

OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

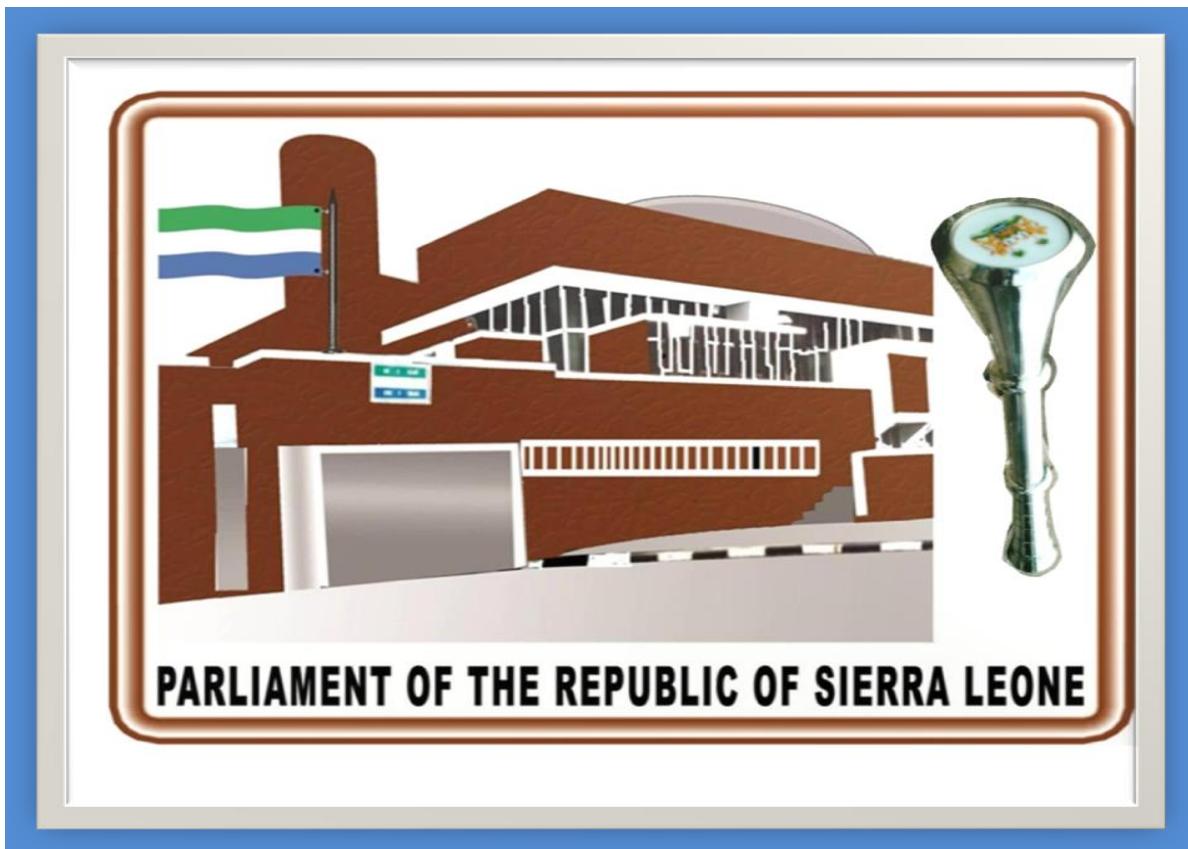
[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

SECOND SESSION – FIRST MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 18TH DECEMBER, 2024

SESSION – 2024/2025



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

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

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
held Wednesday, 18th December, 2024.

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THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

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

Wednesday, 18th December, 2024.

I. PRAYERS

[The Table Clerk, Mrs Fatmata Bintu Weston read the Prayers]

[The House met at 10:00 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown]

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

The House was called to Order

Suspension of S. O. 5[2]

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, I want to amend the Order Paper of the House. Item IV; Laying of Papers, I am proposing that we expunge from the Order Paper.

THE SPEAKER: You mean 4[II]?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Yes Mr Speaker, Roman number 4.2; the Attorney General and Minister of Justice. Mr Speaker, I so move that Roman number 4.2 be removed from the Order Paper.

THE SPEAKER: Any Seconder?

