



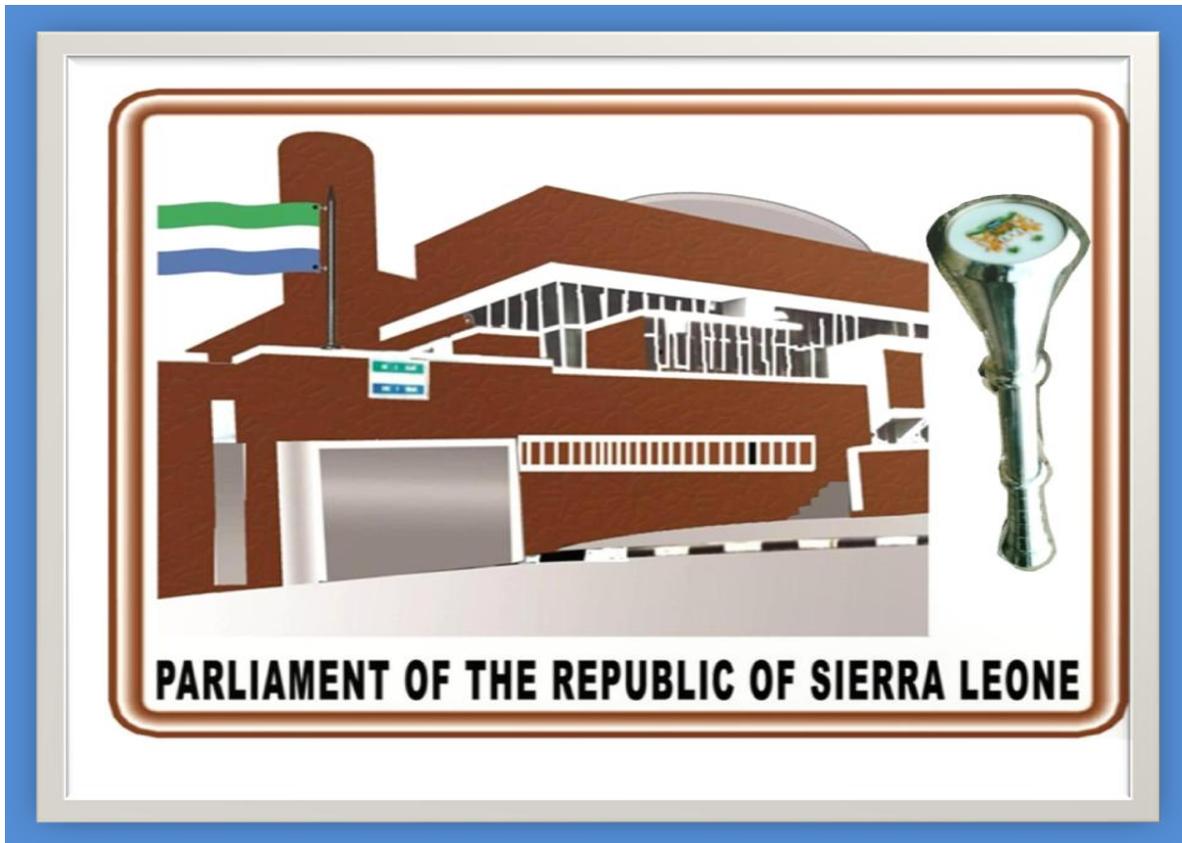
OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOW

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT
THIRD SESSION –FIRST MEETING
TUESDAY, 12TH AUGUST, 2025.**

SESSION – 2024/2025



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMETARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

VOLUME: II

NUMBER: 65

First Meeting of the Third Session of the Sixth Parliament
of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone.

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held Tuesday, 12th August, 2025.

CONTENTS

I. PRAYERS

II. RECORD OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON FRIDAY, 5TH JULY 2024

III. ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR SPEAKER

IV. GOVERNMENT MOTION

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND PUBLIC ASSETS

BE IT RESOLVED THAT THIS HONOURABLE HOUSE HEREBY RATIFY THE FOLLOWING AGREEMENTS, WHICH WERE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE ON MONDAY, 11TH AUGUST, 2025.

[I] CONCESSION AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE [GOSL] REPRESENTED BY THE MINISTRY OF WORKS AND PUBLIC ASSETS, THE SIERRA LEONE ROADS AUTHORITY [SLRA] AND THE SOCIETE D'JURA MARITEC CONSTRUCTION [SJMC] SL [LTD.] AND PARTNERS, RELATING TO THE DESIGN, RECONSTRUCTION, TOLLING, OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE MANO JUNCTION, TONGO, BUMPE, THROUGH PRIVATE SECTOR INTERVENTION USING PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP MODEL, UNDER DESIGN, FINANCE, BUILD, OPERATE AND TRANSFER ARRANGEMENTS, DATED 4TH AUGUST, 2025.

[II] THE PROPOSED PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP FINANCING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE MANO JUNCTION, TONGO, BUMPE ROAD PROJECT, STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT BE FORWARDED BY THE SAFEGUARD SPECIALIST OF THE SIERRA LEONE ROADS AUTHORITY; DATED 4TH AUGUST, 2025.



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

FIRST SESSION – FIRST MEETING OF THE SIXTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC

Tuesday, 12th August, 2025.

I. PRAYERS

*[The Deputy Director II, Legislative Services Department, Mrs Fatmata Bintu Weston,
read the Prayers]*

[The House met at 11:20 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown]

[The Speaker, Hon. Segepoh Solomon Thomas, in the Chair]

The House was called to Order

Suspension of SO 5[2]

II. CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE RECORDS OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTINGS HELD ON TUESDAY, 5TH THURSDAY, 7TH AND MONDAY, 11TH AUGUST, 2025.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Tuesday, 5th August 2025. As usual, we shall skip pages 1-4 and start with Page 5. Do you have any comments or corrections to make on Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Page 8? Page 9? Page 10? Page 11? Page 12?

Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Thursday, 7th August 2025. As usual, we shall skip pages 1-4 and start with Page 5. Do you have any comments or corrections to make on Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Page 8? Page 9? Page 10? Page 11? Page 12?

Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sitting, held on Monday, 11th August 2025. As usual, we shall skip pages 1-4 and start with Page 5. Do you have any comments or corrections to make on Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? If there are no comments or corrections, can someone move for the adoption of the records of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sittings held on Tuesday, 5th Thursday, 7th and Monday, 11th August 2025 as presented?

HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN: I so second, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. IDRIS SAHID KAMARA: I so second, Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

[The records of Votes and Proceedings for the parliamentary sittings held on Tuesday 5th, Thursday 7th and Monday 11th August 2025 have been adopted as presented]

III ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR SPEAKER

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I recognise the diligence of the following Honourable Members who were present in this Well before I entered:

Honourable Umu Pyne,
Honourable J W Lamin,
Honourable Ibrahim Kabbah,
Honourable Musa Fofanah,
Honourable Brima Mansaray,
Honourable Rugiatu Rosy Kanu
Honourable Bayoh Alie,
Honourable Amie Moriba,
Honourable Komba Quee,
Honourable Princess Daramy,
Honourable Satty Banya
Honourable Idriss Sahid Kamara,
Honourable PC Alamin Kanneh
Honourable Beatrice Iyamidae Langly,
Honourable Marie Kamara,
Honourable Alhaji Kekura C. Vandy,
Honourable Rugiatu Kamara,
Honourable Mohamed Billor Shaw,
Honourable Abdul Karim Bangura,
Honourable Abdul Karim Kanu,
Honourable PC Prince Bio Lansana
Honourable Daniel B. Bangura,
Honourable Ambrose M. Lebby,
Honourable Alusine Bash Kamara,
Honourable Memunatu Jalloh,
Honourable Alex Mattia Rogers,

Honourable Mohamed P. Bangura
Honourable Fatmata Sarah Soukuna,
Honourable Mohamed S. Rahman Coker,
Honourable Fallah Tengbeh
Honourable Paul Samba Conteh
Honourable Daniel B. Koroma
Honourable Emelia Lolloh Tongi,
Honourable Idriss M. Dauda
Honourable Charles O. Abdulai
Honourable Nenneh Lebbie
Honourable Ishmael Sankoh
Honourable P C Cyril Foray Ngodor [II],
Honourable Ibrahim Barrie
Honourable Alpha Ben Mansaray,
Honourable Beatrice Maya Kangbai
Honourable P C Paul Ngaba Saquee
Honourable Moses A. Edwin,
Honourable Alice J. Kumabeh,
Honourable Abu Bakarr Fofanah,
Honourable Umpha G. S. Koroma,
Honourable Lucinda F. Kelly,
Honourable Abdulai A. Kamara,
Honourable Sheik Santigie I. Kargbo,
Honourable Saa Emerson Lamina,
Honourable Aaron A. Koroma,
Honourable PC Desmond Mahayei Kargobai,
Honourable Alice Kornya Sandy,
Honourable Juliana Fatoma,
Honourable Foya Tholley, Honourable PC Kandeh Paria Kawally II,
Honourable Hawa Conteh

Honourable Mohamed Kanneh
Honourable Amara N. Kargbo,
Honourable Tamba S, Johnny, Honourable Musa Lahai,
Honourable Joseph Bash Kamara
Honourable Kemoko Conteh
Honourable Mabinty A. Taylor-Bangura
Honourable Ernest D. Koroma,
Honourable John Sarty Kargbo,
Honourable PC Saffa Moya Tamu,
Honourable Habib Keifa Fabbah,
Honourable Alpha A. Bah,
Honourable P C Fatmata Bintu K. M. Kajue,
Honourable Mohamed S. Kargbo,
Honourable Mariama Bangura,
Honourable Mohamed A. Jalloh,
Honourable Catherine Zainab Tarawally,
Honourable Mahmoud Kamara,
Honourable PC Kandeh Baba Keiha III
Honourable Abdul Latiff Sesay

I want to thank you profusely for your diligence to this House of Parliament and the Republic of Sierra Leone. This is for the attention of the public. I thank you very much.

