



# Parliamentary Procedure Properly Followed In Passing The Constitutional Amendment Bill

Member of Parliament for the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), Hon. Hindolo Moiwo Gevao, has defended the parliamentary process leading to the passage of the Constitutional Amendment Bill, insisting that the reforms are the product of years of national consultations, **Contd. page 7**



## Health Minister Calls For Action On Maternal And Child Deaths

By Mahmoud Kamara, Senior Information Officer, Ministry of Health

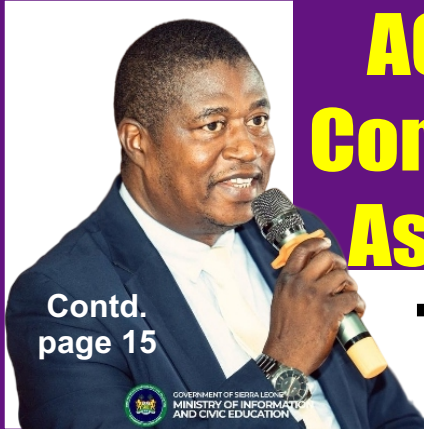


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The Minister of Health, Dr. Austin Demby, has called for greater accountability and decisive action to prevent avoidable maternal and child deaths, stressing that the country's health sector must

## ACC Reports 81% Compliance In 2026 Asset Declaration

By Marian Magdalene Bangura



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The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has reported 81 percent compliance in the 2026 public



## Ministry Of Fisheries And Partners Poised To Boost Aquaculture

Since it was introduced in the 1970s, Aquaculture (Fish Farming) remains a largely subsistence activity in Sierra Leone, providing much needed protein to significantly large numbers of rural households and constitutes an important component of the country's food security drive. **Contd. page 15**

# Editorial

## From Consultations To Parliamentary Approval: Reflections On Recommendation 78 Of The Tripartite Report. Part Two

The consultations continued in the regions. And the funders, International IDEA through European Union, were part of the process to keep to guidelines, and to walk through tight fiduciary mechanism while maintaining consultations that were inclusive and representative.

The team traveled up-country to consult with the people of North-West region. The consultations accommodated participants from Kambia, Karene, and Port Loko. The meeting took place in Port Loko on 23rd June 2025, where participants participated in a participation that discussed the preferred system for voting.

The people of North-West demonstrated a particular behaviour that disregarded the presence of their local authorities as they discussed the subject-matter mattered to them in so far as deciding upon a system of electing their representatives in council and parliament and in so far as seeking the opportunity of holding their leaders to account for the failures written on the communities they come from or for the development transported to their doorsteps.

The people of Karene hit hard at electoral violence that had characterized elections and bye-elections which might have led to loss of property or hospitalization of a number of individuals in that district. For them the electoral system must address violence.

The consultations there were an empowerment to take political power to the hands of the locals, to ask them to think into those situations when elections were held using PR or FPTP and decide upon that which would be best for the peoples of Port Loko, Kambia and Karene.

Consultations in the Northern region comprising Makeni, Kabala, Magburaka, and Falaba were held at the Makeni City Council hall. At some point it became tense on the basis that voices between PR and FPTP competed to be louder over the other. That heralded the significance of the subject for discussion and the desires of the people to choose an electoral system that reflected their political culture. So, an intense brawl might have been presumed given the tone employed by the locals in the discussion of the topic.

Abubakarr Lamte Kamara, Mayor of Makeni City Council, said the North had a decision to take and that decision must be taken with due intention, right mind, and proper sense. The people in the North would do justice to the purpose for which they were there.

The subject for discussion was crucial and the region had a political characteristic of identifying their representatives before voting for them, while preferring FPTP which accentuated the constituency-based elections for council and parliament, and which the North would admonish the state to adopt.

The South held theirs on 28th June 2025. The consultation took place in Bo, where participants in Bonthe, Pujehun, and Moyamba gathered. It was one of the most participatory consultations that started off with an agitation over none presence of a woman on the high-table. For them it was a lack of implementation of the GEWE Act and a lack of inclusion. However, the high-table was constituted by designations of the officials who by their gender were men. A woman was eventually co-opted.

That consultation in Bo, those who participated appeared to have read books days ahead of the engagement, and were set to lecture their facilitators on merits and demerits of the voting systems, drawing from academic references and experiences garnered by their interaction with the two voting patterns.

The women of Bonthe and Moyamba did not appear ordinary neither were they some docile market women trading in fish along rivers in those parts of the country. These bore wealth of experiences, being heads of entities - schools, CSOs, media outfits, and heads of petty-trader unions - and might have had some appetising consumption of

politics and might have been bullied in favour of men over symbols for council and parliament. The facilitators cheered them up, and encouraged more women to take interest in politics and be champions for driving development in the communities and districts they come from.

Consultations in the East - those conversations were clever and the participants were brilliant. For them they wanted a peaceful eastern region and would choose an electoral system that would offer them electoral sanity in the region. Kono and Kailahun gathered in Kenema for the dialogue.

Jusu Jaka Ngobeh, Resident Minister, Eastern Region, said people of the east possessed a civic responsibility to take part in that kind of conversation dealing with their political, social, and economic conditions characterising their political existence. The consultation was important because it was to discuss an electoral system the country would utilize permanently during elections. And the participants there were to make that decision to allow the state adopt a system that would eliminate conflict during elections, reduce cost of elections, foster political participation, increase representation, and enhance inclusivity in the electioneering.

Western Rural, Waterloo - consultations there churned out praises for the District Chairman. Councillors of APC and SLPP seated on the high-table acknowledged his benign treatment to women - SLPP female councillors are placed as heads of committees just like APC female councillors. Most striking in the ensuing discussions were the huge appetite exhibited by women to occupy seats in both council and parliament. The conversations were lively and interactive. Women dominated the discussions, exhibiting interest to contest in elections and represent their communities.

It is important to follow the journey consultations took on account of the electoral choice Sierra Leoneans made between the proportional representation and first-past-the-post voting systems. Our memories may be short, easily forgetting that elaborate consultations were conducted on the subject-matter. Yes, a nation-wide consultations were conducted between May 2025 and June 2026, a good number of interest groups submitted position papers, and many individuals also submitted positions on the subject. I know this may have fed your appetite asking the question what those regions say regarding PR or FPTP. I know you want to hear that now! Wait! Let us go through the National Dialogue.

The National Dialogue took place at the Bintumani International Conference Centre on Thursday 17th July, 2025. Some five hundred people attended the session drawn from across the country, representing sectors of society such as market women, bike riders, motor drivers, lawyers, the media, religious groups, chiefs, political parties, academics, professionals, development partners, ministries, departments, and agencies, etc. The discussions centred on choosing a preferred electoral system for Sierra Leone, inviting position papers from interest groups and professionals. Inter-Religious Council, Council of Paramount Chiefs, All Political Parties Association, All Peoples Congress Party, Sierra Leone Peoples Party etc. presented position papers. These provided rich insight into the social and political history of the two electoral systems employed since 1996. The papers suggested what was best for Sierra Leone. And the participants at Bintumani - the kaleidoscope of opinions indicated their understanding of the voting system of their choice that would consolidate the peace and foster social harmony. UNDP, European Union, Chief Minister and Ministers, the Attorney-General, International IDEA and a host of development partners, ambassadors, heads of government entities, CSOs and the media, the private sector etc. attended the session.

That was not an ordinary session nor was it a meeting to discuss construction of market stalls. It was an assembly that would shed light beyond the immediate political milieu. It touched on the political biology of the state - the mechanism for conferring political power for the political governance of the state. Therefore, citizens were interested in the conversations for it touched on their socio-political wellbeing; for it concerned their economic welfare; for it related to the democratic culture of a people who had chosen cohesion over disunity, peace over conflict, and consolidation over disintegration.

Consultants for the consultations produced an instructive report that captured views of the citizens right across the country on the preferred electoral system for Sierra Leone. The next edition will capture the findings of the consultants and also presented speeches made at the National Dialogue. See part three.

## Governance & Development

By: Yusuf Keketoma Sandi, Esq.

In November 2013, the APC Administration, led by former President Ernest Bai Koroma, introduced a Bill in Parliament. Arrow Bockarie, then Deputy Minister of Justice, presented it in what appeared to be a deliberate effort to revive a provision associated with the 1978 One-Party Constitution.

