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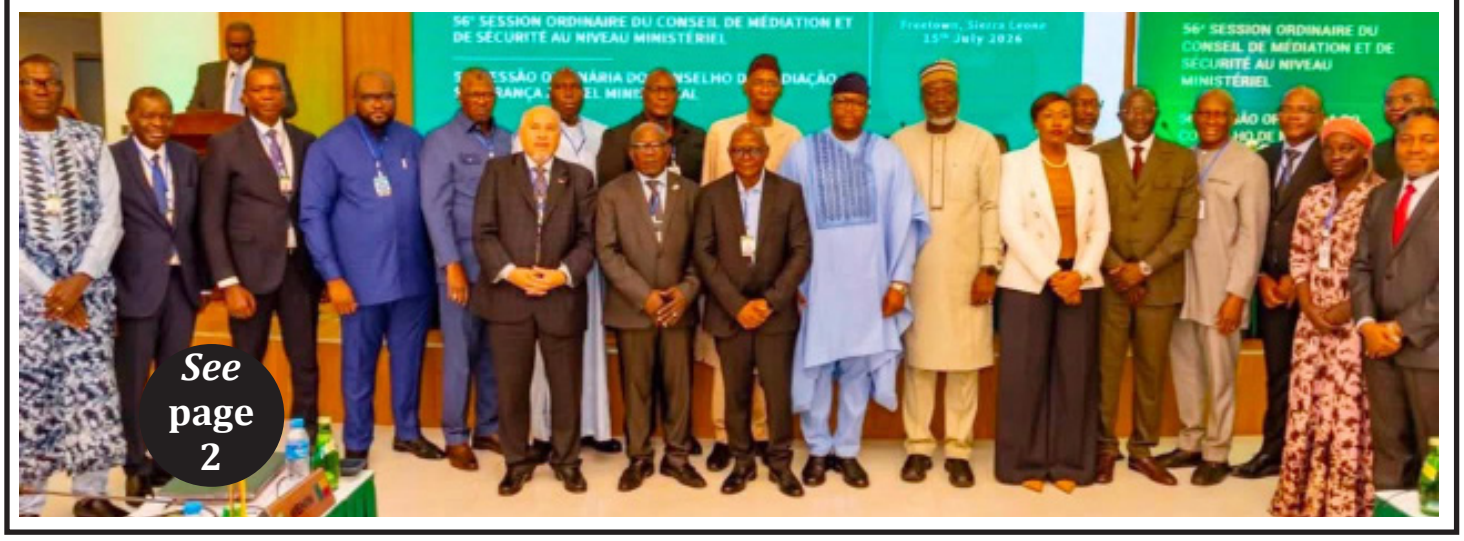

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President Barrow Joins ECOWAS Leaders in Sierra Leone Ahead of Mid-Year Summit

President Adama Barrow has arrived in Lungi, Sierra Leone, to participate in the ECOWAS Mid-Year Summit taking place on Sunday, 19 July 2026.

Upon his arrival, President Barrow joined fellow West African leaders at the commissioning of the newly constructed Julius Maada Bio International Convention Centre in Lungi, a landmark facility expected to enhance Sierra Leone's capacity to host major regional and international conferences and events.

Speaking at the commissioning ceremony, President Barrow described the convention centre as "a symbol of vision, ambition, and confidence in Sierra Leone's future." He noted that the facility would serve as a hub for diplomacy, commerce, innovation, and knowledge-sharing, while promoting regional integration and sustainable development across West Africa.

The President also reaffirmed the longstanding friendship and strong bilateral relations between The Gambia and Sierra Leone, emphasizing the need for continued solidarity and cooperation among ECOWAS member states in advancing peace, stability, and shared prosperity.

President Barrow is expected to join other Heads of State and Government at the ECOWAS Mid-Year Summit, where leaders will deliberate on key regional issues, including peace and security, economic integration, and institutional reforms.

Source :State House

VP Jallow Calls for More Investment in Youth to Drive Agrifood Transformation

By Mariatou Ngum & Abdou Mbye

The Vice President, on Friday, 17 July 2026, called for bold national investment in young people as the driving force behind the country's agrifood transformation. He urged stakeholders to move beyond dialogue and translate commitments into concrete actions that create jobs, strengthen food security and accelerate sustainable economic growth.

His Excellency Mohammed B.S. Jallow, made the call while officially opening the Joint Youth–Parliamentary Retreat on Youth, Agrifood Systems Transformation and CAADP Implementation at the Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara International Conference Centre in Bijilo. The retreat was held under the theme: "National Leadership for Youth in Agrifood Systems."

Delivering the keynote address on behalf of President Adama Barrow, Vice President Jallow described the gathering as a strategic platform that reflects the country's shared commitment to ensuring that young people become architects of national development rather than mere beneficiaries.

He emphasized that The Gambia's youthful population remains its greatest national asset, noting that the country's future is inseparable from the aspirations, creativity and resilience of its young people.

"The answer to youth unemployment lies not only in creating jobs but in transforming entire economic sectors capable of generating sustainable livelihoods, wealth and prosperity. Among these sectors, none is more critical than agriculture and the broader agrifood system," he stated.

Vice President Jallow stressed that agriculture must evolve beyond subsistence farming into a modern, technology-driven, climate-resilient and profitable sector capable of attracting young entrepreneurs and innovators.