IV. GOVERNMENT MOTION

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND PUBLIC ASSETS

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Leader of the Opposition and Acting Leader of Government Business, please come forward.

DR DENIS SANDY [*Minister of Works and Public Assets*]: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that this Honourable House hereby ratify the following Agreements which were laid on the Table of the House on Monday, 11th August, 2025:

[i] Concession Agreement by and between the Government of Sierra Leone [GoSL], represented by the Ministry of Works and Public Assets, the Sierra Leone Roads Authority [SLRA] and the Societe D'jura Maritec Construction [SJMC] SL [Ltd] with Partners relating to the design, reconstruction, tolling, operation and maintenance of the Mano Junction, Tongo, Bumpe, through Private Sector Intervention using Public/Private Partnership Model, under Design, Finance, Build, Operate and Transfer Arrangements, dated 4th August, 2025.

[ii] The Proposed Public/Private Partnership Financing for the Construction of the Mano Junction, Tongo, Bumpe Road Project, Stakeholders Engagement be brought by the Safeguard Specialist of the Sierra Leone Roads Authority, dated 4th August, 2025.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members of Parliament, this is a road construction project that would add to the transformation of our country, Sierra Leone. It is one of the priority road projects under His Excellency the President, Brigadier General [Rtd] Dr Julius Maada Bio, under his new direction administration. This is an 85km road that would transform the lives of our people agriculturally, mining, tourism improvement and the socio-economic development of the country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, without much ado, this is going to be a wonderful infrastructural project that generations yet unborn would benefit from and this is exactly what we mean about 'sustainable developments; developments that sustain the current generation. I present these documents for the attention of this Honourable House. I am sure due diligence has been done; a team from SLRA and the Government of Sierra Leone, including the Ministry of Works and Public Assets went to Conakry to find out for themselves the type of equipment available. We will discuss the financing model with the Ministry of Finance to confirm that it ensures 'value for money.'

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will be brief because I want to give ample time to Honourable Members to ask questions or make comments. I would want to make comparison with the road projects that were constructed by previous governments and see how far we have gone as a nation. On that note, be it resolved that this Honourable

House hereby ratify the following Agreements, which were laid on the Table of the House on Monday, 11th August, 2025:

[i] Concession Agreement by and between the Government of Sierra Leone [GoSL] represented by the Minister of Works and Public Assets, the Sierra Leone Roads Authority [SLRA] and the Societe Jura Marited Construction [SJMC] SL [Ltd] and Partners, relating to the Design, Reconstruction, Tolling, Operation and Maintenance of the Mano Junction, Tongo and Bumpe, through Private Sector Intervention using Public/Private Partnership Model, under Design, Finance Bill, Operate and Transfer Arrangements, dated 4th August 2025.

[ii] The Proposed Public/Private Partnership Financing for the Construction of the Mano Junction, Tongo, Bumpe Road Project, Stakeholder Engagement by the Safeguard Specialist of the Sierra Leone Roads Authority, dated 4th August 2025.

Question Proposed

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, apart from the Chairman, the Deputy Chairman wants to start the debate.

THE SPEAKER: Are you not the Chairman?

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: The Chairman is the Acting Leader of Government Business. The Deputy only performs that function when the Chairman is not around.

THE SPEAKER: It is not a hard and fast rule that the Chair has to start the debate. If you want to debate, I will give you that opportunity.

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: I agree sir and thank you very much [*Applause*].

THE SPEAKER: I do not know why you always talk about this issue of the Chairman to open the debate. It is not a hard and fast rule, but immediately after the Leader, you will debate.

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, let me thank you very much for the respect you have for Leadership. This makes the difference between the previous Speakers and I. Anytime a junior Member of Parliament stands up, you always give due consideration

to seniority and that is how Parliament should operate. I want to thank you very much *[Applause]*. I remembered in the Fourth Parliament that it is the same thing Honourable S.B.B. Dumbuya used to govern this House; even if a junior MP stood up at any time, whenever a senior MP stood up, he always recognised the Senior MP first before the junior MP.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Agreement before us resonates with successive governments. In other words, the issue of Private/Public Partnership [PPP] is not anything new. I remembered in 2014, we enacted the Private/Public Partnership Act; and just after that, the then government attracted investment for the construction of the Wellington/Masiaka Toll Road. On this side, we believe that this was done in good faith because government does not have all the resources to do all what it intends to do without the active involvement of the private sector. What we did in 2015, even when there were lots of hue and cries, I am sure with time, it has justified or vindicated the actions of the then government due to the benefits of the Wellington/Masiaka Toll Road. The road is now being enjoyed by the citizens of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, even in terms of the amount of accidents along the Wellington/Masiaka Road has reduced considerably. We now spend lesser time plying between Wellington/Masiaka. There are a whole lot of benefits even in terms of developments because of the quality of that road. People are now using land to construct modern houses for business purposes. The land is now more value than it was supposed to have been. If that toll road had not been constructed, those benefits would not have been there. So, we believe this to be a fine model and that is why we believe that anytime we have a document, sometimes it is fine to be political and sometimes it is also better that we put the nation first. This is exactly what I will be doing here, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker. Like I said, this is a Bill owned, operated and transferred Agreement. This means government will later own the facility after the investors would have recouped their investments.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what I realised to be strange to all other PPP investments is the fact that for the Wellington/Masiaka toll road, government did not

spend anything on that road; all the moneys spent on that road, which was about **\$155.4mln**, was contributed by the investor, which is the CLSG. For this investment, government will contribute **50%** for the construction of the road. In other words, out of the **\$155.4mln**, government proposed to contribute around **\$77mln**. However, there is something strange and I think this House need to consider it. I want the Minister to take it very seriously when he will be responding. For the Wellington/Masiaka Road, even when government did not spend a dime for the **\$155.4Mln** project, but the distinction between that road, it was a **67km** road, but it also include the construction of a dual carriage bridge and it is a four-lane road. If you multiply 2 by 67, we are talking about a total of **134km** and it was constructed with an amount of **\$165Mln**. For this particular **85km** road, the investor is proposing to spend **\$155mln**. It is just a two-lane road, Mr Speaker. It will be the most expensive road this country has ever constructed. It will mean one kilometre will cost above **\$2mln** which is above the Wilkinson Road which is a four-lane road.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to submit here that the government is going to contribute **50%**. If you looked at the Agreement, from Page 1 to the last page, you would discover that there is nowhere that indicates a sharing ratio for government. I am sure nothing is going to the government, Mr Speaker. Unlike the Wellington/Masiaka Road that was entirely funded by the Chinese and for which the government did not spend a dime, the investor is paying **5%** of the proceeds and after the repayment period, government is going to get **10%**. That was a fine Agreement, Mr Speaker. For this Agreement, the government is going to spend **\$77mln** in the midst of the challenges we are facing with the economy. Of course, the intention of government is very good because we know the opportunities this road is going to provide. But if government is investing **\$77Mln**, it is but prudent that government receives something out of this investment. Mr Speaker, there is a clause I want to make very clear here. The Clause mentioned clearly that all the proceeds for investments would be used for the repayment of the loan. In other words, the investment is only going to take **50%** of the loan. According to this Agreement, even the loan the investor is going to take, ,

when the investor completes **10km** of the road, he can commence the collection of proceeds, which would not be different from what was criticised way back in 2017. Mr Speaker, even the tollgate amount will be too much. In the case of Freetown, we know that it is an urban setting and people can afford to pay, but we are talking about the rural areas. Inasmuch as it is very important for government to construct that road, it would be too much and I want to believe the Minister should consider this, so that by the time he brings an addendum, he should have reduced the number of tollgates.