The Bill altered a fundamental qualification for election as Speaker under section 79(1) of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, 1991. It removed the requirement that the Speaker be a judge of the Superior Court of Judicature or have previously held such judicial office. It also amended subsections (2) and (3) of section 80, changing the election of the Deputy Speaker from the first sitting of each parliamentary session to the first sitting of Parliament. In effect, this transformed the Deputy Speaker's tenure from an annual appointment into a five-year term.

The process was as controversial as the substance. In what many regarded as constitutional manoeuvring by the APC, the substantive Speaker, Justice Abel Stronge, was effectively sidelined. After the prayers, Hon. Ibrahim S. Sesay, then Clerk of Parliament, announced the Speaker's absence and invited the Deputy Speaker, APC's Hon. Chernor Ramadan Maju Bah, to preside.

The APC appeared to be in such a hurry that, although the House was called to order at 10:00 a.m., the Constitution of Sierra Leone (Amendment) Act 2013 had been passed by 12:55 p.m. In less than three hours, the Bill had gone through all three readings, the committee stage and the voting process, which faster than lightning.

The vote was conducted by a collection of voices under Standing Order 45 (S.O. 45). Curiously, our APC friends, who now portray themselves as the new "guardians of the Constitution", considered that procedure sufficient, proper and lawful. Some observers even suggested at the time that APC MPs needed speech therapy merely to pronounce section 108(2)(b) of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, 1991, in the Chamber. No recorded vote was taken to establish that the Bill had secured, on the second and third readings, the support of not less than two-thirds of the Members of Parliament.

Following the voice vote, the Bill was declared passed and became law. The Deputy Speaker and APC MPs were apparently so confident that the non-entrenched provisions in sections 79(1), 80(2) and 80(3) could be amended through a collection of voices, without recourse to section 108(2)(b), that the matter was not even referred to the Supreme Court for an opinion.

Before the Bill was passed, on 31 October 2013, the SLPP, then the main opposition party, issued a scathing press release condemning it. The party described the proposed amendments as an attempt to

## Memory Lane: The Constitution of Sierra Leone (Amendment) Act 2013

return Sierra Leone to its authoritarian past, drawing directly from the notorious 1978 One-Party Constitution. During the parliamentary proceedings, Hon. Dr. Bu-Buakei Jabbi, of blessed memory, also strongly opposed the Bill, describing it as wholly irrelevant and unnecessary.

On 19 November 2013, the very day the Bill was passed, twenty-eight civil society organisations, including the country's leading civil society groups, issued a joint statement condemning the proposed amendment and urging President Ernest Bai Koroma to withhold his assent.

Lo and behold, President Koroma signed the Bill into law on 29 November 2013. The civil society organisations' appeal to the former President not to sign it ultimately amounted to locking the stable door after the horse had bolted.

compliance it demands today is the very compliance it bypassed in 2013. The legality it now invokes was disregarded in 2013. The constitutional interpretation it seeks today was ignored in 2013. The APC cannot fail its own test on constitutional amendment and then turn around and demand that the SLPP pass it. That is the height of double standards and political hypocrisy.

In the same vein, the allegations of cash and cars trumpeted by my friend and Minority Leader, Abdul Kargbo, are both laughable and ill-advised. Given the public's low level of trust in politicians, I am not sure he genuinely believes those allegations will be taken seriously. The leaked audio, confirmed by Hon. Tawa Conteh, Deputy Speaker, suggests that it was an APC MP who was seeking assistance to support the Bill.

In light of the leaked audio, the allegations

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This history matters because constitutional principles cannot be applied selectively. Whatever one's view of the Speaker's ruling during the passage of the Constitution of Sierra Leone (Amendment) Act 2026, it must be acknowledged that Speaker Sengepoh Thomas delivered a considered ruling and referred the matter to the Supreme Court.

The contrast between 2013 and 2026 is instructive. The 2025 Bill underwent months of dialogue, engagement and consultation. In 2013, by contrast, there was no considered ruling by the Deputy Speaker after the voice vote, no referral to the Supreme Court, no meaningful prior consultation and no broad public engagement.

The Bill was introduced and passed on the same day, in approximately three hours. The APC may criticise the 2026 process, but a party that once rushed a constitutional amendment through Parliament in a single sitting, without a recorded vote, judicial referral or meaningful consultation, cannot credibly present itself today as the defender of constitutional principle.

The test the APC has set today is one it failed in 2013. The constitutional

may prove to be Abdul's foot-in-mouth moment. As a parliamentary leader, my friend Abdul Kargbo should have risen above mudslinging and grassroots gossip and focused on the substance of the debate. Instead, he may have opened a can of worms capable of swallowing him as well.

On the substance of the matter, the APC may have an opportunity before the Supreme Court to explain why, in 2013, it considered Parliament constitutionally entitled to amend non-entrenched provisions through the Constitution of Sierra Leone (Amendment) Act 2013 by relying on a collection of voices under S.O. 45, without securing the votes of not less than two-thirds of Members of Parliament as required by section 108(2)(b). The APC's position is not grounded in constitutional principle; it is driven by political survival. It is not founded on the consistent application of the Constitution; it is based on applying the Constitution selectively. At a time like this, the Constitution of Sierra Leone (Amendment) Act 2013 remains fresh in our minds. And on that record, the APC has failed its own test.

## Focus On Peace Building

### From Tension to Dialogue: How Mediation Helped Restore Calm in Sahn Malen



**W**hat began as tension following a local chieftaincy election in Sahn Malen has ended at the dialogue table, following an intervention by the Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion (ICPNC).

The intervention brought together Town Chief Abu Gombu and Madam Fatu Sesay, whose differences had contributed to growing tension within the community after the recent local chieftaincy election.

Political disagreements, allegations of insulting and provocative language, misinformation circulating on social media and growing mistrust among supporters of both parties had created concerns about the potential impact of the dispute on relationships within Sahn Malen.

In a community where political and personal disagreements can quickly spread beyond those directly involved, the situation required an intervention that would allow both sides to air their grievances and address the issues before they developed into a wider conflict.

The ICPNC stepped in to facilitate dialogue between the parties and other key stakeholders, bringing them together in an effort to ease tensions and find a peaceful way forward.

The mediation was led by ICPNC Southern Regional Coordinator Belinda Ndanema and Peace Mediator Abdulai J. Sillah, with the participation of Regent Chief Alex Bockarie Lamin, elders, women, youth representatives and other community stakeholders.

Rather than allowing the disagreements to continue through accusations, counter-accusations and exchanges among supporters, the parties were given the opportunity to speak directly about the issues that had caused tension.

The dialogue created space for concerns to be raised, misunderstandings to be addressed and the consequences of continued hostility to be considered.

At the centre of the discussions were concerns about the use of insulting language, political differences, misinformation and the role supporters could play in either calming or escalating tensions.

Such issues are not uncommon in the aftermath of elections, particularly at community level, where political competition can sometimes affect long-standing relationships and create divisions that extend beyond the election itself.

For Sahn Malen, the concern was not simply about resolving a disagreement between two individuals. It was also about preventing their differences from deepening divisions within the

wider community.

The involvement of traditional authorities, elders, women, young people and other stakeholders reflected the understanding that maintaining peace is a shared responsibility.

Through the discussions, both parties were able to address their concerns and eventually agree on steps aimed at restoring calm and strengthening relationships within the community.

They committed themselves to putting aside their differences and refraining from abusive, insulting or provocative language that could further inflame tensions.

Both sides also agreed to discourage the spread of misinformation, particularly through social media and other channels that can quickly carry unverified information and deepen mistrust.

The parties further committed to working with traditional authorities, community stakeholders and the ICPNC to promote unity, peaceful coexistence and development in Sahn Malen.

For the people involved in the mediation, the outcome represented more than the resolution of an immediate disagreement. It provided an opportunity to move the conversation away from confrontation and towards dialogue.

The intervention also drew attention to the growing role of communication in local conflicts.

In an environment where information can move rapidly through social media, private messaging platforms and informal community networks, allegations and misinformation can quickly reach a wider audience. What may begin as a disagreement between a small number of people can therefore become a source of tension for an entire community.

The discussions in Sahn Malen highlighted the importance of responsible communication, particularly in the period following elections when emotions may still be high and political differences remain fresh.

Community members were encouraged to avoid language and actions that could provoke others or deepen existing divisions.