The Vice President reaffirmed the Government's commitment to empowering young people through skills development, enterprise support, agricultural modernization and climate resilience. However, he stressed that meaningful progress requires effective implementation supported by sound policies, adequate financing and responsive institutions.

"This retreat provides a unique opportunity to bridge the gap between policy aspirations and the lived realities of our young people. It strengthens accountability and ensures that youth priorities are reflected in national decision-making processes," he said.

Vice President Jallow further aligned The Gambia's aspirations with the African Union's Kampala CAADP Declaration and the Africa Agribusiness Youth Strategy, reaffirming the country's commitment to contributing to the continent's vision of youth-led agricultural transformation.

He also appealed to development partners to continue supporting innovative initiatives that expand opportunities for young people and challenged the private sector to invest boldly in youth-led agribusiness enterprises.

Addressing the country's youth directly, Vice President Jallow encouraged them to remain ambitious, innovative and determined in pursuing opportunities that contribute to national development.

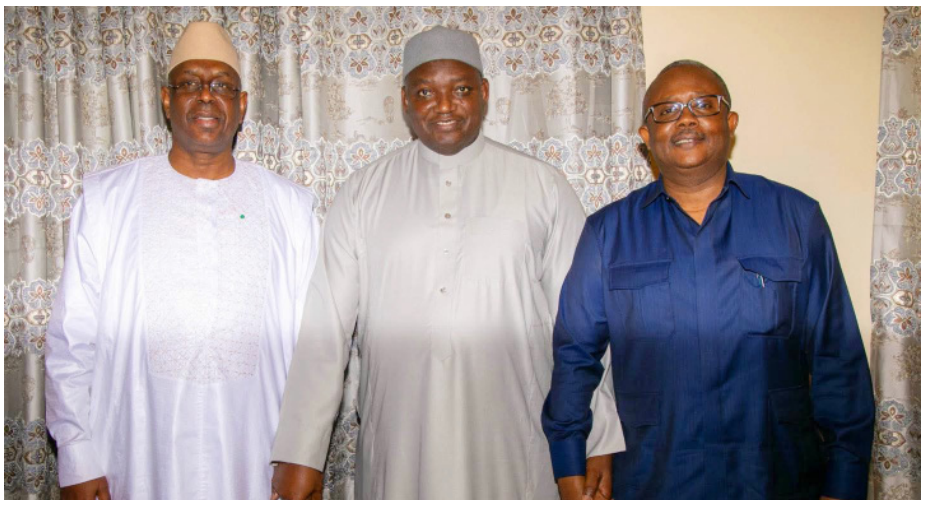
The Vice President expressed confidence that the retreat would mark the beginning of a new era of partnership between policymakers and young people, inspiring practical solutions that create decent jobs, unlock enterprise opportunities and position agriculture as a sector of choice for future generations.

He officially declared the Joint Youth–Parliamentary Retreat on Youth, Agrifood Systems Transformation and CAADP Implementation open and wished participants fruitful deliberations aimed at shaping a more productive, inclusive and sustainable agrifood system for The Gambia.

The high-level forum brought together parliamentarians, cabinet ministers, youth leaders, development partners, representatives of the African Union, AGRA, the African Food Systems Parliamentary Network (AFSPaN), the Consortium of African Youth in Agriculture and Climate Change (CAYACC), private sector actors and senior government officials to chart a common pathway for empowering young people within The Gambia's agrifood systems.

President Barrow Receives Macky Sall as Former Senegalese Leader Seeks UN's Top Post

His ExcellencyPresident Adama Barrow recently received former Senegalese President Macky Sall at the State House in Banjul, where the two leaders held talks as Mr. Sall continues consultations in support of his bid to become the next Secretary-General of the United Nations.



During the meeting, Mr. Sall emphasized the need for greater African unity in addressing global challenges, stressing that the continent should speak with one voice on key international issues.

"As Africans, we must work together and focus our efforts on the key pillars of the United Nations: peace and security, human rights, and sustainable development," Mr. Sall said.

The former Senegalese leader also sought President Barrow's prayers and support for his candidacy, describing African solidarity as essential in advancing the continent's interests on the global stage.

Mr. Sall's visit to Banjul forms part of a broader diplomatic outreach to African and other world leaders aimed at building support for his campaign to lead the United Nations.

The meeting reflects the continued close relations between The Gambia and Senegal and highlights ongoing regional engagement on issues of international governance and African representation in global leadership.

Source: State House

ECOWAS Delegation Explores Agricultural Investment Opportunities in The Gambia

By Landing Sallah

The Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Security, Ambassador Alhagie Nyangado, on Thursday 16th July 2026, received a delegation from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to explore investment opportunities in The Gambia's agriculture sector.

The courtesy visit forms part of ongoing efforts to attract regional investment and strengthen partnerships aimed at boosting agricultural production, enhancing food security, and promoting sustainable economic growth.

Discussions focused on identifying strategic areas where ECOWAS investors could collaborate with the Government of The Gambia to unlock the country's agricultural potential. The meeting highlighted investment opportunities across the agricultural value chain, including crop production, livestock development, agro-processing, irrigation, storage facilities, and agricultural marketing.

Welcoming the delegation, Ambassador Nyangado reaffirmed the Government's commitment to creating a conducive environment for both local and foreign investors. He underscored agriculture's central role in The Gambia's economic transformation and reiterated the Ministry's determination to modernize the sector through strategic partnerships, innovation, and increased private sector participation.

