]. If you are entertaining any ideas, let me lay them to rest [*Laughter*]. On the 16th December, 2018 she will get marry [*Laughter*]. So, she is no longer available [*Laughter*].

Honourable Members, the second point I want to draw your attention to is that, I will discuss with the ICT expert to see how to make that possible. My second son works for a very big company in the U S and he is an ICT guru with the highest qualification the world has in computer studies. He will be coming to Sierra Leon in December to help us see how best we can streamline these debates, so that they viewed live all over the world. This can be done [*Applause*].

HON. IBRAHIM B. KARGBO [*Acting Leader of the Opposition*]: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, my boss is not here, but he also agrees that on behalf the delegation to the European Union and the ACP, we thank you immensely for the position you took yesterday; i.e., the welfare of our Ambassadors abroad. We in the European delegation are worried when we went to Brussels to discover this difficulties which you are about to solve now. The Ambassador to the European Union and the ACP, Honourable Ibrahim Sorie was a formidable Member of Parliament. He has asked me to thank you and to thank this House, having listened to the position which the Speaker took yesterday.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you will agree with me that the Speaker made a point eloquently clear that our Ambassadors and diplomats should be treated fairly and with respect. In that regard, I want to thank you, on behalf of our own delegation and on behalf of all the diplomats whose interest you are now seeking for the position you have taken on this matter. Thank very much sir.

THE SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Member for his very kind sentiments. I will now give the Floor to the Leader of Government Business.

HON. SIDIE M. TUNIS [*Leader of Government Business*]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that the proposed auction for goods and medicines donated by the Global Fund be cancelled to allow the said goods and medicines be cleared from customs and delivered without further delay to their intended destinations or warehouses.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, you have heard the motion from the Leader of Government Business. Any seconder?

HON. CHERNOR BAH: Mr Speaker, I so second.

THE SPEAKER: I will allow one or two Speakers from either side of the isle. We have visitors who have been invited for this specific purpose and I want them to understand the reasons behind the motion. Indeed, the Honourable Member who first brought this matter to our attention should be given the privilege to speak first.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: I thank you very much, Mr Speaker for giving me this opportunity. I believe this is for public attention and I will exactly do so. The reasons for this Motion, as proposed by the Leader of Government Business and seconded by the Leader of the Opposition, is for the proposed auction of drugs rightfully given to the people and government of Sierra Leone through the National HIV/AIDS Secretariat, Tuberculosis and Malaria related Departments and Agencies for the benefits of this country. For the attention of the public, this is a gift from the Global Fund. As I said earlier, three weeks back, the Legal Aid Board had a one day Work Shop with three parliamentary Committees; i.e., Legislative, Human Rights and Health Committees to

explain to us the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in this country. What we learnt on that day was worrisome. They said that we had about sixty-five thousand people infected with HIV/AIDS and out of that number, only twenty-three thousand are currently undergoing treatments based on their records. They said this is why the disease is spreading. For the attention of the public, the virus stays longer in human system. If you are tested and confirmed positive, that does not mean the end of your life. As long as you take your drugs regularly, you will not die. You will live your full life given to you by God. This is for the attention of the public. We attended the Work Shop on that day and it was an awareness raising Work Shop.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we even resolved that we will consult the Leadership of Parliament to even amend the Act regarding secrecy because we believe it is this secrecy that is even making the stigmatisation more fearful. I said yesterday that in places like South Africa, if you have HIV/AIDS and take your drugs regularly, you are given financial compensation for taking your drugs regularly. It was even rumoured that as a result, those who are not infected usually go for them to be infected, so that they will get the monthly payment *[Laughter]*. That was what I heard, Honourable Members. In another words, there is no stigma and no need for people to be afraid that it kills. It does not kill you if you take your drugs regularly. You will live for eighty to eighty-five years. I am HIV/AIDS negative *[Undertone]*. Majority of you have not tested.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is why we must pursue this issue. On that day, the National HIV/AIDS Secretariat, through the Legal Aid Board, made this complaint to us that they need those drugs because they are gifts to the people of Sierra Leone. If somebody is tested positive, but there are no drugs, it will not sound good at all. The drugs have been provided by Global Fund and the beneficiaries must benefit from that gesture. That was their complaints and we promised to help them. When I got the news from Awoko that the Shipping Company intends to auction the drugs, I thought it fit to bring it to the attention of this Honourable House. Apart from that, we all know that Malaria is the highest killer disease in the world. We all know that, but what is

worrying is the fake Malaria drugs coming into this country. We now have good drugs for just hundred and twenty-five million Leones. These are Malaria, Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS drugs. If those drugs are auctioned, private people will buy and sell them. They will even make five times profit and it will be against the interest of this country.

On that note, I want to thank you very much for giving the public this opportunity, which Parliament has taken this stand based on the Motion being moved. I thank you very much and God bless you.

THE SPEAKER: I will entertain one more speaker.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Fortunately, I was able to get to the General Managers of Port Authority, Customs and Bolourie. Now that they are here, I would want this House to ask them, through the Speaker. When I was talking to them, they produced lots of documents. Let them take care of the documentations and make sure that what this House has decided is honoured *[Applause]*. Let them ensure that all stages involved are cleared as soon as possible *[Applause]*.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[The Motion to cancel the proposed auction of goods and medicines donated by Global Fund has been carried]

THE SPEAKER: Let me conclude by saying that both the MDAs and the relevant Ports Authorities present here will take due note of the resolution that Parliament has just passed by proclamation. I hope you will take heed.

ADJOURNMENT

[The House rose at 12:40 p.m., and was adjourned Sine Die]