The peaceful outcome in Sahn Malen also demonstrates the importance of addressing disputes before they become more difficult to manage.

By bringing the parties together and involving people with influence within the community, the mediation created an opportunity for grievances to be addressed directly rather than being allowed to grow through speculation, misinformation and competing narratives.

For the ICPNC, such interventions form part of its broader work to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts while strengthening social cohesion across Sierra Leone.

The Commission continues to work with traditional leaders, local peace actors, women, young people and other community stakeholders to identify tensions and encourage peaceful solutions.

The Sahn Malen intervention is a reminder that peace is often tested long before a conflict becomes visible to the wider public.

Tensions can begin with disagreements, words exchanged in anger, political rivalry or information that has not been verified. Left unresolved, such issues can damage relationships and create divisions that affect entire communities.

But in Sahn Malen, dialogue provided another path.

By choosing to sit together, listen to concerns and make commitments towards peaceful engagement, the parties demonstrated that differences do not have to end in prolonged hostility.

The commitments reached during the mediation now place responsibility not only on the two parties but also on their supporters and the wider community to protect the peace that has been restored.

As Sahn Malen moves forward, the intervention stands as an example of the role early dialogue and community participation can play in preventing local tensions from developing into larger conflicts.

For the ICPNC, the work continues beyond the mediation table - supporting communities to manage their differences peacefully, strengthening relationships among local actors and ensuring that dialogue remains an option when tensions arise.

In Sahn Malen, a dispute that had the potential to deepen divisions has, for now, been redirected towards conversation, cooperation and a shared commitment to peace.

# Spotlight On Health Care

## Compassion in Action: Mothers' Testimonials and Weekly Hospital Reviews Showcase Health Sector Progress



Across Sierra Leone, mothers are increasingly describing a health system where timely treatment, compassionate healthcare workers and improved access to essential services are giving families renewed hope.

At hospitals and health facilities in different districts, the experiences of mothers tell a powerful story behind the statistics of the Ministry of Health's 300 Days of Activism campaign. While challenges remain, patients say improvements in service delivery are making a difference in their lives and in the survival of mothers and children.

From the capital to district hospitals, mothers are highlighting the dedication of nurses, doctors, midwives and other frontline health workers who continue to provide care, often under difficult circumstances.

At Ola During Children's Hospital in Freetown, Abigail T. Turner, a mother of twins, shared the emotional experience of watching one of her children receive treatment for heart disease for six months.

"If I had not come here, I would have lost her," Abigail said, expressing gratitude to the doctors and nurses who cared for her child. She said the family received treatment and medicines without being asked to make payments, describing the experience as a major source of relief at a time when her child's life was at risk.

Another mother at the hospital, Fatmata Aruna, similarly praised the nurses for their commitment. "They have never collected anything from me since I came here with my child. The nurses are really trying," she said.

But the story of progress extends beyond Freetown.

At district-level hospitals and health facilities, mothers are also experiencing improvements in access to maternal and child healthcare, with many pointing to the availability of trained health workers, increased attention to emergency cases, antenatal care, immunisation and referral services as important factors in their experiences.

At a district hospital in the Northern Province, the Port Loko Regional Hospital, a mother of two, Alice Mariama Turay described how she was able to access antenatal services and receive immediate attention when complications developed during pregnancy.

According to her, the availability of health workers at the facility gave her confidence to seek care early rather than waiting until her condition became critical.

treatment said the attitude of health workers had encouraged her to seek medical attention promptly.

She said the nurses took time to explain her child's condition and advised her on medication, nutrition and when to return to the facility if the child's condition worsened.

"What gives me confidence is that they listen to us. They don't just give the medicine and send you away. They explain what we should do," she said.

A mother of two girls, Bandu Rogers in the Southern Province, at the Bo Government Hospital also shared her experience of accessing maternal healthcare at the facility, describing the support she received from midwives before and after delivery as reassuring.

She said regular antenatal visits helped her understand the importance of seeking skilled care and following medical advice throughout pregnancy.

"The midwives encouraged me to attend my appointments and told me what to expect. When it was time to deliver, I felt prepared because of the support I had received," she said.

For mothers in communities far from major referral hospitals, these experiences demonstrate the importance of strengthening district-level healthcare services. District hospitals and peripheral health facilities remain the first point of contact for many families, particularly pregnant women, newborns and children.

The experiences of these mothers also reinforce the importance of the Ministry of Health's weekly Maternal and Child Death Emergency Meeting on performance review, where the Minister, Deputies, Doctors, District Health Management Teams, Hospital Administrators and other health professionals across the country meet to review maternal and child deaths, assess service delivery, identify challenges and agree on practical solutions.

The MaCDEM provides a mechanism for the Ministry to examine individual cases and identify recurring gaps in service delivery, including delays in seeking or receiving care, referral challenges, clinical management and emergency response.

Rather than focusing only on statistics, the reviews also bring attention to the experiences of patients and frontline health workers.

During the last meeting on Friday 14th, August 2026, the Sierra Leone's Minister of Health Dr. Austin Demby called for greater accountability and decisive action to prevent avoidable maternal

"When I arrived, the nurses attended to me and explained what was happening. They encouraged me not to be afraid and made sure I was referred when I needed further care," she said.

In the Eastern Province, the Maternal Center of Excellence (MCOE) in Kono another mother of four children, Finda Sumana who brought her young child to the health facility for

and child deaths, stressing that the country's health sector must move beyond explanations and focus on implementing solutions that save lives.

The Ministry's reported progress during the 300 Days of Activism provides an important backdrop to these stories. Since the campaign was launched in March 2026, the Ministry has reported a 31 percent reduction in maternal deaths, an 11 percent reduction in infant mortality, and significant progress in identifying and vaccinating previously unvaccinated children.

Despite these gains, Dr. Demby stressed that the remaining challenges require renewed commitment and urgent action, particularly in situations where deaths may have been prevented through timely and appropriate interventions.

Behind each percentage, however, is a mother, a newborn or a child whose life has been affected by the availability of timely healthcare.

At Princess Christian Maternity Hospital (PCMH), Gladys Peters, a pregnant woman receiving treatment for complications, said the reassurance she received from nurses helped reduce her fear.

"I came in with complications, and I was so afraid for my baby. But the nurses have been with me every step checking on me, reassuring me, and making sure I get the care I need without asking for money. I feel safe here," she said.

Her experience reflects a broader message emerging from the health sector: quality healthcare is not only about medicines, equipment and infrastructure; it is also about how patients are treated when they are most vulnerable.

For mothers, compassionate care can mean the difference between fear and confidence, between delaying treatment and seeking help, and, in some cases, between life and death.

The stories from Freetown and the districts therefore provide a human face to Sierra Leone's health sector gains. They also demonstrate why continued investment in frontline healthcare workers, district hospitals, referral systems, medicines, equipment and community engagement remains essential.

As the 300 Days of Activism campaign progresses, the Ministry of Health is expected to continue using its weekly performance review mechanism to strengthen accountability and ensure that lessons from hospitals and health facilities are translated into practical improvements.

For the mothers who have experienced the system at its most critical moments, progress is not simply measured in percentages.

It is measured in a child who survives a serious illness.

It is measured in a mother who receives emergency care when complications arise.

It is measured in a newborn who receives the right treatment at the right time.

And it is measured in the confidence of families who know that when they walk through the doors of a health facility, they will find professionals ready to listen, care and respond.

The message from mothers across Sierra Leone is therefore both one of appreciation and a call for continued action: the progress is real, but the work must continue until every mother and every child regardless of where they live can access safe, timely and compassionate healthcare.



**Government Of Sierra Leone Presidential Address Delivered By His Excellency Dr. Julius Maada Bio G.C.R.S.L President of the Republic of Sierra Leone and Commander-in-Chief of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces**

**On the Occasion of the State Opening of the Fourth Session of the Sixth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone In the Chamber of Parliament Building Tower Hill, Freetown On Friday, 7th August 2026 At 10:00 a.m.**

**Continued from last edition**

155. To meet these targets, we developed the Just Energy Transition and Green Growth Plan and sector reforms, including 200 mini-grids through our Rural Electrification Drive.

156. The completed CLSG Rural Electrification Project provided 12,000 connections in over 25 communities and enables imports of 27 megawatts from Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea.