He noted that expanding investment in agriculture is essential to improving productivity, generating employment, and strengthening the country's resilience against food insecurity and the effects of climate change.

Members of the ECOWAS delegation expressed keen interest in strengthening regional cooperation through investments that promote sustainable agricultural production, increase value addition, and expand market opportunities for farmers and agribusinesses. They emphasised that enhanced investment in agriculture would contribute significantly to job creation, food security, and economic prosperity across the ECOWAS region.

The visit aligns with broader ECOWAS initiatives to promote regional economic integration by encouraging greater private sector investment in agriculture. It also reflects the shared commitment of ECOWAS member states to harness the sector's potential as a catalyst for inclusive growth, poverty reduction, and sustainable development throughout West Africa.

Gambia Seeks Strategic Partnerships to Harness Mineral Resources for Growth

By Anna Marie Valentine

The Minister of Petroleum, Energy and Mines, Hon. Nani Juwara, has called for increased international support to strengthen The Gambia's geological knowledge and advance the responsible development of its mineral resources.

The Minister made the call during the Ministerial Forum on Critical Minerals Value Chain and Beneficiation: Pathways for African Transformation, held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

The high-level forum, organised by the African Development Bank Group in collaboration with African governments and the African Union Commission, brought together ministers responsible for mining, energy, industry, green economy and natural resources, alongside senior officials from the African Union Commission, the African Continental Free Trade Area Secretariat, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, regional development banks, international financial institutions, technical partners and institutional investors.

Representing The Gambia at the forum, Minister Juwara was accompanied by the Director of the Geological Department, Mr. Alieu Jawo.

In his contributions, Minister Juwara reaffirmed The Gambia's commitment to developing a sustainable

and competitive mining sector. He appealed to development partners, international financial institutions and technical agencies to support nationwide geological and geophysical surveys aimed at generating modern geoscientific data to enhance understanding of the country's mineral potential and attract responsible private sector investment.

The Minister also called for increased technical assistance and institutional capacity building, particularly in geological mapping and mineral resource assessment, as key steps towards transforming the sector.

Minister Juwara stressed that strengthening the capacity of the Geological Department is essential for evidence-based mineral resource management, sustainable mining governance and the long-term development of The Gambia's mineral sector.

Opening the forum, the President of the African Development Bank Group described the gathering as a defining moment for Africa's mining industry, noting that the continent holds a strategic position in the global energy transition due to its abundant reserves of critical minerals.

He emphasized the need for African countries to move beyond the export of raw minerals and focus on developing local beneficiation industries, value-added manufacturing and integrated regional value chains that can create jobs, accelerate industrialisation and promote inclusive economic growth.

The AfDB President reaffirmed the Bank's commitment to mobilising financing, improving geological knowledge, supporting infrastructure development, strengthening technical capacity and promoting strategic partnerships to enable African countries to derive greater value from their natural resources.

The forum concluded with the adoption of a Ministerial Declaration urging African countries to accelerate mineral beneficiation, local value addition and industrialisation while strengthening regional value chains across the continent.

The declaration further called on governments and development partners to increase investments in geological data generation, sustainable financing, technology transfer, institutional capacity, good governance and transparency to ensure that Africa's critical mineral resources serve as a catalyst for long-term economic transformation.

Participants also agreed that these priorities should be pursued in line with Agenda 2063, the African Green Minerals Vision, the African Development Bank Group's Ten-Year Strategy, and the New African Financial Architecture for Development adopted under the Abidjan Consensus, which seeks to mobilise blended finance, guarantees and institutional capital to close Africa's critical minerals investment gap.

The forum brought together the President of the African Development Bank Group, African ministers, senior government officials and international development partners, who reaffirmed their commitment to transforming Africa's critical mineral resources into a foundation for sustainable industrial development, economic resilience and shared prosperity.

The Gambia Reaffirms Commitment to Regional Peace, Security at ECOWAS Ministerial Meeting

By Ya Awa Touray

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Gambians Abroad, Honourable Sering Modou Njie and Honourable Baboucarr O. Joof, Minister of Defence, represented The Gambia at the 56th Session of the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council (MSC) at Ministerial Level, held on 15 July 2026 in Freetown, Republic of Sierra Leone.

Convened under the auspices of the ECOWAS Commission, the ministerial session brought together Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence from across the West African region to review the political, peace and security situation in member states and deliberate on measures aimed at strengthening regional stability and cooperation.

During the meeting, Minister Njie and Minister Joof reaffirmed The Gambia's unwavering commitment to the principles of democracy, constitutional order, transitional justice, accountability, regional peace and security, counterterrorism, and the deepening of ECOWAS integration.

The Gambian delegation also welcomed ongoing ECOWAS initiatives to enhance regional peace, security and democratic governance, emphasizing the country's continued support for collective efforts to promote a peaceful, secure, stable and prosperous West African sub-region.

The participation of The Gambia at the high-level session reflects the Government's continued commitment to working closely with ECOWAS and fellow member states in addressing emerging security challenges, promoting good governance, and safeguarding peace and stability across the region.

Accompanying the ministers were Ms. Fatou Kinneh Jobe, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Gambians Abroad; Ms. Rohie Bittaye Darboe, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Defence; H.E. Papa Njie, The Gambia's High Commissioner to the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Permanent Representative to ECOWAS; H.E. Claudia Cole, The Gambia's High Commissioner to the Republic of Sierra Leone; Mr. Mustapha Sosseh, Counsellor at The Gambia High Commission in Abuja; and Ms. Tunko Jallow, First Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Gambians Abroad.