[Suspension of SO 5[2] being 12:00 noon]

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: I was saying that upon completion of **10km**, the investor should start collecting toll fees. Therefore, this is not different from what people decried in the case of the Wellington/Masiaka Road. Like I also said earlier, the amounts of tollgates for rural communities are many. Let us have one tollgate between Mano Junction and Panguima; another tollgate from Panguima to Tongo; another tollgate from Tongo to Njiama; and another tollgate from Njiama to Bumpe. This means we are talking about four tollgates. Mr Speaker, inasmuch as this is a very good scheme, we equally believe that this would have serious implications on the people *[Applause]*. I am saying this because anything that would affect the people should be corrected immediately. This House stands for the people and I want to submit here that the Minister should consider a review of this Agreement when tabling the Addendum Agreement to this House.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the aspect of Corporate Social Responsibility [CSR] is not clearly spelt out in this Agreement. In the Wellington/Masiaka Agreement, the CSRs were clearly spelt out. A school was constructed at Jui and there is also a school at Makolo in Songo and a proposal to construct two markets at Lumley corridor – those markets have not been successful because of the unavailability of land. If the government continues to encourage them, they would construct the markets. We should not lose sight of the fact that these are investors and their aim is to make profit. Looking at their projections, this is going to be a viable investment, starting from the

first year to the thirtieth year. They are going to make not less than **\$520mln**. Therefore, from **\$155mln** projection, they are going to make not less than **\$520mln**.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, for the government to involve in such viable investments with **\$77.4mln** without getting anything in return is an injustice on our economy [*Applause*]. I am sure the Minister should consider this as an important aspect of revenue for the government. We have an investment where the government will not spend a dime, but there is a clause that says for the first five years, when the investor is paying for the loan, government is losing **5%** from the proceeds and after the repayment, government is receiving **10%**. Why the government is contributing **50%** of the cost? Nothing is being said about revenue sharing in this Agreement. Mr Speaker, you were here when we ratified the Tollgate Agreement, we ratified two Agreements because there were many challenges and MPs raised some serious concerns. Those concerns were incorporated into the Addendum Agreement. That Agreement was later brought to this Well and that is why I am also submitting that the Minister considers this concern.

THE SPEAKER: Hold on Honourable Leader. I am inviting the Leadership to my Chambers [*Applause*]. This Sitting is stood down for 10 minutes.

[The House stood down at 12:02 p.m. and resumed at 12:40 p.m.]

THE SPEAKER: Mr Minister, please take note.

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, like I was saying, I believe this is a rural settlement, but for Wellington/Masiaka Road was relatively established because the people can afford to pay. However, for those in the provinces, it will be difficult for them. For instance, in Honourable Fofanah's Constituency or Chiefdom, there will be two tollgates. This will be too much for those poor people along that axis. I think the number of tollgates needs to be looked into. All of us cried over the inclusion of a proviso in the Wellington/Masiaka Agreement where we stated that for any increase in the dollar by **10%**, it should necessitate an increase in the toll fare. Mr Speaker, when the amendment was brought to this Well, all of condemned that aspect; we said it was

a bad law done by the APC. Why did they say for any **10%** increase, it should necessitate an increase in the toll fees? This Agreement also contains a provision that states: 'for any increase in **10%** in the exchange rate, we should provoke or necessitate an increase in the toll fare. Well, we now have the opportunity to make sure we do the right thing through the addendum I proposed earlier. Like in 2015, when the Wellington/Masiaka Road Agreement was brought here, because there were serious concerns raised by MPs, we later brought an amendment in the form of addendum and those concerns were incorporated and tabled here. The addendum formed part of the initial Agreement that was tabled here and this is why I am saying that it will be unfair to the government and to the peoples' representatives if we go by what we have in this Agreement. The government is struggling to execute its mandate due to budgetary constraints. For the government to give **\$77mln** without anything in return is something we must not take lightly. This was why I submitted that we want to see a proviso that talks about sharing. This is because when you look at the analysis, the actual cost on Page 80 is telling you what is actually supposed to be incurred for the construction of the road.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, of the **\$155mln**, it includes administration and other costs, but for the construction alone, it would cost approximately **\$85mln**. So, if the government is going to give **\$77mln**, it means the government is almost providing **90%** for the construction of this road. Four years ago, the Military were donated lots of equipment, including equipment that can be used to construct roads. These are opportunities for government to take up the challenge, whether you take ten years or not. I must also state here that there is willingness on the part of the President and I want to say kudos to him [*Applause*]. This is a huge commitment and we can even give that money to a competent body like the Military who have equipment to construct this road at no cost to government and the people of this country. We want to put unnecessary burden on the people. Therefore, I want to state here that inasmuch as government intends to spend **50%**, I want to give the following recommendations:

- ❖ government to make an Addendum Agreement to include toll revenue sharing;

- ❖ government should compel MDLMCO to clearly stipulate CSR projects; and
- ❖ review the project cost of **\$177.4mln** because to the West Africa average, a kilometre should range within **\$300,000** to **\$1mln**. As per the analysis, this road is going to cost something around **\$2mln**. Therefore, I want the addendum to consider a review of the initial proposal of **\$177.4mln** for the construction of just **7mln**, which to me, is not too prudent.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to recommend that the Minister considers the sufferings of the people of that road linking Bumpe and Kono. Those people deserve better than this. I am aware that the road will bring many opportunities for them, but we also have to look at the economic implications of this toll road. That is why I am recommending that when they bring the Addendum Agreement, let us consider the removal of some of these tollgates to make sure that the people can afford and will be willing to pay without any extra cost on them. Like I submitted earlier, this is not new and I want to believe that the Minister should be considerate enough to take these concerns in good faith and incorporate them in the Addendum. This is for the good of this country, Mr Speaker. The toll road is good and we cannot go against development as a party because we initiated such development in 2015 and that was why we enacted the 2014 PPP Act. If we had not believed in it, we would not have enacted that law in the first place, but we are firm believers of the existence of PPPs. It should be a win/win situation; i.e., the Government should win, the People should win and the investors should also win. However, in a situation where only the investors win and the people or government lose is not a people's-centred Agreement. On that note, I want to thank you very much *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Honourable Aaron A. Koroma. Mr Minister, I am sure you took notes of all the issues raised by the Honourable Member. This is for 'God and country. We are all in this position because we have been entrusted to be in this position by our people; to serve them. Therefore, whatever we do should be done for God and country.

HON. HABIB K. FABBAH: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to lend my voice to this Agreement. Mr Speaker, if for any reason anyone of us has travelled from Mano Junction, Tongo Field to Bumpe, especially during this moment, you would not even question the importance of this Agreement, but to just approve it because of the constraints our people are facing. Presently, that road is only accessible by motorbikes and pedestrians. However, after a thorough review of this Agreement, there are certain issues that must be properly handled. I will agree with most of the issues raised by my senior colleague. In that regard, I will also recommend that this Agreement is given a second thought. My colleagues and I tried to look at it yesterday and we discovered certain issues that should be addressed. In the first place, I can see 15yrs, but there is also 30yrs in the bracket. We do not know which one of the two we should take. Therefore, if Agreement like this is to be accepted by our people, it must be a win/win situation. There are, however, several issues we must address or issues that must be given close lens. I am sure if this is not done, our people will not be happy with this project. I am certain that consultation with Members of Parliament along that road was not done, not even during the stakeholders' engagement. As Deputy Chairman of this Committee, I collected this Agreement yesterday from the Dispatch Section.

That being said, we must make some changes, but it is not yet time to bring them to this House by mentioning them. I put my argument to rest.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, let me tell you that if I do not regulate this House, we will be leaving at night each time we come here. This is because everybody wants to say something; and most of the time when you get up to talk, you end up saying the same thing others have already said. If I do not regulate this debate, we will leave this place in the middle of the night.

HON. CATHERINE Z. TARAWALLY: Mr Speaker, we know you are a man of your words and I know you want to see every Member of this House say something or debate on issues. As Speaker and head of this House, we are pleading that you try as possible to be considerate to our Members.

THE SPEAKER: Which Members are you referring to, Honourable Member?

HON. CATHERINE Z. TARAWALLY: All of them, especially the host MPs.

THE SPEAKER: All of you want to say something?

HON. CATHERINE Z. TARAWALLY: I am appealing for the host MPs to say something.

THE SPEAKER: I want to see all those who want to debate.

HON. CATHERINE Z. TARAWALLY: Just the host MPs like Honourable Musa, Honourable Gertrude and Honourable Alice.

THE SPEAKER: If that is the case, I would like you to do your debate in three minutes.