157. Rehabilitating and expanding the Bo-Kenema distribution system, our largest recent energy infrastructure investment, will connect 50,500 households and modernise networks in our second- and third-largest cities.

158. The USD 495 million Millennium Challenge Corporation Compact will further strengthen the national grid through critical infrastructure investments and policy reforms.

159. Through the World Bank-funded Enhancing Sierra Leone Energy Access Project (ESLEAP), implemented by UNOPS and the Ministry of Energy, more than 10,000 metered connections have been installed, while solar home systems have reached another 12,000 households.

160. In 2025, solar power was extended to 203 schools and 199 health facilities.

161. The Newton and Lungi solar plants connected more than 50,000 people, while the 40-megawatt RESPITE Solar Project represents the largest single addition of renewable energy to the national grid. More than 40 communities in the Western Rural Area are expected to benefit directly.

162. Through the European Union's €22 million Salone Off-Grid Renewable Energy Acceleration initiative and €2.68 million from Denmark, we will accelerate privatesector investment in green mini-grids. More than 320 suitable sites have been identified, with 20 international developers ready to invest.

163. A 108-megawatt combined-cycle power plant is under construction and is expected to supply electricity in the first quarter of 2027.

164. We secured a 60 per cent financing commitment from the OPEC Fund to rehabilitate and expand the Bumbuna Hydroelectric Project, doubling its capacity from 50 to 100 megawatts.

165. For families, electricity means light for children to study; for hospitals and clinics, safer care; and for businesses, the power to produce, grow and create jobs.

**B. ROADS AND BRIDGES: CONNECTING SIERRA LEONE**

**Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members,**

166. Roads and bridges connect communities to markets, essential services and economic opportunity.

167. Between 2018 and 2026, my Government

paved 474.46 kilometres of roads and built or rebuilt 23 bridges. Another 26 major road projects are underway: 18 Government-funded and 8 development partner-funded.

168. Pipeline projects include the 105-kilometre Kambia-Tomparie-Kamakwie Road, supported by USD 70.1 million in financing from the Islamic Development Bank; the 39-kilometre Buedu-Koindu-Liberia/Guinea Border Road; the 65-kilometre Bauya-Benducha Road; and the 105-kilometre Kenema-Joru Junction and Kenema-Blama-Potoru Road.

169. These investments must deliver practical results: lower transport costs, stronger trade, and better access to markets and public services.

**C. PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND ROAD SAFETY**

**Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members,**

170. Safe, affordable transport sustains daily life and the economy. The Lumley terminal, 50 WAKA Fine buses, streetlights and pedestrian bridges at Jui Junction, Shell New Road, Lumley and Wilberforce have made travel safer and more accessible.

171. We will expand urban and inter-city services, add high-capacity buses and improve terminals while keeping fares affordable.

172. Stronger licensing, inspections, traffic signals, lighting, crossings and emergency response will reduce accidents.

**D. LANDS, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

**Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members,**

173. Rapid urban growth is increasing pressure on land, housing, transport, drainage and public services. Secure land rights and well-planned communities are essential.

174. The Town and Country Planning Act 2025 replaced legislation dating back to 1946, modernising spatial planning, zoning, development control, disaster-risk reduction and the planning authority of local councils.

175. We will modernise land administration, make transactions more transparent, reduce disputes, expand affordable housing and improve informal settlements.

176. Secure title gives families confidence and businesses a basis to invest.

**E. MARITIME TRANSPORT, PORTS AND HARBOURS**

**Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members,**

177. As a coastal nation, Sierra Leone must leverage its maritime potential for trade, fisheries, tourism, and regional connectivity.

178. We will modernise ferries, navigational aids, vessel monitoring and ports, making travel

safer, cargo faster and coastal communities more accessible.

179. Digital customs, automated cargo tracking, and electronic clearance will reduce delays and trade costs, with support from strategic private-sector investment.

180. We will strengthen the Ports and Harbours Authority to improve efficiency, transparency and financial sustainability, while connecting our ports to roads and production centres.

181. Reports linking Sierra Leone to illegal drug trafficking are deeply concerning. Criminal networks will not be allowed to use our territory, waters, airports or ports as transit routes.

182. We will strengthen maritime surveillance, coastal radar, cargo and container screening, intelligence-led risk profiling and financial investigations.

183. We will also deepen coordination among customs, ports, law enforcement and intelligence agencies, and strengthen regional and international cooperation to ensure every credible allegation is independently and thoroughly investigated.

184. We will secure our waters and ports, ensure equal accountability before the law, and protect Sierra Leone's integrity and international reputation.

**Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members,**

185. Infrastructure connects our country; capable institutions turn those connections into reliable public services.

186. This brings me to our fifth Game Changer: Transforming the Public Service Architecture.

**VIII. GAME CHANGER FIVE: TRANSFORMING THE PUBLIC-SERVICE ARCHITECTURE - BUILDING A GOVERNMENT THAT WORKS FOR OUR PEOPLE**

**Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members,**

187. In this Year of Action and Accelerated Delivery, Government must operate at the speed and standard our people deserve.

188. Whether in schools, clinics, district offices or service centres, every citizen should receive efficient, fair and respectful treatment.

189. We are modernising administration, digital services and performance management.

190. Institutions and senior officials will be assessed against national priorities and measurable targets; performance reports will be published, delays explained and failures corrected.

**A. DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF GOVERNMENT SERVICES**

**Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members,**

191. Digital reform should save time and make services easier to obtain.

**To be continued next edition**

# Parliamentary Procedure Properly Followed In Passing The Constitutional Amendment Bill

political engagement and constitutional review.

Speaking at the Government of Sierra Leone's Weekly Press Conference held at the Miatta Civic Centre on Tuesday, 18 August 2026, Hon. Gevao said the current constitutional reform process did not emerge suddenly, but was rooted in several previous reviews of the 1991 Constitution.

He traced the process to the work of the Peter Tucker Constitutional Review Committee, whose recommendations were later followed by the establishment of the Dr. Edmond Cowan Constitutional Review Committee.

The 80-member Cowan Committee brought together representatives from civil society, the media, teachers, political parties, the Inter-Religious Council, the Labour Congress and other stakeholders. According to Hon. Gevao, the committee produced a comprehensive report containing recommendations aimed at strengthening Sierra Leone's constitutional and democratic institutions. Although political parties disagreed on some recommendations, he said there was broad agreement on several key issues, including electoral reforms, proportional representation (PR), the electoral threshold and increased participation of women in politics.

Hon. Gevao said the reform process continued under successive APC and SLPP administrations, both of which produced White Papers outlining their respective positions on the recommendations.

He noted that among the recommendations accepted by the APC administration of former President Ernest Bai Koroma were the Proportional Representation system and the 50 percent plus one threshold for presidential elections, which the APC now opposes.

Turning to developments following the disputed 2023 elections, Hon. Gevao said the Tripartite Committee was established with representatives from the APC, SLPP and the international community to examine electoral and constitutional concerns and identify areas of agreement between the two major political parties.

He explained that proportional representation was among the issues considered by the committee and was not a new concept, having featured prominently in earlier constitutional review processes.

According to him, the Tripartite process also produced agreement on several other reforms, including reducing the electoral threshold from 55 percent to 50 percent plus one, measures to enhance women's political participation and other constitutional and electoral

provisions.

Hon. Gevao further explained why some proposed amendments were separated from the broader constitutional review process. He said the decision was informed by concerns that changing electoral laws too close to an election could create uncertainty and raise questions about fairness. Consequently, provisions that could directly affect the 2028 elections were treated through a separate legislative process, while the wider constitutional review was expected to continue thereafter.

On the parliamentary process, Hon. Gevao said the Constitutional Amendment Bill underwent the required stages, beginning with its First Reading in February 2026.

He said Members of Parliament were given opportunities to study the provisions, consult their technical teams and legal advisers, and propose amendments before the bill proceeded through subsequent stages. He particularly highlighted the Committee Stage, during which the proposed constitutional provisions were examined clause by clause. Issues considered included proportional representation, the electoral threshold, women's participation, dual citizenship, eligibility to contest elections,

nomination committees and consultation requirements.

Addressing concerns over the voting procedure, Hon. Gevao referred to Section 108 of the 1991 Constitution, which requires constitutional amendment bills to secure a two-thirds majority at the Second and Third Readings.