Gambia Seeks Diplomatic Resolution to Bulock Border Incident

The Gambia Government has expressed deep concern over an incident on Thursday afternoon, 16th July 2026, at the Bulock Military Border Post in the West Coast Region, involving members of the Senegalese Armed Forces.

In a statement issued by the Office of the Government Spokesperson, the Government confirmed that a section of the perimeter fence of a Gambia Armed Forces installation was demolished without prior consultation through the established bilateral military and diplomatic mechanisms guiding cooperation between the two countries.

While describing the action as profoundly unfortunate, the Government said it remained committed to resolving the matter peacefully through the Joint Military Committee and other bilateral channels, adding that formal diplomatic engagement with the Government of Senegal was already underway.

The Government reassured the public, the Diplomatic and Consular Corps, and residents of The Gambia that the security situation remained calm and fully under control, and said personnel of the Gambia Armed Forces had acted with professionalism and restraint throughout the incident.

The statement noted that The Gambia and Senegal have enjoyed decades of close cooperation, and

that both Heads of State recently reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening bilateral relations in defence, security, trade, border management and economic development.

The Government called on the Senegalese Armed Forces to exercise maximum restraint and ensure that future border concerns are addressed exclusively through established bilateral mechanisms, in full respect of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of both states.

It expressed confidence that the matter would be resolved swiftly and amicably through mutual respect and dialogue, and urged Gambians to remain calm and refrain from speculation as the diplomatic process continues.

Source: Office of the Spokesperson of The Government of The Gambia.

Editorial

Beyond Extraction:

The Gambia's Opportunity to Harness Its Mineral Potential

The global race for critical minerals has placed Africa at the centre of a new economic conversation. As countries seek resources essential for renewable energy technologies, electric vehicles, digital infrastructure and modern industries, the continent's vast mineral wealth presents an opportunity to drive transformation rather than remain trapped in the old cycle of exporting raw materials.

For The Gambia, this moment presents both a challenge and an opportunity. The call by the Minister of Petroleum, Energy and Mines, Hon. Nani Juwara, for greater international support to strengthen geological knowledge and advance responsible mineral development is timely and strategic. It reflects a growing recognition that the country must first understand the full extent of its mineral resources before it can attract meaningful investment and ensure that mining contributes to national development.

Geological data is the foundation upon which a sustainable mining industry is built. Comprehensive geological and geophysical surveys, modern mapping and mineral assessments are not merely technical exercises; they are investments in economic planning, investor confidence and national sovereignty over natural resources.

The Gambia's participation in this conversation is important. While the country's mineral sector is still developing compared to some of its neighbours, its potential cannot be overlooked. Strengthening the capacity of the Geological Department, investing in scientific research and improving regulatory systems will be critical steps towards building a mining sector that is transparent, environmentally responsible and beneficial to citizens.

However, mineral development requires more than discovering resources. It requires strong institutions, skilled professionals, effective policies and partnerships that protect national interests.

The Minister's appeal to development partners and international financial institutions should therefore be viewed as part of a broader national development agenda. Support for geological surveys, technology transfer and capacity building will not only strengthen the mining sector but also enhance The Gambia's ability to negotiate better investments and make informed decisions about its resources.

At the continental level, the African Development Bank's emphasis on beneficiation and local value chains offers an important lesson. Africa's minerals should help power African industries, create employment for young people and support sustainable economic growth. The energy transition provides a historic opening, but African countries must act with vision and urgency to ensure they are partners in the global mineral economy, not simply suppliers.

For The Gambia, the path forward should be guided by sustainability, inclusiveness and long-term national interest. Mineral development must go hand in hand with environmental protection, community participation and fair economic returns.

The task now is to transform potential into progress turning geological knowledge into responsible investment, and mineral resources into opportunities for generations to come.

GTBoard Engages Tourist Guides, Expands Regional Tourism Promotion

By Lamin Njie

The Gambia Tourism Board (GTBoard) on Thursday 17th July 2026 held separate meetings with key tourism stakeholders aimed at strengthening destination management, improving visitor experiences and expanding regional tourism promotion.

During a consultative meeting with the Executive of the National Tourist Guides Association, discussions centred on enhancing coordination among stakeholders in receiving cruise ship visitors and addressing concerns over unauthorized individuals conducting excursions for cruise passengers without the required licences.

Board officials said the meeting also explored measures to uphold professionalism within the guiding profession, improve service delivery and ensure visitors receive quality experiences while touring the country. Other issues of mutual interest affecting the tourism industry were also discussed.

In a separate engagement, the GTBoard met with Ambassador Ayo Omotoso of Travelogue Magazine/DStv to explore opportunities for promoting Destination Gambia through regional media platforms and strengthening partnerships with Nigerian airlines.

The discussions focused on leveraging leading media platforms to increase The Gambia's visibility as a preferred tourism destination across West Africa and beyond.

Ambassador Omotoso briefed the Board on DStv's tourism programme, Africa Tourism Map, which showcases major tourism attractions across West African destinations. He proposed featuring Destination Gambia on the programme as part of efforts to boost the country's regional and international tourism profile.

The meetings form part of the GTBoard's ongoing efforts to enhance stakeholder collaboration, improve tourism service standards and position The Gambia more competitively within the regional tourism market.