HON. CATHERINE Z. TARAWALLY: Thank you so very much, Mr Speaker. I am happy for allowing them to say something, especially Honourable Rugiatu Mussaffa from Tongo. Some years ago, she used to be a troublesome person and the people were harassing her for this particular road. As Opposition MP, I am happy for her. You would agree with me that toll roads help the government to raise revenue and every country that wants to develop should encourage toll roads. My brother and the deputy have said it all. We appreciate this Agreement, but we have to involve the Committee on Legislative. If we could get the Chair or any other Member of the Legislative Committee, we will not have cause to go back and forth because they will come back and report to us their findings. We will sit as a Parliament and agree on what to do. The other problem I have, as a Sierra Leonean from the provinces, is the toll system. The Speaker should use his good office to negotiate with the Minister in respect of the toll. My brother has asked for an addendum and we should look at the issue of toll very critically. I am not convinced with the analysis because at some points we are told of four tollgates, but Annex 4, is telling us three tollgates. I want to know which one is correct.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the other problem is that the Agreement states 15yrs, but we have 30yrs in the bracket. The Minister needs to address this issue. I

know that it should be 30yrs, but typo means a lot. As a Sierra Leonean, we need to peruse the interest of the government because the government should have something from this Agreement. The people need this road so dearly. I am sure for the past 60 years, this road has not been looked into by successive governments, but if this particular government wants to look into this road, we are asking that it should benefit the people; it should be for the good of our Sierra Leonean people. The people cannot afford to pay for four tollgates. In Freetown, where we have everything, we pay for three tollgates. Why are you asking the people to pay for four tollgates in the rural areas? In fact, if you looked at the Agreement, even though it was laid yesterday, but we are doing a diligent job because we are able to bring out issues within the shortest possible time. Therefore, even though we are asking for an addendum, let the addendum be very clear or explicit, especially on the area of revenue sharing. We should also address the issue of Corporate Social Responsibility [CSR], which is not too clear in this Agreement. I am sure whatever government or company, the issue of CSR has to be very clear for the people.

On that note, I want to say a very big thank you, Mr Speaker. You are a man that is listening and I want you to continue with this spirit. The House should be a safe place for everybody. I thank you.

HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. I just wanted to inform the general public that we must not, as Honourable Members, misinform the public. The figure mentioned here is very simple and straightforward. My daughter that is attending the Murry-Deen Primary School can attest to the fact that if you divide **Le155mln** by 85 is **\$2mln** per kilometre or **\$1.8mln** per kilometre. Again, if you talk about CSR, I want to inform the public that if you looked at the document in question, Page 80 of Annex 4 is very explicit. This is why we have **\$155mln**, but if you take the specific amount for the construction process, it is not up to that amount.

THE SPEAKER: Hold on Honourable Member.

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, this will be an insult on my profession. I am a mathematician. The project cost is **\$577.4mln** and if you divide it by 85 kilometres, you will get **\$2,087mln**. This is very clear, Mr Speaker.

HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN: Honourable Speaker, if you go to Page 80 of Annex 4, it is very clear and that is why I called on the mathematicians to do the calculations. I do not want the Honourable Member to talk about Mathematics because I also have a degree in mathematics. I am saying that SLRA and the Ministry of Works did a very good job when it comes to consultations. I want to inform my colleague Honourable Member that you do not need to be involved in every stage because we have an oversight responsibility. This means if we are not consulted during the engagement meetings; it means we have to do our oversight activities. This is why I said we do not need to be involved in every stage. I know that our people were involved. If you look through the Agreement, you would find out that they engaged 850 persons in 41 communities along that route.

HON. MUSA FOFANAH: I want to differ from what my colleague is saying.

THE SPEAKER: No, Honourable Member; leave that aspect.

HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN: Honourable Speaker, I want to commend the Ministry and SLRA for their engagements with the people. The professionals did engage the people. When we went to Bumpeh, Kpaetema and the Mattru-Jong Road, we discovered that they have engaged the people. My colleague stood earlier on a Point of Order because he wanted to make an issue, but I want to emphasise here that Honourable Member of Parliament do not need to be involved in everything because we have oversight responsibility to perform.

In conclusion, Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members, when people are talking about CSR, **\$4.3mln** is budgeted for that purpose. This includes community structures, boreholes, schools, health centres, markets, etc. So, what are we talking about? The Ministry has done its best and I believe if we do all we could to ratify this Agreement; we cannot compare China to our neighbour. We are talking about local content; we are

talking about West Africa; and we are talking about Mano River Union. There is no way you compare China to this one. On that note, I want us to consider the ratification of this Agreement without further delay.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I now take Honourable Fofanah.

HON. MUSA FOFANAH: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, this is an opportunity for us. Some of us are familiar with Lower Bambara and Kono. I want this House to understand that some of us were happy when we saw this Agreement. I want to thank Members of the Opposition who have taken the Floor before me. Mr Speaker, for the past 90 years, Kono and Kenema have been challenged with that particular road. Mr Speaker, you would agree with me that between June and September, if you want to go to Kenema, you either use a motorbike or you go through Masiaka. This indicates the importance and critical nature of that road, especially for some of us who are connected to Tongo and Kenema. Therefore, seeing the government, through the Ministry of Works and SLRA, bringing this particular Agreement to this Well makes us happy. We are willing to support this Agreement wholeheartedly.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, for big mining companies like the NDMC to have left that road unattended was a big disadvantage for us. As Members of Parliament, we should be involved in some of the engagements. Mr Speaker, there is no way MDAs can exclude Members of Parliament from our roles because we are stakeholders in our constituencies or districts *[Applause]*. Mr Speaker, if Members of Parliament were consulted, we should have lobbied our colleagues before this day because we need this road more than any other Member of Parliament. Mr Speaker, less than a year ago, a Paramount Chief from this particular area debated the Mano/Junction-Tongo Road. This tells you that even the Paramount Chiefs from the North are concerned because this country is interconnected. If we want to know about the calculations, the Minister should educate us about the toll road. Few months ago, we were here with the very Minister, discussing the additional costs of this toll road. I am sure we campaigned on some of these things we are talking about. Therefore, anytime we see a toll road Agreement, we have to support it.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we worked with the current Director General [DG] and the Deputy DG for almost 10 days. We did the Mabang Bridge with these two young people who are in front of us. We also did the Rogbere Bridge, the Liberia Highway and the Moyamba Junction/Moyamba Town Road with them. So, if constructions were well done, it was because Parliament was also involved. We want to be involved not only in the debate process, but also in the preparation of some of these Agreements. We are happy for this Agreement, but where we need clarifications, we would ask the Minister to do so because at the end of the day, it is Members of Parliament and the President whose faces will be on the ballot papers during elections. Owing to this reason, we want to be informed, so that when the community people ask questions, we would explain to them clearly. Thank you very much *[Applause]*.

HON. RUGIATU TARAWALLI-MUSSAFFA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am one of the beneficiaries of this Agreement. If I call my people today and tell them that we have an Agreement for the construction of this road, they will dance all day. At the moment, I have been working with the DG of SLRA to reconstruct the road from Mano Junction to Tongo Junction onto Panguima. We have some construction companies that are applying stones on the road just to ensure that the road is functional. I was not here yesterday for this Agreement, but this is laudable. I want the construction of this road, **100%**, but I also want it to be feasible for my people. I have no problem with the payment of toll fees because I am used to paying toll fees. However, instead of three or four tollgates, I want the Minister to reduce them to two *[Applause]*. I know that this company is going to make money. I am sure the revenue from two tollgates will be huge and there is no reason why there should be three tollgates. This will increase financial burden on my people. If the government is paying half of the construction cost, they should also get half of the proceeds from such investments *[Applause]*. They should also get half of it. I do not want the company to think that we are desperate for this road. Of course, we need the road, but we cannot just accept anything that is sent to us without thorough scrutiny. We want things to be done the right way. If the government is paying half of the construction cost, they should also

get half of the proceeds from the toll road. This is the right thing to do. I am one of the biggest stakeholders in that area, but I was not consulted. I am always at SLRA and I know at some points, the DG gets tired of seeing me, but I did not relent because what I am doing is in the best interest of my people *[Applause]*. That road has been in bad state since the days of SLSD and NDMC. This country has benefited immensely from that area. It is the right thing to reconstruct that road, but it should not be a burden on my people. As soon as I leave this Well, I will summon a stakeholders' meeting to inform them that the road is on track. I am going to do that because this House will do the right thing; and the right thing to do is to ratify this Agreement. We have to make sure that the right thing that is going to benefit us all is included. Please, when we go home today, let us look through this Agreement; we should not take it as a pinch of salt. Let us see what is agreeable and what is not agreeable. Dr Denis Sandy, you know I have been to your office many times regarding this road and I am very elated and thankful that you have brought something that will help us in that area. As we speak, that road is not motorable, but it is one of the biggest roads leading to Kono. It should not be that way and that is why we are looking at the Agreement to make sure that it is in the best interest of the construction company, the people and the government. This is because nobody wants to work for nothing *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I now call on Honourable Simeon Johnny, followed by Honourable Lolloh Tongi and then we round up the debate