He, however, distinguished the voting on the bill itself from the consideration of one of the contentious clauses during the Committee Stage.

According to Hon. Gevao, the particular clause considered at Committee Stage did not require the same two-thirds majority applicable to the bill at the relevant constitutional stages.

He also defended the continuation of parliamentary business after APC Members of Parliament walked out of the chamber.

He said Parliament's Standing Orders provide that parliamentary business may continue once the required quorum is established. According to him, the House needed 38 Members to form a quorum on the day in question, while 96 Members were present.

He added that the number subsequently increased to 97 following the arrival of a Paramount Chief who had been ill.

Hon. Gevao argued that the number of Members present, together with the absence of three APC MPs, meant that the constitutional threshold required for the passage of the bill was achieved. He therefore maintained that the Speaker's ruling allowing the parliamentary process to continue was correct.

The SLPP lawmaker said disagreements and walkouts during parliamentary proceedings should not be interpreted as evidence that the constitutional reform process lacked consultation or scrutiny.

He stressed that Members of Parliament had spent considerable time debating, reviewing and consulting on the proposed amendments, describing the Constitution as the foundation of Sierra Leone's governance system.

Hon. Gevao concluded that the constitutional amendment process reflected years of consultations, recommendations from previous review committees, political negotiations and parliamentary scrutiny.

He called for greater public understanding of the process, stressing that informed public participation remains important as Sierra Leone continues to reform its constitutional and electoral framework.

## Health Minister Calls For Action On Maternal And Child Deaths

move beyond explanations and focus on implementing solutions that save lives.

Dr. Demby made this statement on Friday, 14 August 2026, when he joined the Ministry of Health's weekly Maternal and Child Death Emergency Meeting (MaCDEM) at the Ministry's Conference Hall in Freetown.

The MaCDEM brings together doctors, District Health Management Teams, hospital administrators and other health professionals to review maternal and child deaths reported across the country. The platform examines the circumstances surrounding each death, identifies contributing factors and determines what could have been done differently to prevent similar cases.

Speaking during the meeting, Dr. Demby stressed that every maternal or child death should serve as an opportunity to identify weaknesses within the health system and take corrective action.

"This is not a time for excuses and explanations, but a time for accountability and implementation of solutions," Dr. Demby said.

He emphasized that preventable deaths require collective responsibility, urging healthcare workers and health authorities to strengthen clinical care, emergency response, referral systems and timely decision-making.

The Minister's intervention comes as Sierra Leone continues to implement the 300 Days of Activism for Triple Zero, a national campaign focused on achieving Zero Preventable Maternal Deaths, Zero Preventable Child Deaths and Zero-Dose Children.

At Week 32 of the campaign, the Ministry reported significant progress in several key areas. Of an estimated 9,006 zero-dose children, approximately 8,037 have been vaccinated, representing 89.2 percent of the national target.

The country has also recorded a 30 percent decline in maternal deaths and a 14.4 percent reduction in child deaths, according to figures presented during the meeting.

The Ministry attributes the progress to intensified

interventions, targeted investments, strengthened monitoring and increased accountability across the health sector.

Despite these gains, Dr. Demby stressed that the remaining challenges require renewed commitment and urgent action, particularly in situations where deaths may have been prevented through timely and appropriate interventions.

The MaCDEM provides a mechanism for the Ministry to examine individual cases and identify recurring gaps in service delivery, including delays in seeking or receiving care, referral challenges, clinical management and emergency response.

The information generated through the reviews is intended to guide corrective measures at health facilities and district level while strengthening the wider health system.

The Ministry of Health has reaffirmed its commitment to sustaining the momentum of the 300 Days of Activism and accelerating interventions towards the Triple Zero targets.



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Policy & The People

A Policy Is More Than a Document

By Alice A. Kamara Esq.

A policy can begin with a document. It can contain carefully written objectives, strategies, timelines and commitments. It may go through consultations, revisions and approvals before it finally becomes an official government policy. However, that is not where the story ends. In fact, it is where the more difficult part begins. A policy only becomes meaningful when its intentions begin to translate into action. A policy on education must eventually be felt in schools. A health policy must reach patients and health workers. An agricultural policy must mean something to farmers. A social protection policy must eventually reach the people it was designed to support. This is why the success of public policy cannot be measured by the quality of the document alone. It must also be measured by what happens after the document is approved. Are institutions equipped to implement it? Are the necessary resources available? Do the people responsible understand their roles? Are citizens aware of what the policy provides? And, perhaps most importantly, is anyone checking whether it is achieving what it promised to achieve? These questions remind us of an important distinction: Making policy is one thing. Making policy work is another. For citizens, understanding this distinction matters. Government policies are not simply documents produced in offices. They are instruments intended to address real problems and improve people's lives. That is why Policy & The People will continue to look beyond the policy document itself but to the decisions, institutions, laws, resources and people that turn policy intentions into results. Because ultimately, the true measure of a policy is not what it says on paper, but what people experience because of it.

Minister Bah Challenges Young Leaders to Turn Outrage into Action at AFS Youth Assembly in Geneva

By: Salamatu Conteh



Minister of Information and Civic Education, Chornor Bah, has challenged young people to turn their outrage over injustice into action, leadership and institution-building, urging them to move beyond criticism and become active participants in shaping the decisions that affect their lives. Minister Bah delivered the message during two engagements at the AFS Youth Assembly in Geneva: an opening plenary address under the theme "Rise. Reimagine. Rebuild: A World for All," and a fireside conversation on civic

education, youth leadership and political participation. Drawing on his journey from a 15-year-old activist in Sierra Leone to serving in government, Bah reflected on the role outrage has played in shaping his activism and public service. "I am an activist, a noise maker, somebody who refuses to settle when things are not right," he said. But he stressed that activism cannot end with identifying what is wrong. "My activism is not just about bringing things down; it is about bringing things up." Bah recalled helping to establish Sierra Leone's Children's Forum Network at the age of 15, creating a platform for children to participate in national conversations, including the country's peace process and Truth and Reconciliation Commission. "I was only 15, but I had the audacity to ask my country to do better," he said. He also reflected on the global response to the shooting of Malala Yousafzai for advocating girls' education, and his own decision to leave his job during Sierra Leone's Ebola outbreak to support the national response. His work during the Ebola crisis, particularly with women and girls, later contributed to the establishment of Purposeful, a movement-building hub supporting girls and feminist organizing. For Bah, these experiences demonstrate that outrage can be a powerful starting point for change, but cannot be the end. "Outrage is powerful-but outrage alone is not enough." He challenged young leaders to find their outrage, harness it, organize with others and build-moving from identifying injustice to understanding the systems behind it and creating better alternatives. "Change is not a solo performance," he said, encouraging young people to build alliances, listen to those most affected and share power. During the fireside conversation hosted by Wantoe T. Wantoe, Executive Director of African Policy and AFS Intercultural Programs, Bah extended that challenge to politics and public service. Reflecting on his own transition from activism into government, he said young people who want to change society should not abandon the spaces where important decisions are made. "Politics is too important to be left with politicians alone." Bah said that after years of challenging decision-makers from outside, he came to believe that activists must also be prepared to enter the room and help shape the decisions themselves. "When young people get involved, they shift the conversation. It changes the landscape. It changes rooms," he said. He pointed to Sierra Leone, where President Julius Maada Bio has appointed several young people to senior government positions, including 10 ministers below the age of 40, as an example of how youth participation can bring new perspectives into government. Bah also drew lessons from his current role as Minister of Information and Civic Education, particularly the challenge of misinformation and the need to make government communication more accessible. He explained that increasing the use of Krio, communicating proactively and providing timely factual information have helped government reach citizens directly and strengthen access to credible information. Rather than focusing only on those spreading misinformation, he said institutions must understand why citizens turn to alternative sources and communicate in languages and formats people understand and trust. Bah also cautioned young activists who eventually enter positions of leadership not to lose touch with the people and causes that brought them there. "When you enter positions of leadership-as many of you will-do not become so comfortable in the room that you forget those still outside it. Keep a seat open. Keep listening." Across both engagements, Bah's message was clear: young people should challenge systems that fail them, but they must also be willing to organize, lead and build better ones. "Most times, you cannot do it alone," he said. "Find your clique, someone who is outraged like you, and rise, reimagine and rebuild." He concluded with a call to the young leaders gathered in Geneva: "Rise above the limits imposed on you. Reimagine systems that exclude people. Rebuild institutions, communities and relationships so that they work for everyone."