MoYS Hails Gomez's Population Commission Appointment

By Lamarana S Jalllow

The Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS), under the leadership of Honourable Bakary Y. Badjie, has welcomed the approval by His Excellency President Adama Barrow of the appointment of Elizabeth Kinta Gomez as the Youth Representative on the Board of the National Population Commission Secretariat.

The appointment, made in accordance with the provisions of the National Population Act, 2025, follows her nomination by the Ministry of Youth and Sports and marks another important step in strengthening youth participation in national governance and decision-making.

According to the Ministry, the appointment demonstrates Government's commitment to ensuring that young people have a meaningful voice in shaping policies and programmes that directly affect their lives and the nation's future. It also reflects recognition of the significant contributions young people continue to make to national development.

As Youth Representative on the Board, Elizabeth Kinta Gomez is expected to champion the interests of young people while contributing to policy discussions on population, health, social development, and other key national priorities. Her inclusion is expected to help ensure that youth perspectives are integrated into national planning and implementation.

Elizabeth currently serves as a Council Member of the National Youth Council of The Gambia and Chairperson of the Kanifing Municipal Youth Committee (KMYC). She has established a strong record in youth leadership, advocacy, and community development, with more than a decade of experience promoting youth empowerment, civic engagement, and inclusive development initiatives across the country.

Throughout her career, she has worked closely with youth groups, community organisations, and development partners to create opportunities for young people while advocating for their meaningful participation in governance and national development processes. Her dedication and experience have earned her recognition as one of the country's committed youth leaders.

Her appointment to the Board of the National Population Commission Secretariat is for a three-year term and is expected to strengthen collaboration between government institutions and young people in addressing population and development challenges.

The Ministry of Youth and Sports congratulated Elizabeth Kinta Gomez on her appointment and expressed confidence in her ability to represent Gambian youth with dedication, professionalism, and integrity.

The Ministry also extended its best wishes to the Chairperson and members of the National Population Commission Secretariat Board as they undertake their responsibility of providing strategic leadership to advance the country's population and development agenda.

The appointment underscores the Government's continued efforts to promote inclusive governance by creating greater opportunities for young people to participate in leadership and contribute meaningfully to national decision-making.

With young people constituting a significant proportion of The Gambia's population, the inclusion of a youth representative on the Board is expected to strengthen policies and programmes that respond to their needs, aspirations, and development priorities while supporting the country's broader sustainable development goals.

News

The Gambia, Nigeria Reaffirm Strong Bilateral Ties

By Ya Awa Touray

On the sidelines of the ECOWAS Ministerial Mediation and Security Council (MSC) meeting, The Gambia and Nigeria reaffirmed their longstanding diplomatic relations and pledged to deepen cooperation across key sectors.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Gambians Abroad, Hon. Sering Modou Njie, held a bilateral meeting with Nigeria's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Hon. Ambassador Sola Enikanolaiye, during which both sides reviewed the state of relations and explored new opportunities for collaboration.

The discussions focused on strengthening cooperation in areas of mutual interest, including capacity building, education, security, technical cooperation and regional integration.

Minister Njie congratulated Ambassador Enikanolaiye on his recent appointment and expressed confidence that the two countries would continue to build on their historic partnership for the benefit of their peoples.

He also conveyed The Gambia's profound appreciation for Nigeria's unwavering support to the country's democratic transition and national development. He particularly acknowledged Nigeria's pivotal role during The Gambia's 2017 political impasse and its continued contributions through the ECOWAS Mission in The Gambia (ECOMIG), the Nigerian Technical Aid Corps (TAC), and various capacity-building programmes in the education, health, legal and security sectors.

The two ministers also discussed ways to expand bilateral cooperation through the revitalisation of the Gambia-Nigeria Joint Commission. They agreed that the commission remains an important mechanism for reviewing existing agreements, identifying new areas of partnership and promoting mutually beneficial cooperation.

The meeting concluded with both ministers reaffirming their shared commitment to working closely within the ECOWAS framework to promote regional peace, security, political stability, economic integration and sustainable development across West Africa.

The bilateral engagement underscored the enduring friendship between The Gambia and Nigeria and their mutual determination to further strengthen diplomatic and development cooperation in support of regional prosperity.

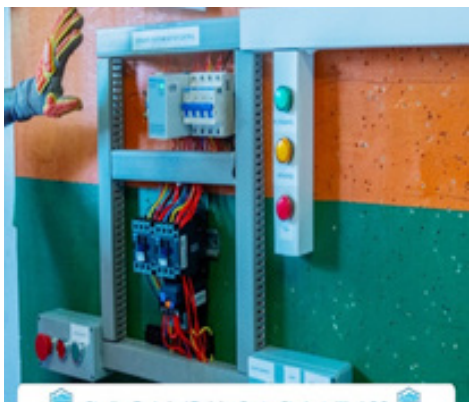
Sterling Technical Training Centre Promotes Innovation and Skills Development Through TVET

By Majula Samura

Emerging as a leader in introducing innovative training modules that support national development, Sterling Technical Training Centre, a Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institution established in 2016, continues to promote practical solutions aimed at improving workflows, reducing operational challenges, and transforming raw materials into valuable finished products.

The centre regularly updates its curriculum by introducing new and unique modules aligned with international industrial standards. According to stakeholders, students at Sterling are equipped with the skills and competencies needed to contribute meaningfully to society, achieve economic self-reliance, and support local production initiatives that stimulate economic growth and sustainable development.