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: I so second Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed Put and Agreed to]

[Motion for the amendment of the Order Paper, moved by the Leader of Government Business has been carried]

RECORD OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR TUESDAY 17TH DECEMBER, 2024

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, on the record of Votes and Proceedings, Mr Clerk on page 1 the title is not the 'Right Speaker', it is supposed to be the Right Honourable Speaker. Page 1 to 4? Page 5? Page 6? Page 7? Page 8? Page 9? Page 10 and page 11? Can a Member move?

HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN: I so move Honourable Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any Seconder?

HON. FATMATA BINTU BOCKARIE: I so second Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed Put & Agreed to]

[The Record of Votes and Proceedings for Tuesday 17th December 2024 has been adopted]

ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR SPEAKER

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I can see the House is too dull for my comfort, even to shout Aye becomes a problem. I am to inform you that Parliament has taken the necessary action and it is for BSL to do the needful. I am sure they will conclude that today. So please, move away from that dullness and spring into action. I gave the Governor a call this morning and the Director in charge and they said they are working on it. Honourable Members, as a matter of fact we told you the other day that it is going to be yesterday, so please; thank you very much for your understanding. Some of these things are merely administrative issues.

Honourable Members, the other day we formed the Public Interest Committee, unfortunately, there was a slight mistake, we did not include any Paramount Chief. I am to inform you that and to urge you that we include Honourable P.C Desmond Mahayei Kargobai from Bo as the Paramount Chief representative in that Committee and Mr David Saffa to deputize the Clerk of Parliament in that Committee.

[Question Proposed Put & Agreed to]

THE SPEAKER: Leaders on the Government Bench and Leaders of the Opposition, please be reminded that we have a meeting today at 2 p.m prompt. Please reserve that meeting because we are going to discuss relevant matters. Matters that are relevant to the well-being of Parliament and to the Members of Parliament. Thank you very much.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, before we proceed to the Laying of Papers, I want the Desk Officers to clarify something with me so hold on for few minutes. Mr Speaker, with your leave I beg to further amend the Order Paper for the Laying of Papers. The Deputy Speaker is yet to come, so I will lay on his behalf the following documents but let me first do the amendment on the Order Paper.

1. The Honourable Ibrahim Tawa Conteh, the Deputy Speaker of Parliament and Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee remains the same.
2. The Audit Service Sierra Leone Annual Performance Report 2023.

Mr Speaker, I so move for the Order Paper be so amended.

THE SPEAKER: Any Seconder?

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: I so second Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed Put & Agreed to]

PAPER LAID

THE LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I am sorry going back and forth with the amendment of the Order Paper. I apologize for going back and forth, it is not my fault; I cannot see myself trying to put document that we are yet to verify. So for both documents I have to expunge the whole section from the Order Paper. Mr Speaker, with your leave after consultation with you, I beg to expunge the whole of item 4 from the Order Paper, I so move Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any Seconder?

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: I so second Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed Put & Agreed to]

[Motion for the amendment of Order Paper moved by the Leader of Government Business has been carried]

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, the Minister of Finance unfortunately we cannot get him. Mr Speaker, the Minister has just sent his Budget Director that he is going for Cabinet meeting and his Deputies are not within the jurisdiction of Sierra Leone. I think we have to adjourn for today I propose because if we cannot get him, he has gone for Cabinet meeting urgently. Mr Speaker, the matter is before your desk now.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Deputy Speaker, what do you want to say?

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Mr Speaker, I think for neatness of Proceedings, if we are going to adjourn for today as he directed, I suggest that tomorrow we allow the

various Committees to lay their Reports and we give them time to bring the House up to speed after the Reports would have circulated in our tablets or in our Piegons holes so that we go through the key findings in the Reports so that we will not spend the whole day tomorrow going through these Reports; that is my own suggestion.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, we definitely have to read the Reports for the Minister's reactions towards the Reports so for me the only thing I can suggest, I am seeing it coming, which I have to discuss with my Colleagues on the other side, possibility for us to sit on Saturday because the way I am seeing it right now *[Interruption]*.

THE SPEAKER: You know we discussed that the last time.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, the suggestion is not bad, but the Minister has come to ask for genuine excuse. We can sit as much as we can tomorrow. What he has suggested is in line but the Minister cannot get a view of all of the Reports he has laid. It is not our reaction, is the reaction of the Minister because Members are going to raise issues. Do not forget, there are MDAs that are asking for increment in their budgets ceiling and other issues that Members would like to raise. It is quite in place, but the Minister has really genuinely asked us. So what we can do is whether we decide to have a long day tomorrow or we decide our mind for Saturday *[Undertone]*.