HON. TAMBA SIMEON JOHNNY: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I want to take this opportunity to thank His Excellency the President through the Ministry of Works for this great initiative. Mr Speaker, just like the previous speakers stated, that particular part of the country has suffered injustice for quite too long. During the era of SLST and NDMC, instead of these companies to fix the problem of that road, they chose to construct small tarmac and called it Tongo Airfield or Yengema Airfield, just to avoid connecting these two communities. A lot of people have lost their lives and property, while others have sustained serious injuries due to accidents along that road. So, this is welcoming news for all of us. When I told my people that we are coming to look at the

document that has to do with the Bumpe, Njiama, Tongo, Kangama to Mano Junction road, they were very happy.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I know we have to look at this document carefully, but I would not want us to vilify it at the same time. We can do comparison with the Masiaka/Wilkinson Road. Those of us from that part of the country will tell you that the road under discussion is in terrible state. The document is talking about designing and construction of the road, but if you have had the opportunity to ply that road between Kangama Gurama and Njiama Nimikoro, where Honourable Musa Fofanah hails from, you would think you are in hell. It is a very difficult terrain to navigate through, Mr Speaker. To be honest, the contractor would have to spend huge amount of money on that road if he wants to permanently fix that road. Even though there are some areas that we need to fix, such as constructing tollgate at Bumpeh and another at Njiama, this means you have automatically disadvantaged people like Honourable Musa Fofanah because he lives at Bumpeh, although he has his family house at Kwanda. This implies that he would have to pay for two tollgates for a distance that is not more than five kilometres. This is also is a burden.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am pleading with the Minister of Works for a reconsideration of the Guinea/Kamiendor Road. I hope this opportunity will spread to that route. We also have the Ngandon/Segbwema/Gondola Road that needs rehabilitation. It is due to the abandonment of those roads that makes Kono to be referred to as the North/East. Originally, we know Kono to be part of the Eastern Region, but because there is no accessibility to the regional headquarters today, that is why they referred to it as North/East. So, please reconsider the Ngandon, Gondola and Segbwema because that was the first trunk road that leads to Kono. It was this road that the White man used to enter Kono. Today, if we are talking about education in Kono, it is through that road we are receiving Western education. This means the road is strategically important and that cannot be overemphasised. I am saying this because if you toll that road, you would recover your money in less than no time because you would have a lot of trucks coming from Mali, Ivory Coast, Guinea and other places to

Sierra Leone through that road. I thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I also thank His Excellency the President for such initiative. God bless Sierra Leone.

HON. EMILIA L. TONGI: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I like the way you advise us that when people get up to debate, they should not repeat what others have said. I am going to bring up ideas that none of them spoke about.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you would recall that three years ago, we received the Chinese Construction Company that started the construction from Jui to Masiaka. However, they made a simple mistake when they quoted the price in Dollars. This is very important and we should be careful with what we put on paper. It was **Le5.00**, but today, we are paying **Le10.00** due to the depreciation of the Leones. So, I want the Minister to be careful about this. As Minister, you should negotiate in a position of strength, so that our people will not pay **Le10.00**.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you know that Sierra Leoneans lack maintenance culture and this is destroying a lot of our infrastructure. If we continue to neglect our maintenance culture, we will continue to struggle with other partners because we are not ready to take care of our infrastructure. We are so negligent that we allow something that could have cost us approximately **\$100,000**, but ended paying **\$500,000** simply because we do not take our time or not careful of what we have until things go bad. The Wellington/Masiaka Road is so comfortable to drive on and sometimes you would not want to stop driving, but immediately after Masiaka, you begin to see thousands of potholes from Masiaka to Kenema [*Applause*]. This is what I wanted to bring to your attention, and I hope and pray that the Minister is taking notes of this. Let us include this in the Agreement, so that we would not go back and forth. I thank you.

HON. ALICE K. SANDY: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. As one of the host MPs from Mano Junction to Bumpe, I cannot overemphasise how happy I am. Again, I am sure my people, upon hearing this news, will be happier because of the enormous benefits they will be enjoying. Other host MPs before me have all stated the benefits this road would bring to our people. I am speaking not just as host MP, but as

beneficiary of this road. This Agreement is not just an Agreement for us, it is a hope for economic development for our people. This is the same path I would use or I usually use to visit my people; it is the same path the farmers in our areas use to transport their goods to the markets; it is the same path our school children use to go to school and it is the path they use to travel with patients. However, inasmuch as we are happy for this development and it is indeed true that development comes at a cost, I have some concerns which I want the Minister to clarify. First, I want to know whether the environmental, social impact assessment approval and compensation completion report has been done. If so, does the Grievance Redress Committee include our local people? Second, regarding transparency and accountability, all of us want to maintain transparency and to be accountable for our actions. Therefore, I want to know the procurement processes or procurement methods used in respect of the **\$155.44mln** contract. I want to establish whether there were direct negotiations and publication of the contract, Bills of Quantities and variation controls.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we all know that without benchmarks and estimates, together with the Independent Engineer Review, we cannot verify in unit, the rate for the art work and pavement that would be done. So, we may also want to know the Engineer's estimates and comparison for similar roads, if any. Of course, it is welcoming for the **\$1.75mln** that is being allocated for compensation of affected persons. However, delays in payment and violation of these areas or property, if not properly done, would lead to resentments among our people. The Minister and all those involved should carefully manage this situation, in order to ensure that it is done properly.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, all of us know that the **\$155.44mln** for 85km is quite huge, especially when our government will contribute **50%** of that amount. In any business, there should be returns, but the fact that our government has nothing to benefit is also a concern and that the Ministry should take note of this situation. I also want to mention here that our people do not eat promises. They need good roads because these roads will positively impact their lives. If the government and the contractors can adequately meet the conditions and put the interest of the people of

Sierra Leone first, we should have this road in place, but if not, there is no problem in waiting to ensure that we do the right thing. I thank you very much *[Applause]*.

MR SPEAKER: Yes, Leader.

HON. SAA E. LAMINA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to join Honourable Musa Fofanah to express happiness for the construction of that road. Section 40 of the 1991 Constitution, Sub-section 4[d] is very clear. The President is considered to be the 'Fountain of Honour, Symbol of Unity' being represented by the Ministers to enter into Agreements, but Parliament has to ratify every Agreement. It is on this note I want to speak to this 'Concession Agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone [GoSL] being represented by the Ministry of Works and Public Assets and SLRA, and the Societe Djura Marited Construction Limited and Partners.' It is important to know that Agreements of this nature fills my heart with proofs that President Maada Bio is indeed a 'Tok and Do' President. This road was part of the President's Manifesto; and today, it has been transformed into government's policy. It is here today for ratification.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to say something about the historic perspective of that road. Immediately after Njaiama or Kangama Gorama, there is a place called 'Negefaye' and there is another place called Konofaye. I never knew this because I do not usually read history. When I went to the British Parliament Library during my short stay in the UK, I took time to read about the scramble and partition of Africa. I engaged that Library and I saw one of the greatest Warriors in Sierra Leone, who was called: 'Komba Fwamansa Maturi' This man was given the 'Dollar Award' because he made a name between Mende Line and Kono Line, and that is why that place was called 'Mendefaye.' It was the place where the Mendes were killed. There is also a place called Konofaye, a place where the Konos were also killed. There were two Bundors; one Bundor belonged to the Konos and the other belonged to the Mendes. Today, if you went to Kewan-gulama, the Paramount Chief's name is Konobundor.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Kenema and Kono used to be one South-East. They were all doing trade in a single place called Panguima. I have been reliably informed that a Panguima District would be formed and also Bandajuma District. That is the