Stakeholders noted that the institution has, over the past decade, produced outstanding graduates who are helping to reshape perceptions about vocational education. The centre attracts learners from various tertiary institutions who seek to complement their academic knowledge with practical skills and hands-on experience.



Highlighting the institution's achievements, Malang Kanteh, Assistant Accountant and Applied Mathematics Trainer at Sterling Technical Training Centre, explained that the school operates two admission pathways: the Regular Badge, which caters for students with formal educational qualifications, and the Practical Competency Badge, designed for individuals from Madrassas, school dropouts, and those without formal schooling.

He explained that the dual-track system provides opportunities for a wider range of learners to access skills training while ensuring that students are placed in programmes suited to their educational backgrounds and practical abilities. He added that the approach reflects Sterling's commitment to inclusive skills development and empowering young people with employable competencies.

Through its focus on innovation, practical learning, and entrepreneurship, Sterling Technical Training Centre continues to play a vital role in developing a skilled workforce capable of contributing to The Gambia's industrial growth and economic transformation.

Mr. Kanteh revealed that the school offers different courses, though some are mount based on student demand or number of applicants.

Speaking on the recently introduced Net Metering and Grid Connection Course, which has attracted government officials, the sponsored programme included a practical Solar System Installation project. This initiative benefited the school and several government institutions. "We installed solar systems at Sterling, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Petroleum, Energy and Mines (MoPEM), PURA, and NAWEC," he noted.

Kanteh further emphasized that the institution's reputation is self-marketing, driven by a growing number of enrollments, adding this growth is attributing to visible and high-quality work the school graduates are delivering within their communities. "That is how the school markets itself," he affirmed.

Recalling through the commitments and resilience instilled in students, the centre prepares learners to deliver tangible outcomes and create meaningful impact. Students are required to demonstrate their acquired competencies during students' week, where they showcase their skills, undertake community service, and amplify their professional discipline.

Mr. Singhateh noted that students made a significant impact during the community engagement phase, impacting local hospitals, police stations, and mosques. "We deployed our students to conduct site surveys and extract assessment invoices to identify problems and develop technical solutions," he explained. "We addressed electrical faults, resolved plumbing issues, cleaned mosques, clinics, and replaced missing essential equipment such as fans, bulbs, taps and flushing system."

Sterling Technical Training Centre continuously evaluates its students' progress and capacity to effect positive change within their communities. The Centre consistently produces graduates, including those from other tertiary institutions, who are excelling across the country and competing at international levels. Today, conceptual ideas are being transformed into practical innovations, positioning Sterling at the forefront of The Gambia's vocational and technical industry.

Ruth Carrol Remembered as Pioneer of Gambian Graphic Design

By Lamin Njie

The Director General of the National Centre for Arts and Culture (NCAC), Hassoum Ceesay, has paid tribute to veteran graphic designer and book designer Ruth Carrol, describing her as a pioneer in creative industry whose work helped shape the visual identity of many national and international institutions.

Ms. Carrol, who died last week in her late 60s, was widely recognised for designing the logos of several prominent organisations in The Gambia.

Paying tribute, Mr. Ceesay said Ms. Carrol was the creative force behind the logos of the National AIDS Secretariat, the 1997 Zone Two Football Tournament hosted in Banjul, the African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies, the University of The Gambia, and The Gambia Postal Services, among others.

"She was The Gambia's logo artist," Mr. Ceesay said. "She set high artistic standards in her work as a logo and book designer. Above all, she was an exceptionally talented creative who worked quietly and professionally, ensuring that Gambian publications met high design standards."

Born in Bathurst in the late 1950s, Ms. Carrol studied graphic design at the prestigious Dakar School of Fine Arts before furthering her studies in the United Kingdom and the United States. She began her career as an art teacher before joining the then Government Printing Department, now the Gambia Printing and Publishing Corporation (GPPC), where she rose through the ranks to a senior position before retiring.

Reflecting on her legacy, Mr. Ceesay said Ms. Carrol's career demonstrated the important role of the creative arts in national development.

"Her professional journey shows that the creative industry can provide meaningful and rewarding careers for Gambians, enabling talented individuals to excel and make lasting contributions to national development," he said.

Ms. Carrol is remembered for her remarkable contribution to graphic design and publishing, leaving behind a legacy that continues to inspire generations of Gambian artists and designers.

News

Parliament,Youth Forge Alliance to Transform Gambia's Agrifood Sector

By Kumba Leigh

Young people must be placed at the centre of transforming The Gambia's agrifood systems if the country is to achieve food security, create sustainable jobs, strengthen climate resilience and accelerate economic growth, speakers emphasized during a two-day National Youth Agrifood Systems Workshop and Parliamentary Retreat.

The high-level retreat, held at the Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara International Conference Centre, brought together parliamentarians, youth leaders, policymakers, development partners, private sector representatives and agricultural stakeholders to strengthen youth participation in implementing the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and advancing sustainable agrifood systems in The Gambia.

The event was organised by Soil Solution in partnership with the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Agriculture, AGRA and other development partners.

Delivering the keynote address, Hon. Sulayman Jammeh, National Assembly Member for Bundung, described the retreat as a timely platform for strengthening collaboration among policymakers, young people and development partners to drive Africa's agricultural transformation.