THE SPEAKER: Leader, how many Reports do we still have outstanding?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: How many Reports do we know? It should be nine.

THE SPEAKER: Eight?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Eight?

THE SPEAKER: I think we are still within time, we can complete them on Friday.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: In fact, Mr Speaker, we have agreed for a long day.

THE SPEAKER: Yes....

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: So, in the issue of time...

THE SPEAKER: We can complete them tomorrow.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Alright!

THE SPEAKER: But this Parliament is not going beyond this week, we cannot go beyond this week for the holidays. So, after Friday or later Saturday, we should be leaving for our Districts. We can stay here till night to complete our job and just go away.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker....

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Chief Whip.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, I need your attention please.

THE SPEAKER: Yes proceed.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, I want to go with the suggestion of the Deputy Speaker. I am sure if we supply all those Reports to the Minister, he will be able to read them but we have piles of activities lying down for Friday.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Chief Whip. You wanted to say something?

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, if you want us to have a long day tomorrow to submit our Reports, can you please urge the Chairmen of the Committees to make sure that all the Reports are ready by tomorrow? Because Friday and Saturday will be out because some of us from Pujuhun, we lost our former District Council Chairman and I will be in Pujehun on Saturday.

THE SPEAKER: Okay.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: So, if there is anyway we can urge the Committee Chairmen to submit their Reports by tomorrow that will be fine so we can have a long day tomorrow.

THE SPEAKER: Are all the Committee Chairmen here? Do we have all the Committee Chairmen? Are all your Reports available? *[Undertone]*. They are all available now? Chief Whip, you can coordinate that please. Honourable Members, let me talk to

you if we are to avoid Saturday, because, as I can hear, all of you are against Saturday. If we want to avoid Saturday, then you have to be here in time, so that we get the quorum early to proceed. Otherwise, we will come on Saturday. We have to complete our work latest on Friday, if we do not want to come here on Saturday, so please take note.

HON. IBRAHIM BARRIE: Mr Speaker, let me draw your attention to Section 18 of the Constitution which says: "No person shall be deprived of his/her freedom of movement". And for the purpose of this Section, freedom means the right to move freely through out Sierra Leone. Mr Speaker, in response to what the Guinean authority did, we saw a situation that has the tendency to create tribal issues. So therefore, Mr Speaker, we saw over 300 people representing the Fula group were arrested and detained at the Sierra Leone Police Training School and that has angered the Fula Community. Mr Speaker, I want to use this opportunity to ask where does that instruction came from, who gave them that instruction?

THE SPEAKER: Who did that? Who arrested them?

HON. IBRAHIM BARRIE: The Police.

THE SPEAKER: For what?

HON. IBRAHIM BARRIE: The Police Officers arrested them and they took them to the Sierra Leone Police Training Centre. Yesterday, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the IG; they attended the weekly press conference of the Ministry of Information. The Minister of Foreign Affairs apologized and then we saw a press release from the Ministry of Information condemning the act. But the question is, who gave the instruction? And somebody needs to be held responsible because in as much as we have a responsibility to ensure that all our residents are documented, but we should never in this age attempt to target a particular ethnic group in response to such situation. Therefore, Mr Speaker, I am bringing this up so that we can know where the instruction came from *[Interruption]*.

THE SPEAKER: That is a very serious public interest matter.

HON. IBRAHIM BARRIE: Exactly, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Is extremely serious, and I condemn that.

HON. IBRAHIM BARRIE: Mr Speaker, I want to suggest that through the Committee of Internal Affairs, or with your wisdom, we try to know who gave this instruction and hold those accountable so that such thing can never happen again in this country to target one ethnic group in relation to deportation *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Clerk, please invite the Inspector General of Police. We do not have an Internal Affairs Minister for now, not so? Please invite the Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs, the Deputy Minister of Defense and the Minister of Foreign Affairs to be here tomorrow at 4 p.m. for a meeting with the Public Interest Committee.

HON. IBRAHIM BARRIE: Thank you so much Mr Speaker.

HON. EMERSON SAA LAMINA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I stand on S.O 23 to bring to your attention of this Honourable House *[Interruption]*.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, what is going on?