central place called Panguma, until the Kono people feel very threatened. They were laid off after getting their wears from the bag; they were engaged in palm kernel, cocoa and coffee production. They lost all their benefits. There was a great man called 'Komba Fwamansa Matuturi, the first Paramount Chief of Nimikoro. According to the British writers, we learnt that he used to transform into Python and even Lion or Leopard. He was indeed a great man. He killed the greatest Mende warrior called Ndawa and a British. He was a fearful man at that time. A small man in stature killed a whole Mende warrior called Ndawa. The man was given the 'famous Ndawa Award. Please visit the UK Library or British Parliamentary Library for more information. He was a small man in stature, but he was very powerful. Since that time, the British Colonial Masters delinked Kono District from Panguma and that was how Kono District came to be independent. President Maada Bio made that promise; and today, we are here to fulfil that promise.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is a very good road and President Maada Bio will remain as a champion of infrastructural development. The question is how did I know? From the records, I saw under his watch, the Moyamba Junction and Moyamba township road network is a case study; and under his watch, the Kabala and Falaba Roads are on-going. Again, the Gendema Road to Liberia Border is also another example [*Applause*]. Under President Maada Bio, the Hill Station bye-pass road and Hillside Road are almost complete. It was the late President Ahmed Tejan Kabba who sourced funds for this road and under President Maada Bio, it has been completed [*Applause*]. You were never privileged to read history and that is why I want you to listen attentively. I am just a Linguist and I want the donors and historians to listen to this short history. Under the watch of President Maada Bio, the Hill Cut Bypass Road and Hill Station Road have been completed. President Maada Bio is also making history in respect of the construction of the Mabang Bridge, Rogbere Bridge, Yambatui Bridge, Gendema Bridge, Wanje River Bridge, Moa Bridge, Bandajuma Bridge, Senehun Bridge, Tomparie Bridge, etc. [*Applause*]. He is indeed a champion for development.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have just seen from Google that the US model for Public Private Partnership [PPP]. I went to Virginia last year and I discovered that PPP was at work' in the United States of America. Colleagues can testify that Virginia, Maryland and Washington DC have toll roads. I passed through France in the tunnel and I saw powerful models of toll roads. In Kenya, you have to pay toll fees. This is also happening in South Africa. I just wanted to justify how toll roads have benefitted nations through their socio-economic impact.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in Annex VI of road maintenance culture, it is saying that between every five and seven years, it is compulsory for them to maintenance the road. Today, our roads have been unkempt and dilapidated. I am sure Bai Bureh will not forgive us in a hurry. In 1898, he built his own house and he threatened the British Colonial Masters that he would not pay a dime for his own house. During the previous governments, even though the road was there, we were forced to pay for the road Bai Bureh fought very hard for. Today, even though the Wellington/Masiaka Road has been constructed, we were forced to pay toll fees. President Maada Bio did not meet any road in that particular place, but under his watch, Mano Junction, Kangama Gorama, Tongo, Njiama Nimikoro and Bumpeh would be constructed through BOT and PPP.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in Annex III, I saw projected amount from the toll road, but that did not happen under the Wellington/Masiaka Road. For this road, from 2025-2054, there is a provision in Annex II, which talks about traffic projection on the road and there will be an evaluator who will do the projection. In Annex VI, Clause 24[3], we can see that failure to meet this condition could lead to termination within 90 days. Clause 24[1] says it can be terminated, but it is not a hard and fast rule. If the concessioner fails within 90 days or three months, the Agreement can be terminated and that is why I am happy when the Honourable Minister alluded to an addendum to this Agreement. Mr Speaker, the Concession Rights and Obligations are also embedded in this particular Agreement. This is a very good Agreement and we have worked for it. Clause 25 talks of 10km, which to me is too small for a Concessionee to start receiving money. I only hope that in the addendum, it will be extended to at least 20km before

collecting money. I begin to imagine the socio-economic boom through cocoa transporting, coffee, Kola nut, gold, diamond this road will bring. It will connect and integrate the South/East; i.e., the Konos, Mendes and the Kissi people will become one. We would once again live together brethren. This is why the road is so important. I can tour the South, East, West and North within six hours.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am very happy because Njiama Nimikoro Chiefdom is just a single Chiefdom Constituency. It means one Chiefdom and one Constituency and I want the Minister to take note of that in the Addendum Agreement. I would also like to appeal that the host Paramount Chiefs of Njiama be given concession not to pay toll fee. They should be given concession, Mr Speaker. I actually had a lot to bring out from this Agreement, but it is my belief and I am incline to believe that the Honourable Minister will take note of those concerns in Addendum Agreement. Once again I would like to thank President Maada Bio because he has just manifested one of his campaign promises. I thank you very much, President Maada Bio *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. I now take the Leader of the Opposition.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, whenever normal procedures are breached, I feel sorry for ourselves. This is because you will go all out to ensure that crisis management is maintained. You are an expert in crisis management *[Applause]*, but you must also ensure that things happen the right way. If there had been compliance with standard procedures in this Parliament, you would have had no headache. I can even refer you to the previous Agreement regarding the operations of the Port. I am certain that you were not happy the way that Agreement was ratified here. However, in the interest of progress, it was done that way. Again, we are here today with evidence of procedural breaches and that was why you invited us to your office to find a way out; and based on that, I see no need to waste our time. We want to put Sierra Leone first.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with your permission, I would like to read the relevant provision in the Constitution. I want my colleagues to agree or disagree with me that I have been saying this over and over in this House. I have raised lots of points

in this House, this particular Agreement before us is an exception. It was never a party to all the concerns I have been making here. The concerns I have been raising here relate to the rules, regulations and Statutory Instruments. When you make regulations to give effect to an Act of Parliament, you make Statutory Instruments to give effect to those Acts or you make rules based on emergency situation or Proclamation by His Excellency the President. You would agree with me that those Regulations or Statutory Instruments need to mature for twenty-one days before they becomes laws, but if a Member is not satisfied with the content of that Statutory Instruments or Regulations or Rules, the Member of Parliament will stand under Section 170[7] to ensure that the said Instrument is debated and then a Motion is moved to annul it. However, this needs 2/3 majority to annul the Statutory Instruments or Rules and Regulations.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, with your permission, I would want to read verbatim. I am sure both lawyers and non-lawyers can simply interpret what I am about to read. I am happy that the Minister is a Professor with years of experience. Sub-section 7 says: **"Any orders, rules or regulations made by any person or authority, pursuant to a power conferred in that behalf, by this Constitution or any other law:**

a. shall be laid before Parliament;

b. shall be published in the Gazette on or before the day they are so laid before Parliament;

c. shall come into force at the expiration of a period of 21 days of being so laid, unless Parliament, before the expiration of the said period of 21 days, admits any such orders, rules or regulations by the vote of not less than 2/3 of Members of Parliament." So, those are Orders made pursuant to an Act of

Parliament; Rules are made pursuant to an Act of Parliament; and Statutory Instruments are made to give effect to an Act of Parliament and not Agreements. My first submission is that Agreements do not need annulment; they can be amended by this House [*Applause*]. This House has the power to amend Agreements and that is what we are ready to do now. We are ready to raise the issues and we agree to

disagree; and based on SO 42, the Speaker makes his ruling. Nevertheless, I want this House to know that based on our agreement, I would move a Motion today that going forward, any Agreement of any nature, must be presented to Parliament first before it is laid. This is because once it is laid, especially Statutory Instruments, Rules and Regulations, the only applicable law is annulment under Section 170[7]. However, if those Rules, Regulations and Statutory Instruments are presented to Parliament before they are laid, we can make amendment at that stage. Mr Speaker, certain MDAs have tested the waters and I will refer you to NaTCA. NaTCA have just laid their Regulations and let them tell you their experience with the Legislative Committee. Their experience was superb because before it was laid, they engaged Parliament and we resolved many issues. If they had been laid in that manner or form, they would have regretted that action, but because they engaged Parliament, we were able to address certain issues. So at the close of my debate, I will move a Motion that going forward, any Agreement must come even Rules, Regulations and Statutory Instruments must first of all be presented to Parliament before they are laid. If that is done, you would have less to do.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is no need to waste time, but for the attention of this House, maybe we will just mention some few things. This is to prove that if Parliament was engaged earlier than this time, those errors or mistakes would have been easily corrected. In fact, the most fatal error in this Agreement is just an ordinary typo, but because of the implication of this typo, it is now the most fatal error and that is enough to close this debate and send you back to your offices. Article 2.3 of this Agreement talks about the concession period; and before an Agreement is ratified, the first thing we look out for is the concession period in terms of how long it will take to develop the property or how long it will take to recoup your money or investments; how long will you take to give us back our property; and how much are you spending? We will do the comparison to determine if the timing is reasonable or not. Timing is our first point because it is very important. In words, they mentioned 15 years, but in bracket, they stated 30 years. So, which one do we take? Is this a typo or not? If there was a