He commended AGRA and its partners for creating a platform that promotes dialogue and practical action towards building youth-inclusive agrifood systems.

"Africa stands at a defining moment. Our continent has the world's youngest population, and this demographic reality presents both an extraordinary opportunity and a profound responsibility," Hon. Jammeh said.

He stressed that young people should no longer be viewed merely as beneficiaries of development programmes, but as innovators, entrepreneurs, investors and leaders capable of transforming agriculture across the continent.

Hon. Jammeh said the successful implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Agenda requires bold political leadership, evidence-based policymaking and sustained public investment.

He noted that parliamentarians have a critical role to play in creating an enabling policy environment by enacting supportive legislation, approving adequate budget allocations, strengthening accountability mechanisms and championing policies that empower young women and men across agricultural value chains.

Speaking on behalf of young people, Mariama Sonko, Youth Representative, said many Gambian youths continue to face significant barriers, including limited access to quality education, finance, markets, technology and technical skills.

She described the retreat as particularly timely as stakeholders work toward implementing the African Agribusiness Youth Strategy 2025-2034.

"We must ensure that young people are not simply beneficiaries of development programmes but active partners in designing, implementing and monitoring the policies that affect their lives and livelihoods," Sonko said.

She observed that agrifood systems remain among the country's most important sectors for generating employment, strengthening food security, reducing poverty and building resilient economies.

Alagie Jarju, Executive Director of the National Youth Council, said agriculture remains one of the sectors with the greatest potential to generate employment for young Gambians.

However, he noted that many aspiring young farmers continue to struggle with limited access to finance, markets and modern agricultural technologies.

He also highlighted the high cost of value addition, explaining that many producers are forced to import packaging materials from countries such as China and the United Arab Emirates, significantly increasing production costs.

Despite these challenges, Jarju acknowledged ongoing government efforts to support youth entrepreneurship through various projects.

He disclosed that under the Roots Project, approximately 200 young people are expected to receive matching grants this year to establish or expand agribusiness enterprises.

He further noted that the Ministry of Youth and Sports continues to provide training in climate-resilient and sustainable agricultural practices.

Also addressing the retreat, Bameuju Agho of the African Food Systems Parliamentary Network AFSPaN reflected on Africa's evolving agricultural policy journey over the past two decades, from the Maputo Declaration 2003 to the Malabo Declaration and most recently the Kampala Declaration.

According to Agho, the Kampala Declaration represents a significant shift in Africa's thinking by recognizing food systems as far more than agriculture alone.

He emphasized that while governments implement policies, parliaments determine whether those policies ultimately succeed through legislation, budget approval and oversight.

He urged parliamentarians across Africa to modernize agricultural legislation, strengthen budget oversight, and ensure that food systems become a central part of national policy discussions rather than being confined to specialized parliamentary committees.

At the close of the retreat, participants agreed that empowering young people, strengthening parliamentary leadership, expanding access to finance, and promoting innovation are essential to building resilient, inclusive, and sustainable agrifood systems capable of driving The Gambia's economic transformation for generations to come.

MoPS Staff Urged to Uphold Professionalism, Integrity in Public Service

By: Lamin B. Darboe

The Minister of Public Service (MoPS), Hon. Baboucarr Bouye, has urged staff of his ministry to recommit themselves to the values of professionalism, integrity and selfless service in the discharge of their duties.

Minister Bouye made the call on Wednesday, 15 July 2026, while presiding over the official closing ceremony of a three-day staff retreat held at Jerreh Camp Lodge in Sita Nunku, Upper Nuimi District, North Bank Region.

He said the Ministry of Public Service would continue to serve as a cornerstone of national development, noting that the country's progress depends largely on the efficiency, dedication and commitment of civil servants.

The Minister described the retreat as an important platform to review the ministry's activities and reaffirm its collective commitment to building a public service that is efficient, accountable and responsive to the needs of citizens.

"During this retreat, we reflected on our achievements, acknowledged the challenges we face, and charted practical strategies for improvement," he said.

He added that the discussions and insights generated during the retreat would guide the ministry in strengthening performance management, improving service delivery and ensuring that its work remains aligned with the Ministry's Strategic Plan 2025–2030 and the Recovery-Focused National Development Plan (RF-NDP) "YIRIWAA."

Minister Bouye urged staff to leave the retreat with renewed energy, a shared vision and a stronger commitment to delivering on the ministry's mandate.

"The responsibility before us is immense, but so too is our capacity to deliver," he said, while emphasizing the need to foster greater collaboration among units and divisions, invest continuously in staff capacity development and embrace innovation.

He further encouraged employees to uphold the core values of the ministry's strategic plan, including integrity, accountability, excellence and citizen-centred service delivery.

"Remain committed to these values as we work together to build a public service that meets the expectations of the Gambian people," he urged.

Speaking on behalf of participants, the Permanent Secretary at the Personnel Management Office (PMO), Lamin F. Jawara, reminded officers that they are agents of positive change whose daily responsibilities have a direct impact on the lives of citizens.

"Every action you take during your official working hours contributes to national development. It is our commitment to creating a highly competent workforce that will serve as a beacon of excellence," PS Jawara said.

He commended the leadership of Minister Bouye for his efforts in advancing the policy objectives of the government and acknowledged the support and collaboration of Permanent Secretaries, the Senior Management Team and staff of the ministry.