HON. EMERSON SAA LAMINA: Pursuant to Section 23, Subsection 4 of the Constitution, something that is now ongoing in my District called Kono has caught up public interest. It can be recalled that three months ago, the Minister of Labour visited Koidu Holdings one of the mining companies. His interaction with the workers and not the management has sparked up some conflict, I should say and because of that, the labour forces or the workers have gone haywire asking for certain rights that is not actually enshrined in their working documents. And this has threatened the security of Koidu as a city at the moment. Whilst some workers are very willing to go to the mines, others will hang on threatening even illegal and unlawful demonstrations. This has caught public interest Mr Speaker, and I should bring it to your attention *[Interruption]*.

THE SPEAKER: Who is threatening demonstrations?

HON. EMERSON SAA LAMINA: Certain unnamed workers, it will surprise you also.

THE SPEAKER: But why are you calling it illegal?

HON. EMERSON SAA LAMINA: It is illegal because according to the Industrial Act, it has to have a 21-day leverage before ever you should proceed with any demonstration. So it is illegal in any case. We passed the Industrial Act in this particular Parliament. And any notice of demonstration involving 21 days, I am afraid, we should not go ahead of it. Mr Speaker, this has caught public interest and I want to appeal that this matter be looked into *[Interruption]*.

THE SPEAKER: You are referring to the workers?

HON. EMERSON SAA LAMINA: The Management as well as the workers Mr Speaker *[Interruption]*.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, normally when you have problem between the elephant and the ant, even in law, Industrial Law; they tend to listen more to the ant to know why, so do not arrive at conclusion yet until we invite the parties and we hear from them.

HON. EMERSON SAA LAMINA: Very importantly, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, the moment you begin to refer to their demonstration as illegal, you prejudice the Committee and I want to believe you are a popular representative of the people. You are a popular representative of the voice of the people; and do not arrive at conclusion. Please just explain what has happened and we invite them, so that we listen to them before we arrive at conclusion.

HON. EMERSON SAA LAMINA: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. I know very well they have agonies which will be laid on the Table. But as far as demonstration is concerned, I think the Police have to be notified. In 21 days, more so, the Secretary-General of that particular union has to write to the Police. If all those procedures have been ignored, I am afraid, but I will be tempted to call it illegal.

THE SPEAKER: Okay Honourable Member.

HON. EMERSON SAA LAMINA: Mr Speaker, I think it would be wise that this issue attracts the Public Interest Committee [*Interruption*].

THE SPEAKER: Mr Clerk, please summon the company of Koindu Holdings and summon the Labour Minister and the key stakeholders of that demonstrations. Let say probably the management and their Secretary-General and some of the workers to be here on Friday 4 p.m prompt. Tomorrow at 4 pm, we have the Inspector-General of Police, the Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs, the Deputy Minister of Defence, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs. On Friday at 4 p.m., we have Koindu Holdings and the relevant parties, let them appear before the Public Interest Committee.

HON. TAMBA KELLIE: Mr Speaker, master-servant relationship is a relationship between master and servant. We went there with some Honourable Members, and some workers have refused to sit at home, they want to work then there is a group that is preventing them from working. It is really a matter for the Police.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Kellie except if you want to sit here, do you want to sit here?

HON. TAMBA KELLIE: No Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: I have just ruled.

HON. TAMBA KELLIE: Yes, you have ruled, I am sorry.

THE SPEAKER: So is left with you to determine.

HON. TAMBA KELLIE: I retract Sir. I just want to throw light on it so that you can be in a better position.

THE SPEAKER: Is alright let them come and I want every Member of the Committee to know that let us allow them to face the Committee so that we make our own judgement; you do not make judgement for us. Let them appear before the Public Interest Committee then we can take it from there.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Members of the Female Caucus are asked to wait for a short meeting at the New Administrative Building.

All Members are asked to pick up the Bill entitled the National Petroleum Regulatory Authority Act 2024 from their Pigeon Holes.

THE SPEAKER: Both Leaders of the Opposition and the Ruling Bench have decided that we meet at 12 p.m instead of 2 p.m, so please be notified.

ADJOURNMENT

MR SPEAKER ADJOURNED THE HOUSE TO THURSDAY 19TH DECEMBER 2024

AT 10:00 A.M

THE HOUSE ROSE AT 11:10 A.M.