# Health Ministry Boosts Infection Prevention with Locally Produced Soap, Sanitiser and Detergent

By- Mahmoud Kamara, Senior Information Officer, Ministry of Health

**4**th Floor Youyi Building, Freetown, Sierra Leone - August 18, 2026: Sierra Leone's Ministry of Health has strengthened its infection prevention and control efforts with the local production of liquid soap, hand sanitiser and liquid detergent for distribution to government hospitals and health facilities across the country. The initiative, led by the National Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Programme, forms part of the Ministry's ongoing 300 Days of Activism for Triple Zero, a national campaign focused on reducing maternal deaths, child deaths and the number of zero-dose children. The locally produced supplies are intended to support hand hygiene, environmental cleaning and the safe maintenance of healthcare facilities, helping to reduce the spread of infections and prevent complications that can lead to sepsis.

Nana Fofanah, Programme Manager of the National Infection Prevention and Control Programme, said infections remain a major contributor to maternal and child deaths and can become life-threatening when they develop into sepsis.

She explained that the locally produced liquid soap will support regular handwashing, while hand sanitiser will be made available for healthcare workers and patients. Liquid detergent will be used for cleaning healthcare environments, surfaces and medical equipment.

"Something as simple as washing your hands and keeping your environment clean can drastically reduce germs in the environment," Fofanah said, emphasising the importance of consistent hand hygiene and environmental cleanliness in healthcare settings.

According to the IPC Programme Manager, the initial production and distribution will provide government hospitals and health facilities with approximately three months' supply of the products. Production will continue thereafter, with replenishment based on consumption levels and the specific needs of individual facilities.

To strengthen accountability and ensure effective use of the supplies, the Ministry has introduced consumption registers in health facilities. The registers will enable health authorities to monitor the use of soap, sanitiser and detergent, identify unusual consumption patterns and support timely replenishment.

District IPC supervisors and hospital IPC focal persons will also provide mentorship, supervision and compliance monitoring to ensure that healthcare workers adhere to infection prevention and control measures.

Fofanah said the monitoring system would help the Ministry determine whether facilities are receiving and using the products appropriately and identify areas requiring additional support.

The local production initiative is part of the Ministry's broader strategy to

strengthen infection prevention and control across all levels of healthcare, from primary healthcare facilities to secondary and tertiary hospitals.

The Ministry will continue working with healthcare workers to improve compliance with IPC protocols while strengthening supervision and mentorship at both facility and district levels.

Fofanah further called on healthcare workers, patients, caregivers and visitors to make infection prevention a shared responsibility by observing proper hand hygiene and maintaining cleanliness whenever they access health facilities.

The Ministry believes that strengthening infection prevention and control will contribute to safer healthcare environments and help reduce preventable infections, particularly among pregnant women, mothers, newborns and children.



The initiative also represents a step towards greater sustainability in healthcare by ensuring that essential infection prevention products can be produced locally and supplied to health facilities according to their needs.

As Sierra Leone continues the 300 Days of Activism for Triple Zero, the Ministry of Health says infection prevention and control will remain central to the national effort to combat sepsis and reduce preventable maternal and child deaths.

## MLGCA Resolves Impasse Between Gbense Chiefdom and KUST

By Sahr Sewa, Senior Information Officer, MLGCA

**T**he Ministry of Local Government and Community Affairs (MLGCA) has helped resolve the impasse between the leadership of Gbense Chiefdom and the Kono University of Science and Technology (KUST). This followed a meeting in Freetown with Chiefdom authorities, University leadership, and other stakeholders.

In his opening statement, the Acting Minister of Local Government and Community Affairs, Alfred Moi Jamiru, said the purpose of the meeting was to resolve the impasse between the University and Gbense Chiefdom.

He noted that MLGCA, the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education (MTHE), the Office of National Security (ONS), and Civil Society Organizations have all played mediation roles. He also expressed concern over social media postings, saying it portrayed both the University and the Chiefdom in a negative light. He recalled that the establishment of KUST was a major decision by His Excellency President Julius Maada Bio, and stressed that government remains committed to ensuring the institution fulfills its mandate of providing higher education in Sierra Leone. He called on all parties to resolve issues through dialogue and to work together so that the university's legacy becomes Gbense Chiefdom's legacy. The Acting Minister recognized the behind-the-scenes role of the Minister of Local Government and Community Affairs, Amb. Tamba Lamina, and the Minister and Deputy Minister of Technical and Higher Education, Dr. Haja Ramatulai Wurie and Sarjoh Aziz-Kamara, respectively. MLGCA's Permanent Secretary, Prince Alex Soriba, assured stakeholders of government's commitment to intervene to resolve issues where necessary and to support a peaceful resolution to protect development initiatives in Kono.

The Vice Chancellor and Principal of



KUST, Prof. Tamba Jamiru, explained that the concerns relate to land, property, compensation, and arrangements for the university's use of certain facilities. He said discussions have taken place between the University and Chiefdom authorities, and that the institution remains committed to finding an amicable resolution. He added that the University leadership has taken responsibility for gaps in the arrangement that delayed taking possession of the land in question. Prof. Jamiru acknowledged gaps in communication regarding funding for University property, but however assured members that moving forward, the University and the Chiefdom will continue to engage to move the process forward. In their presentation, the Paramount Chief of Gbense Chiefdom, PC Komba S.K. Kaimachinde, and the Chiefdom Speaker, Kai S. Manchendeh, briefed the Acting Minister on issues that led to the confrontation around the university. They noted that significant progress has been made since then, and expressed optimism about the meeting helping to resolve the matter once and

for all. PC Kaimachinde reaffirmed the Chiefdom's commitment to education and development, and expressed willingness to work with the university and government to address any concerns. He also acknowledged the chiefdom's agreement to sign the Deed of Transfer of Gift to the University. The Chiefdom Speaker, Kai S. Manchendeh, rejected claims of hostility between the chiefdom and the university. He, however, acknowledged gaps in communication between the two parties.

Dr. Josephus Brimah, Chief Technical and Higher Education Officer at MTHE, also reaffirmed the ministry's commitment to KUST and underscored the importance of maintaining good relations with the chiefdom and other stakeholders.

At the close of the meeting, it was unanimously agreed that the Deed of Transfer of Gift will be executed in the following week in Gbense Chiefdom, Kono District, in the presence of all relevant stakeholders. The chiefdom authorities also appealed to MLGCA, MTHE, and the University stakeholders to engage the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints to help resolve its land issue.

# Inside Parliament

## PAC Orders Kailahun District Council to Strengthen Revenue Its Mobilisation Efforts

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the Parliament of Sierra Leone has commenced public hearings on audit queries raised against Local Councils in the Auditor-General's Report for the 2024 financial year. The exercise began with Kailahun District Council on Monday, 17th August 2026, at the Kenema District Council Hall. The hearings formed part of Parliament's constitutional oversight responsibility to examine the management and utilisation of public funds and other resources by local councils.

Speaking during the proceedings, the Acting Chairman of the PAC, Hon. PC Desmond M. Kargobai, stressed the need for councils to uphold transparency, accountability and sound financial management. He clarified that the purpose of the hearings was not to criticise councils, but to examine audit findings, identify challenges and encourage improvements in local governance.

Hon. PC Kargobai also noted that councils received grants and other support from central government, whilst they have responsibility to mobilise own-source revenues for development. He therefore urged councils to ensure that all funds collected and received were properly accounted for and utilised for their intended purposes.

He further encouraged council officials to provide supporting documents to clarify audit queries, particularly where such evidence was not available to auditors during the audit exercise.

During its engagement with Kailahun District Council, the Committee expressed concerns over the council's low level of own-source revenue mobilisation for the period under review. The PAC has urged the council to strengthen its revenue-generation mechanisms and provide proper documentation on revenue collected and expenditure incurred. The Committee also requested the council to demonstrate how its various sources of own-source revenue could be expanded to improve its financial capacity.

Among the key audit issues examined were the non-receipts of some budgeted grants from central government, the council's

performance in own-source revenue mobilisation, outstanding statutory deductions owed to relevant authorities, and the absence of sufficient evidence of community participation and awareness in the budget preparation process.