pre-engagement in respect of this Agreement, you would have provided the correct answer because it is typographical error.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to refer you to the opinion by the Solicitor General to show that such mistakes cannot be condoned. With your leave, I would like to read the penultimate paragraph of the Solicitor General's opinion and it says: **"We have read the document forwarded to us and directed that Clause 21, Sub-Clause 2[ii] of the Concession Agreement be corrected to the effect that the days in numbers be reflective of what is in words."** On a separate note, the days in numbers be reflective of the words. Currently, they are at variance and I want to inform you that that Clause is not even too serious. That variance can stay and has no negative impact on the Agreement. In other words, this is not as serious as the variance in Clause 2[iii]. The variance in Clause 2[iii] is more serious and it cannot be accepted that way. Thankfully, Sub-section 7 of Section 170 of the 1991 Constitution does not stop us to correct mistakes or errors.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, no sane MP will deny such concession Agreement for the construction of toll roads in this country. I am one of the happiest men to see toll roads across this country. Apart from the Wellington/Masiaka toll road, this is the second toll road Agreement we are ratifying today. I am certain that the first one apart from the Wellington/Masiaka Road is the Songo/Gbangbatoke, which is another 83 or 85km. I am sure it has been ratified and I want to say kudos to you. I have used the Kenema/Kono Road twice, but we also have another Kono/Kenema Road on different dates. That road also links South/East and North/West, which means it is another form of a link between or among places. How I wish, before the end of your term, the Mile 91/Matotoka Road is also considered *[Applause]*. This is because that road will close the gap between South/East and North/West. We also have the Bo/Yilleh to Magburaka, which is also believed to close the gap between South/East and North/Western divide. The divide will go without noticing it with a good road. In fact, if I have my way, both should be four lane roads; i.e., Mile 91 to Matotoka should be four lane and Bo/Yilleh to Magburaka should also be four lane.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if I have my way, I will follow strictly the advice of the Chief Adviser to the President, Professor Wurie. He has advised the President and it is left with him to follow that advice. He advised that the Ministry of Lands and the Ministry of Agriculture have nothing to do with the Western Area; they have no business in Western Area. The Ministry of Agriculture can be relocated along Masiaka and Bo; Masiaka and Makeni, Mile 91 and Magburaka, Njiama and Masingbi or between Bo and Yilleh. The Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Lands can be relocated to those places. These two ministries and/or three other ministries will attract investments and people from the North/East, South/East and North-West will be together. The so call regional divide will become a thing of the past. Please consider that road.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when you look at Article 10[iv] of the Agreement, it has imported a virus that has killed this country. I must confess that we did that mistake for the very first time. We started toll road operations in the country. You would agree with me that it is a good model, but because it was the first one, there were certain mistakes we did. For instance, we tied the exchange rate to the Dollars. Let me state here that when you tie the exchange rate to the Dollar, the Dollar will just hang the Leones like a handbag. The Leones is just a handbag for the Dollar and the Dollar will not suffer when there is variance in the exchange rate. This is enough for the investors to increase the toll fees. To me, this is murderous and suicidal. However, I am happy because I can expunge it because I have the power under S.O 42 and you have the final say. As a Member of Parliament, I can propose to you because no law stops me from doing that. I can suggest that the Agreement shall be reviewed in every five years. I can also say based on the current circumstance, we can increase or decrease the price, but this should not be tied to Dollar. In fact, if the Chinese Company had followed that law strictly, the **Le10** we are paying for Jeep, it should have been increased to **Le300** by now, but they chose to ignore it. Do we have assurance that this new investor will ignore it? If he chooses not to ignore, the law is on his side and there is provision for redress if we failed to pay. However, if he chose to strictly follow the law, as soon as the exchange rate increases by **10%**, the toll fees also increases. I

am not pessimistic, but based on the current trend, instead of **Le10** as stated here, we will start paying close to **Le150**.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let us talk about the collection of the toll fees. The question is who collect the toll fees? This was a very good initiative and I was so happy that the government is collecting through their agents. There is provision in the Agreement which states that out of the proceeds from the toll road, they will pay the contractor. In fact, when I engaged the Ministry of Finance, they told me that the duration is thirteen years. This means you can pay within thirteen years. We can even source funds from somewhere else and pay the man in the next one or two years, so that we manage our toll **100%**. This is a very fine idea, but this idea has been abandoned. We are now saying that it is the concessionee who should collect throughout for a period of fifteen or thirty years. He should collect throughout and in the event there is increase in traffic, he should recover his money in the next five years. This implies that if it is thirty years period, the next twenty-five years will be a profit making period for him and we will stand to lose as we are losing now at Wellington/Masiaka. We did the same mistake, but you corrected it in the Songo/Gbangbatoke Road. We can use that good example to allow the government to collect through their agents and we pay the concessionee. I am sure by divine providence, if there is money elsewhere, we can even source that money and pay him earlier, so that we can operate the toll **100%**. I think I have the opportunity to follow the rules as directed by you, Mr Speaker.

On that note, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I know that the real opportunity is there because you have created it and I want to commend you for being the people's Speaker *[Applause]*; a real Sierra Leonean Speaker and posterity will clearly explain the way you have managed the situation. I will read more tonight and we will sort out things by tomorrow. I want to assure my colleagues that the right thing will be done because the Speaker is here to ensure that the right thing is done. He is not known for the wrong things and he would tell us the way forward. I assure you, on behalf of this side and my Leader that you will not be disappointed because the right thing will be

done. I thank you very much and God bless you *[Applause]*. I would like to move a Motion, but maybe after this.

THE SPEAKER: You have to hold on to your Motion because we will not conclude this debate today. After we would have resolved all the thorny issues, you can move your Motion. I now call on the Leader of Government Business.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I also thank the Minister for bringing this document to us. The Opposition MPs have had their say and we have listened to all the concerns they have raised. I believe the Agreement is not too bad, but there are some challenges we need to address. We need a document that will stand the test of time. I noticed that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition II was comparing this Agreement to the Wellington/Masiaka Agreement. I have said before, and I will continue to say it again that I was in this Parliament when the Wellington/Masiaka Concession Agreement was brought here. I can state here without hesitation that the said toll road was under the control of the government and we were not paying anything for it. The Agreement was awarded to CRSG to construct additional two lanes. What we gained from that Agreement was **5%**, while the **10%** will be realised after the loan would have been fully liquidated. There was a period where the government was supposed to pay compensation, but we were not able to pay as we speak. I believe they have not paid and the burden was shifted to the contractor.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today, we also have similar Agreement we are discussing and the cost is **\$155mln** for 85km and the Wellington/Masiaka was 62km and cost **\$161mln**. I said we had an existing two lane we were using. What they did was to construct additional two lanes to make it four lanes. We already had two lanes in existence that we were using and it was government property. So, the cost of the two lanes, which is 62km, was **\$161mln**, while the cost of the 85km road we are now discussing is **\$155mln**. What we are discussing now is a brand new road and we are starting from afresh. It is going to be a herculean task, but I believe they have negotiated well. If we compared the Wellington/Masiaka Road to this, I think this Minister and his team have negotiated well. We are going to pay **\$155mln** as against

62km that we paid **\$161mln**. I am sure there are typos, like the Leader of the Opposition mentioned and the Solicitor General has advised them to do the needful. They should correct all the mistakes. I wholeheartedly accept those observations and we would definitely correct them. We want to pass laws that can stand the test of time.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it has been told that this Concession Agreement is going to last for thirty years. The Wellington/Masiaka Road is twenty-seven years. Comparatively, the traffic from Wellington to Masiaka is greater than the one from Mano Junction to Kono. This means everybody that comes in and out of the city would have to pay toll fees. We have given them twenty-seven years, but the Agreement under discussion is thirty years. I asked one of the team from the SLRA if we have such traffic flow on that road. I asked this question because I come from Bo and I would tell you that I can spend almost two years without going to Kono. I only go to Kono on purpose, but it is not possible for me to go there on a daily basis. In Freetown, I can either go to Waterloo or Masiaka. All of us pay the toll fee in Freetown. It is compulsory for us in Freetown, but it is not compulsory for Kono.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members the beauty about that toll road is that it has an optional route. This implies that if you are coming from Freetown, you can use the Makeni route to go to Kenema, but if you do not want to use the road, you will pass through Masiaka, which is an optional route. If you are coming from Kenema and you want to spend less than two hours to go to Kono, you can pay the toll fee. When we were debating the Wellington/Masiaka Road, our contention in this Well was that there was no optional route. The optional route is not convenient, but it is a choice one has to make. It is not of convenient, but if you want to be inconvenient, you can come to Masiaka and go to Kono. The road from Kenema to Masiaka is paved and the one from Masiaka to Kono is also paved. So, those are optional routes, but if you want to spend one or one hour and half to go to Kono, you have to pay. Today, even when we are discussing the toll road, nobody has raised the issue of optional route, but I want you to know that there is an optional road.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if I have the wherewithal, I will even toll the road between Masiaka and Bo. His Excellency the former President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma, completed the Bo/Masiaka Road and it is barely fifteen years ago. Today, we are trying to rehabilitate that road because it is wearing apart. If we had put aside funds or toll that road, we should be using the money to rehabilitate it. That is what this Agreement is going to address. This Agreement is saying that when we collect toll fees, we keep the money to rehabilitate and maintain the road because we do not have money set aside for the purpose. Today, the fact that we are paying **50%** means we have committed ourselves that when these moneys are collected, we use the **50%** to maintain the roads. The government is using huge sums of money to construct roads. What we used to construct the Bo/Kenema, Bo/Masiaka and Masiaka/Makeni is huge.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the other thing the Minister should bring, which we should enforce also, is the Axle Load Policy. Today, we have big vehicles that are loading containers with excessive weight. They are pressurising the roads. Mr Minister, you come from Bonthé and there are mining companies in Bonthé that are loading raw materials and these are the people who are destroying our roads. We have people who are loading timber and timbers have excessive weight. This weight pressurises the road. We have vehicles that are going to Guinea with excessive weight. All our vehicles have specific loads to carry. When you drive SQV vehicle, the required number of people who should be in that vehicle is the driver, one passenger in front and three passengers at the back seat. If you take ten passengers at the back seat and four in front, that is an excessive weight and it is not the weight the vehicle is meant for. When these trucks ply the roads, they should carry specific tonnage of goods. Today, if you go to these roads, you would see the bumps due to the weight of our vehicles. The only reason the Wellington/Masiaka toll road is under rehabilitation is because it is still under the supervision of CRSG. They have the funds from the toll charges, but if that road had been under the control of the government, it could not have been passable by now. You would agree with me that some of these problems are created by us. I would like

