

## MTHE Holds Dialogue Session with Staff and Students of Eastern Polytechnic

The Ministry of Technical and Higher Education has held a dialogue session with the Academic and Administrative Staff and Students' Union government of the Eastern Polytechnic, at the Ahmed Tejan Kabba Hall in Kenema.

The meeting was in a bid to hear the needs and challenges of the Institution with a view to providing sustainable remedies to them.



In his welcome address, the Principal of Eastern Polytechnic, Prof. Mohamed Konneh, thanked the Ministry for giving them the opportunity to discuss pertinent issues to their Institution's growth. He appreciated the Government of Sierra Leone, through the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education, for having given them staff capacity-building opportunities in the area of international scholarships to their Staff, regular payment of salaries and subventions, the 50% salary adjustment etc.



The President of Academic Staff Association (ASA) at Eastern Polytechnic, Mr. Joe Diawo, started off by disclosing the cordiality that exists between ASA and the Administration of Eastern Polytechnic, noting the Administration's support to members who have had the desire for further studies. He expressed his gratitude to the Ministry for the many strides made to transform their Institution, but however noted key areas in which they would need support, ranging from the transformation of Eastern Polytechnic into a University, promotion of Lecturers, retirees meeting their ex-gratia on time, staff bus provision, to age not being a deterrent to the award of scholarships.



The Students' Union President of Eastern Polytechnic, Mr. Abdul Rahman Jalloh, thanked the Ministry for answering to their call. According to him, students are challenged with lack of a student bus, an outdoor sitting facility for students, and a photocopy centre, requesting the government to consider such needs.



In his keynote address, the Minister of Technical and Higher Education, Prof. Alpha Tejan Wurie, noted Government's readiness to transform Eastern Polytechnic into Eastern Technical University, with the repeal of the University Act of 2005 and an enactment of the University Act of 2021. He mentioned the need to have at least a University in every region of Sierra Leone,

adding that the Eastern Region is the only without one. According to Prof. Wurie, the legal framework needs to be gotten right for the University to exist. "The intended timeline is for the first set of students to enroll into the Eastern Technical University in October 2021," he envisaged.



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