The Committee also reviewed several other audit queries raised in the Auditor-General's Report. Some of the issues were resolved during the proceedings, whilst the outstanding matters were referred for further clarification and follow-



up. The PAC has also requested the Audit Service to conduct follow-up work on unresolved issues and verify documentary evidence provided by the council to ascertain whether the outstanding audit queries have been satisfactorily addressed.

## Parliamentary Tourism Committee Engages National Tourist Board on Tourism Development

The Parliamentary Committee on Tourism and Cultural Affairs, chaired by Honourable Tom Issac Tucker, has engaged the management of the National Tourist Board (NTB) on the state of Sierra Leone's tourism sector as part of Parliament's oversight responsibilities.

The engagement, held on Wednesday, 12th August 2026, at the NTB Boardroom in Freetown, focused on the Board's achievements, challenges, financial management, revenue generation, tourism promotion, ongoing projects and future plans.

Deputy Chairman Honourable Abdul Karim Kamara said the Committee's objective was not to "police" the NTB, but to understand its operations and identify areas where Parliament could provide support. He emphasized tourism's importance to economic diversification and national development.

NTB General Manager Madam Fatmata Carew reported significant progress despite funding challenges following the end of World Bank support for marketing activities in 2024. Tourist arrivals reportedly rose from about 94,000 in 2024 to approximately 150,000 in 2025. The Board attributed the increase partly to its marketing initiatives and partnerships with international tour operators, including G Adventures and Intrepid. The NTB also highlighted efforts to promote gastronomy, eco-tourism and community-based tourism, as well as the growing potential of Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions



(MICE) tourism following the opening of the Julius Maada Bio International Conference Centre. The Committee was further briefed on the Board's digital marketing activities, tourism websites, social media platforms and acquisition of modern communication equipment. Particular attention was given to the management and redevelopment of Lumley Beach. The Board reported sanitation, beautification, tree-planting and security initiatives, alongside efforts to restructure beach facilities. It disclosed that 66 beach bars had been demolished, while 33 others were instructed to restructure to improve standards and the appearance of the beach.

However, inadequate funding remains a major challenge. The NTB said its approved budget was insufficient to implement several planned projects, including the proposed Tourist Information Centre at Balamuya in Kambia. The Committee also reviewed previous tourism projects at Tawai Island, Banana Island and Kabala, while financial accountability and documentation were scrutinized. Members raised concerns over missing figures, unsigned documents and inconsistencies in some financial reports. The NTB confirmed that its 2025 financial statements were available and that an audit was ongoing. Chairman Tom Issac Tucker commended the NTB for providing additional information and assured that the Committee would carefully examine the Board's achievements and challenges before determining areas requiring parliamentary intervention. The engagement forms part of the Committee's wider oversight programme, which includes further engagements with the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs and other tourism institutions and sites across the country. The Committee reaffirmed its commitment to working with stakeholders to strengthen tourism, improve accountability, attract more visitors and maximize the sector's contribution to Sierra Leone's economic growth and development.

300 Days of Activism  
for Triple Zero

R dae take  
me **pekin**  
for get all  
e **maklate**  
Early **action**  
dae **save life.**

Zero Dae Start Wit Action



Ministry of  
Health



GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE  
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION  
AND CIVIC EDUCATION



# ENTERTAINMENT

## Incredible JJ: The Mende Voice Taking Sierra Leonean Music To New Heights

By Marian Magdalene Bangura



Boomplay.

What followed was a remarkable transformation from an emerging artiste from the East into one of Sierra Leone's most closely watched young musical acts. His story has become an example of how talent from outside Freetown can capture national attention when given the opportunity to shine.

**A Sound Rooted in Mende**

Perhaps one of the most distinctive aspects of Incredible JJ's artistry is his commitment to incorporating Mende, one of Sierra Leone's major indigenous languages, into contemporary popular music. Rather than abandoning his cultural roots in pursuit of a more commercially familiar sound, JJ has turned his linguistic and cultural identity into one of his greatest musical assets.

His music combines Mende with Krio and English over contemporary Afrobeats, R&B and Afro-fusion productions, creating a sound that feels both local and accessible to wider audiences. His song "Aminata," for example, showcases his ability to weave Mende into a romantic Afrobeat composition. The song became another important step in establishing his musical personality following the success of "Freetown."

His earlier release "Jonjomi" - a title associated with the idea of "vibe," also demonstrated his ability to turn local expression into contemporary musical entertainment. For JJ, language is therefore more than a means of communication. It is part of his identity and a bridge between Sierra Leone's cultural heritage and the sound of today's African youth.

**From Viral Breakthrough to Growing Discography**

Incredible JJ has demonstrated that he is far more than a one-hit sensation. Following "Freetown," he continued to build his catalogue with songs including "Aminata," "Bad Bush," "Decide," "Sporty Vibe" and "Side Gig." His music has continued to attract listeners across Sierra Leone and beyond, while his growing streaming numbers have strengthened his position as one of the country's emerging digital music stars.

His 2024 single "Bad Bush" became another major milestone. According to artist and music-industry profiles, the song enjoyed substantial streaming success and spent several weeks at the top of Audiomack's Sierra Leone chart.

His continued musical output has also demonstrated his versatility. He can deliver energetic Afrobeat records, romantic songs, smooth R&B-inspired melodies and more experimental Afro-fusion sounds without losing the identity that distinguishes him from his peers.

**A New Chapter: \*The Maths**

In 2026, Incredible JJ entered another important phase of his career with the release of his seven-track project, *The Maths*. The project, released in May 2026, includes songs such as "Jakondeh," "Novice," "Love Code," "City Bill," "Crush," and "Morning Sunlight," among others. The project also features collaborations with artistes including JZyNO, King Boss LA and King David 1995. The project provides an even clearer picture of JJ's artistic evolution, showing an artiste becoming increasingly comfortable with his voice, songwriting and ability to experiment with different contemporary African sounds.

"Novice," for instance, combines Krio and Mende in an Afrobeat setting, further demonstrating the artiste's continuing commitment to incorporating Sierra Leonean languages into modern popular music.

From Eastern Sierra Leone to International Attention

From the vibrant streets of Sierra Leone's Eastern Province has emerged a young musical talent whose distinctive voice, originality and fearless embrace of local language are steadily earning him a place among the country's most exciting new-generation artistes.

His name is James Junior Kaisama, popularly known as Incredible JJ.

Born in Sierra Leone and closely associated with Kenema, Incredible JJ represents a new generation of musicians who are proving that Sierra Leone's musical identity can be rooted in local culture while simultaneously embracing contemporary global sounds. With his ability to move effortlessly between Mende, Krio and English, while drawing influences from Afrobeats, R&B, hip-hop and Afro-fusion, JJ is developing a musical identity that is distinctly his own.

From Kenema to the National Spotlight

Incredible JJ's rise to prominence was anything but conventional.

The young artiste first captured widespread attention through a freestyle titled "Freetown," which expressed his anticipation of visiting Sierra Leone's capital. The freestyle quickly resonated with listeners and became the catalyst for his emergence on the national music scene.

The momentum surrounding the freestyle eventually resulted in an official single featuring acclaimed Sierra Leonean rapper Drizilik. Released in November 2023, "Freetown" became a major breakthrough for JJ and helped introduce his talent to a much wider audience. The song has accumulated significant streaming numbers on platforms including Audiomack and

Incredible JJ's journey has also taken him beyond the traditional boundaries of Sierra Leone's entertainment scene.

His increasing popularity has created opportunities to perform before high-profile audiences and at major events. His growing international profile was particularly highlighted in 2025 when he performed alongside Drizilik at a concert in London, marking an important milestone in his journey from Sierra Leone's Eastern Province to the international stage.

For a young artiste whose career began with a simple freestyle, the progression is significant.

It demonstrates the growing appetite internationally for authentic African music and, importantly, the potential for Sierra Leonean artistes to export sounds that are deeply rooted in their own cultural identity.

**Recognition for a Rising Star**

JJ's growing influence has not gone unnoticed within Sierra Leone's entertainment industry. He has featured in industry rankings recognising the country's leading and emerging artistes. In 2023, he was included among Sierra Leone's 20 Hottest Artistes, while in 2025 he was again recognised in the country's annual ranking, reflecting his continued growth and relevance within the industry.

His achievements have also extended to awards. He has received recognition at the Kenema Entertainment Awards, including Artiste of the Year and Viewer Choice Awards, while his team also received recognition in music and dance categories.