to talk to the Minister to ensure the implementation of the Axle Load Policy. I know that it will be difficult and people will start grumbling, but we have to protect our roads.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have constructed roads that should last fifteen to twenty-five years, but these same roads only last for ten to eleven years. I think we have to ask ourselves why? I want you to briefly stop at Masiaka and observe the number of heavy vehicles with timbers coming from Guinea. The Chinese are also moving with heavy raw materials from one point to the other. I was in Mano Daseh the other day and I saw the condition of that road is not good due to the pressure on the road. This is what is happening with our roads. These grey areas can be corrected, but this is an extremely very good project. I do not want money to be tagged in Dollars; we should be specific and making sure that our currency is viable. We know that all the materials used to construct and maintain these roads are imported. This is where we should encourage the Ministry of Finance and the Bank of Sierra Leone to ensure that the Leone appreciates. Like what somebody mentioned, we should not do it the same way we did for the CRSG. When we were doing the Wellington/Masiaka Road, the exchange rate was **Le7,000** or **Le7,500** per dollar; but today, due to the global crisis, the exchange rate is **Le2,300** or **Le2,350**.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we know that the investors would sometimes want to save their investments by handling the market value of their commodities. We should also encourage them to do their transactions in Leones. We can look at the traffic and project the increment in Leones. We can say in the first ten or fifteen years, this is the profit we are expecting. The Honourable Member said there is no CSR, but all of us know that whenever there is a project, SLRA, the contractors and the Ministry always put in place a CSR Committee. This is already stated in the Agreement with proposed amount of **\$4.3mln** to be expended on CSR. They have not identified a project they should embark on, but the amount to be spent on CSR is clearly stated in the Agreement. This is where this Parliament could come in since we are the ones ratifying it with additional responsibility to monitor the implementation process. We have to

make sure that what we ratify today is what will be implemented tomorrow. We have the right to call and question them how they spent this **\$4.3mln.**

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the toll plazas. I think the Honourable Member from Bombali was misled. They were doing analysis on the toll traffic and that was where she misunderstood the whole thing. It is stated that we have three toll plazas. Mr Speaker, when we ratified the Wellington/Masiaka Toll Road Concession Agreement, some people wanted one toll station; some wanted two toll stations, while others wanted three. If you are moving from Freetown to Newton and Waterloo, you are not using the full stretch of the road. This means you should not pay the full amount for the entire toll road. You will be opportune to pay for one particular area of the road because you are only using that part. If you are going to use the road after Songo, that means you are paying more than half of the entire toll road. Mr Speaker, due to the fact that you are using that stretch of the road, you are going to pay for the second trench; and if you are using the entire toll road, that is where you will be required to pay for all tollgates.

Mr Speaker, Honorable Members, if you are traveling from Mano Junction to Tongo, you are not required to pay the full amount for all the tollgates because you are stopping at Tongo and Panguma. You are only required to pay some amount because you are using the facility, but if you use another half, you will pay because you are using half of the facility. If you use the entire stretch of the road, then you are bound to pay the full amount. This is a three toll plaza and the beauty about the toll plaza is that it is not just a normal toll plaza because it is going to have facilities like resting pavilion. We have travelled to other countries and we have seen the facilities they have along their roads. When I traveled from Dallas/Texas to Fan-Antony we had to stop somewhere and took some drinks. We used the restroom and relaxed at the restaurant. It is very important to have moments of rest after long hours of travelling. You have to stop along the road and take some food. We now have vehicles that will tell you to stop after a long distance travel. This will even reduce the accident rate in the country because if you drive for hours, but you recalled of a toll plaza somewhere along the road, you would

have to park around the plaza, instead of parking beside the road. This is what is happening even when I am travelling to Bo. I am confident that when I get to Mile 91, I will stop at the fuel station to relax. I am sure Honourable Aaron A. Koroma has advised the owner of fuel station to open a restaurant there, so that when you are travelling to Bo, you would stop briefly at Mile 91 to have some rest, especially when you are feeling bored or tired. You can take some drinks and have moments of relaxation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, these are the kind of facilities this toll road is going to create. This is not like the Wellington/Masiaka where we only pay and continue our journey. This is why they are paying **\$23mln** to construct these facilities and that is where this Parliament will come in to monitor these facilities. There are lots of accidents on these roads because travellers have nowhere to rest after being exhausted. Drivers usually sleep off while driving due to exhaustion. I believe this toll road is good for our people. I am sure if the Mano Junction/Tongo is constructed, you would think you are in another planet. As we speak, there is no road and these people are starting afresh.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to encourage all of us, as Members of Parliament, especially the parliamentary Committee on Works, to do due diligence in making sure that what we have agreed on is implemented. Today, Dr Denis Sandy is presenting this Agreement; but some years ago, someone else presented the Wellington/Masiaka Road Agreement. A lot of communities will be created along that road. In other words, a lot of communities, including those from other areas, would be confident to build skyscrapers or beautiful houses. As we speak, nobody wants to build houses along those roads, but as soon as the road construction process commences, you will see new communities and other developments. I want to thank the Minister for this Agreement. I am sure the grey areas will be addressed and we should not allow them to overshadow the general good of this project. We should not politicise this project at all. Mr Minister, if you have the opportunity, please ensure that we have a four-lane road between Bo and Masiaka in order to reduce the accident rate on that road. If you are driving on that road, you will not rest or feel comfortable until you arrive at your destination because the road is too narrow. It is better for us to make it a

toll road in order to avoid or minimise accidents. People are dying and I want to state here that there is no money that worth the lives of Sierra Leoneans.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want the Minister to also consider Yilleh and Bo Road. I think that road will also have investors who are ready to invest on that road. That road delinks the North and South. It is a very short road and we can easily make it a toll road. We would summon SLRA for an update on the Songo/Moyamba Road whose Agreement was ratified in this House. It has been ratified here and we are expecting that the project would have started *[Applause]*. Our summon letters will be sent today or tomorrow for public engagement in order to obtain first-hand information. This should not be business as usual. We have been ratifying Agreements here, but nobody monitors the implementation status of those Agreements. I am sure people are using these Agreements to source funds and such funds should be available. If you do not have the resources, let us encourage other partners to come and invest. They are going to explain to us all the roads that are under construction; we are going to visit all the trunk roads and Parliament is ready to give us the support to undertake that activity. I would like to thank the Speaker for supporting the Committee on Works. We will be visiting the trunk roads and this is very close to the heart of the Speaker. We will be deliberating on this issue next week; and thereafter, we will visit the various construction sites. Mr Minister, please ensure that what we ratified is what is being implemented. Also ensure that when we ask for evidence, for instance, if you took bank loan, you have to bring the evidence of the bank loan. We do not want to have any challenge when we ask for evidence. Thank you very much and may God bless us all.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Mr Leader of Government Business.

DR DENIS SANDY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have listened attentively to all your interventions, and be rest assured that we will leave this Well very happy. I will bring an Addendum that will meet your expectations; of course, we will work together with the SLRA, the Ministry of Finance, the Attorney General's Office and the Legislative Committee of this Parliament. This aim is for us to have a working document that will stand the test of time. I want to assure you that the interest of this country is going to

be captured in this document, so that our children yet unborn will benefit *[Applause]*. This is my promise to you and we will go and work on it together.

THE SPEAKER: I am not putting the question today because we have a meeting tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. prompt. Please bring your team along. I have already called the Attorney General's Office to inform the professionals from SLRA that we should meet tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. prompt in the Speaker's Boardroom or Conference Room. We want to see how we can chisel out the rough edges and arrive at something that will be in the interest of this nation. We are a poor nation and we are aware of that, but we can make these Agreements better the lives of our people, otherwise we will not develop. Even though we are poor, we can still make some imputes to ensure that we grow as a nation.

DR DENIS SANDY: Mr Speaker, with your kind permission, let me just say something before I take my seat. I am happy that we have all recognised that the President, if everything goes on well, will be considered as Champion of Infrastructural Development in this country. I am also happy with the spirit I am seeing from all Members of the aisles; the SLPP and the APC. This is exactly the spirit we need to have in this country. I am very satisfied with your leadership and I pray that God continues to guide all of us. I would also like to state here that I have a sister here, but for a very long time I have always tried to hide her identity. I am impressed with your intervention, Honourable Alice Kornya Sandy. She is my sister and I am proud of her. I thank you all.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much and at least, we recognise Honourable Alice Kornya Sandy. She has been an outstanding personality in this Well and we are proud of her *[Applause]*.

ADJOURNMENT

[The House rose at 2:35 p.m., and was adjourned to Wednesday, 13th August, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.]