Such recognition is particularly meaningful because it reflects support from the very community from which his musical journey began.

**The Young Voice of a New Salone**

What makes Incredible JJ particularly interesting is not simply his popularity but what he represents. He is part of a generation of Sierra Leonean musicians challenging the old idea that an artiste must leave his or her cultural identity behind to become internationally successful.

Instead, JJ is demonstrating that Mende can be contemporary, Krio can be global, and Sierra Leonean stories can travel beyond Sierra Leone's borders. His music offers a meeting point between generations - the traditional sounds and languages of Sierra Leone and the modern rhythms consumed by today's young audiences.

That combination could become one of his greatest strengths as his career develops.

**Looking Towards the Future**

With a growing catalogue, increasing collaborations, international performances and the release of *The Maths*, Incredible JJ appears to be entering one of the most important stages of his career.

The challenge now is to sustain the momentum. As the Sierra Leonean music industry becomes increasingly competitive, JJ will need to continue developing his songwriting, performances, collaborations and international strategy while protecting the authenticity that first made audiences pay attention to him.

For an artiste who has already moved from a viral freestyle to nationally recognised releases and international performances, the possibilities are significant.

His story is still being written.

From Kenema to Freetown, from Mende to the global Afrobeat conversation, Incredible JJ is steadily carving his own lane.

And if his journey so far is anything to go by, the young man who once asked Freetown to welcome him may soon be asking the world to listen.

Incredible JJ is not simply following the new wave of Sierra Leonean music-he is becoming part of the wave.

# ACC Reports 81% Compliance In 2026 Asset Declaration

Compliance in the 2026 public officers' asset declaration exercise while highlighting ongoing investigations, prosecutions, recoveries and institutional integrity initiatives as part of its broader fight against corruption.

ACC Coordinator of Operations, Patrick Sandi, made the disclosure at the Government's Weekly Press Conference held on Tuesday, 18th August 2026, at the Miatta Civic Centre in Freetown.

Sandi said 13,036 of the 16,144 public officers targeted for the 2026 declaration exercise had complied as of the latest update, representing approximately 81 percent compliance.

He noted that the asset declaration portal is scheduled to close on Friday, 21st August 2026, after which the Commission will enforce sanctions against public officers who fail to comply. According to Mr Sandi, defaulters will first receive a 14-day default notice, followed by salary withholding for one

month. Continued non-compliance could lead to suspension and eventual dismissal from office, in accordance with the law.

He said the previous declaration cycle recorded 17,173 declarations out of 17,253 targeted public officers, representing 99.54 percent compliance, with the remaining defaulters subsequently subjected to administrative sanctions.

Mr Sandi attributed improvements in the declaration process to reforms introduced under the 2019 amendment to the Anti-Corruption Act, alongside digital systems supported by the Directorate of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI).

He said the digital platform has made the declaration process faster, easier and more accessible to public officials, with further measures being considered to streamline the process through mobile-based services. Providing update on the Commission's wider activities, Mr Sandi disclosed that the ACC had investigated

107 corruption-related cases, concluded 23, and recorded six successful prosecutions during the reporting period.

The Commission also recorded approximately Le1.305 million in recoveries from completed investigations.

Mr Sandi further highlighted the establishment of Integrity Management Committees across public institutions as part of the ACC's preventive approach to corruption and its efforts to strengthen institutional accountability.

He urged citizens to remain active partners in the fight against corruption by providing credible information on suspected corrupt practices, while assuring the public that mechanisms for reporting and witness protection remain available.

"The fight against corruption is still very robust. We are at the very top," Sandi said, reaffirming the Commission's determination to combat corruption and strengthen integrity in public life.

# Ministry Of Fisheries And Partners Poised To Boost Aquaculture



Although the pace at which it is developing in the country is noticeably slow as a result of the decade-long rebel war, coupled with other challenges undermining its contribution to food security and sustainable livelihoods such as restrictions in terms of funding, distribution, number and pond size, the practice arguably has vast potential.

Its potential for food security, employment and household income generation still remains to be sustainably exploited.

It is against this backdrop that the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources has vowed to boost the practice through the use of sustainable innovative measures in

collaboration with other development partners.

At the newly rehabilitated Fish Farming Experimental Station in Bo, over the weekend, a team comprising technical staff of the ministry and other development partners, led by the Acting Director of Fisheries, Sheku Sei, started the process of CARTFISH INDUCED BREEDING PROTOCOL, under the ministry's National Fingerling Production Programme, supported by GOSL, UNDP and China.

Speaking during the exercise, the Acting Director of Fisheries, said the objective of the programme is to produce millions of fingerlings annually for distribution to

smallholder Commercial Fish Farmers.

The initiative he added, will also help revolutionise fingerlings production through the development of a cohort of Broodstock (Adult Fish) for breeding, reduce bottlenecks, increase domestic fish production and access to fish feed in the country.

He expressed, government's desire to encourage private sector involvement in the Aquaculture sector, indicating that the ministry is currently working with other development partners to develop bigger bankable projects that would promote government's Feed Salone/ Poverty Reduction programmes.

He disclosed plans to replicate the exercise at the Makali Experimental Fish Farming Station in Tonkolili district to enhance the programme.

A representative from an International NGO, the Continental Food Action and Aquatic Centre, Golbert Tembo, spoke of Sierra Leone's vast potential in Aquaculture development and highlighted some challenges facing the sector including high cost of fish feed and poor climate conditions.

He expressed their profound desire to produce high quality fish feeds at Gbangbama in Moyamba district.

The exercise ended with a visit to MMC Fish Farm at Gelehun, Bo district, supported by the ministry of fisheries and marine resources.



# Gomez Da Rosa Eyes Local Talent as Leone Stars Launch AFCON 2027 Qualifier Camp

Sierra Leone's national team, Leone Stars, have stepped up preparations for the 2027 Africa Cup of Nations qualifiers with the start of a home-based training camp under Head Coach Didier Gomez Da Rosa.

The session began yesterday at the SLFA Academy, with a group of technically selected domestic players given the chance to impress ahead of September's opening Group games against Zimbabwe and Equatorial Guinea.

SLFA Vice President 1 and Technical Committee Chairman Alie Badara Tarawallie attended the training. He urged players to stay disciplined and focused, stressing that selection for the final squad will be based purely on "competence and performance."

Gomez Da Rosa said he was encouraged by the quality in the camp and wants the players to remain committed as assessment continues.

With AFCON 2027 qualifiers fast approaching, the Portuguese coach will use the home-based phase to blend local talent with overseas professionals ahead of Sierra Leone's push to return to the continental finals.



# Bambara Town vs Dovcut Clash Abandoned After Fan Attacks Referee



The local league match between Bambara Town and Dovcut Community was abandoned on Sunday after a fan invaded the pitch and attempted to assault the centre referee.

The game was stopped with Bambara Town leading 2-1 when the incident occurred in the second half. Eyewitnesses said the supporter rushed onto the field and confronted the match official, forcing players and security to intervene.

The referee was later attended to by the team doctor on the sidelines. Photos from the scene showed medical staff treating the official as players and officials gathered around.

League organizers are expected to launch an investigation into the incident and review security arrangements at the venue. No further matches will be played at the ground until a decision is made.

The abandonment throws the fixture into doubt, with the league's disciplinary committee set to determine the next steps in the coming days.

# SLFA Secures Moroccan Deal to Build Training Ground and Boost Youth Football

The Sierra Leone Football Association, SLFA, has signed a two-year partnership with the Royal Moroccan Football Federation, FRMF, to accelerate football development at home. SLFA President Babadi Kamara and FRMF President Fouzi Lekjaa sealed the agreement today in Rabat. The deal focuses on technical support rather than just senior team fixtures. Key areas include the training of coaches, referees and administrative staff, youth football promotion, and joint workshops. Morocco will host SLFA personnel for observation and training programmes, and provide access to specialised sports injury hospital facilities. A major component is infrastructure. Under the pact, FRMF will support the establishment of a technical training ground in a vulnerable community in Sierra Leone to expand grassroots access. The federations also agreed to organize friendly matches for senior and youth national teams, men and women. The renewable agreement positions SLFA to tap into Morocco's growing football model as Leone Stars prepare for upcoming AFCON qualifiers.

Credit: Miracle Kargbo