Other senior officials, including Permanent Secretaries Pateh Jah and Sheriff Jallow, Deputy Permanent Secretary Madam Lalla Jaiteh and Alhagie Jallow, Director of Reforms and Project Manager for the Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS), assured the Minister of the staff's continued loyalty, dedication and commitment to strengthening public service delivery.

News in portugueses
- From Bissau

GUINÉ-BISSAU E FEDERAÇÃO RÚSSIA APROFUNDAM RELAÇÕES NAS ÁREAS DE AGRICULTURA E SEGURANÇA ALIMENTAR

A Guiné-Bissau e a Federação da Rússia identificaram as oportunidades para aprofundar as suas relações de cooperação nas áreas de agricultura e segurança alimentar, pescas e economia azul, ensino superior, a investigação científica, saúde pública, energia, transformação digital, formação técnico-profissional e reforço das capacidades institucionais.

Segundo o Comunicado à Imprensa do grupo dos Negócios Estrangeiros de Whasap, a necessidade de aprofundamento das relações de cooperação entre os dois países nessas áreas foi debatida no âmbito da visita que a ministra dos Negócios Estrangeiros, Cooperação Internacional e das Comunidades da Guiné-Bissau Fatumata Djau está a efectuar à Federação da Rússia.

"Futumata Djau e o ministro dos Negocios Estrangeiros da Federação de Rússia Sergey Lavrov manifestaram igualmente o interesse em dinamizar a vertente económica da relação bilateral, promovendo um maior envolvimento das instituições públicas, universidades, centros de investigação e setor privado, criando condições favoráveis ao investimento, à transferência de tecnologia, às parcerias empresariais e ao aumento dos intercâmbios comerciais", lê-se no comunicado.

No final do encontro que teve com Sergey Lavrov, em Moscovo, Fatumata Djau manifestou a sua satisfação pel profundidade das consultas realizadas, considerando que representam um passo significativo para o reforço da amizade e cooperação entre a Guiné-Bissau e a Federação da Rússia.

A governante agradeceu ainda ao seu homólogo Sergey Lavrov e as autoridades russas pelo o que considerou de "calorosa hospitalidade" e excelente organização da visita, reiterando o compromisso da Guiné-Bissau em prosseguir com o diálogo político e uma cooperação orientada para resultados concretos e benefícios mútuos.

A ministra destacou igualmente o novo impulso registado nas relações bilaterais nos últimos anos, evidenciado pelas sucessivas visitas do então Presidente da República, Umaro Sissoco Embaló, à Federação da Rússia entre 2022 e 2025.

Durante as consultas, as duas partes reafirmaram a excelência das relações históricas entre a República da Guiné-Bissau e a Federação da Rússia, assentes numa longa tradição de amizade, solidariedade e respeito mútuo.

No plano internacional, os dois ministros procederam a troca de pontos de vista sobre diversas questões regionais e globais de interesse comum, reafirmando a importância do diálogo político regular, do respeito pelo direito internacional, da promoção da paz e de um multilateralismo mais eficaz e inclusivo.

GÂMBIA/ EMBAIXADOR LUÍS BARROS DISTINGUIDO PELO APOIO À 1ª GRANDE ETAPA CICLISTA

O Clube Multidesportivo Esperança Nova da Guiné-Bissau distinguiu esta quinta-feira o Embaixador da República da Guiné-Bissau na Gâmbia, Luís Camará de Barros, com um diploma de reconhecimento, pelo apoio à realização da 1ª Grande Etapa Ciclista, nesse país africano.

Segundo uma nota da Embaixada da Guiné-Bissau na Gâmbia, enviada hoje a ANG, a cerimónia decorreu nas instalações da Chancelaria da Guiné-Bissau em Kotu, República da Gâmbia, e a comissão organizadora enalteceu a contribuição do diplomata para o sucesso da iniciativa.

A nota refere que o "gesto simbólico" traduziu-se num justo tributo ao apoio decisivo do diplomata para a viabilização e o êxito da 1ª Grande Etapa Ciclista, um evento tido como um marco na diplomacia desportiva da região.

Segundo a comissão, o diploma outorgado ao Chefe da Missão Diplomática guineense testemunha a profunda gratidão da comissão organizadora pelo seu empenho pessoal na promoção do desporto e no estreitamento de pontes entre as comunidades.

"Este tributo reflete o reconhecimento de um esforço contínuo de posicionar o desporto como um catalisador de unidade, disciplina e cooperação regional", sublinhou o responsável máximo do Clube Multidesportivo Esperança Nova Wilson Ié.

Disse que, 1ª Grande Etapa Ciclista destacou-se não apenas pelo rigor técnico, mas também pelo seu caráter de integração cultural e desportiva. Este desígnio materializou-se na promoção da coesão regional mediante a participação ativa de atletas guineenses e gambianos.

Wilson Ié afirmou que o evento permitiu estreitar os laços de fraternidade entre as duas nações, colocando, simultaneamente, em relevo o papel facilitador da Chancelaria em Kotu, que proporcionou um impacto "altamente positivo" do apoio institucional ao desenvolvimento da juventude e na consolidação do ciclismo de estrada como uma modalidade em franca ascensão na África Ocidental.

Reagindo a distinção, Luís Barros reiterou o compromisso de apoiar iniciativas da sociedade civil que promovam a saúde, a coesão transfronteiriça e o desenvolvimento social por via do desporto.

MÉDIO ORIENTE/IRÃO DENUNCIA NA ONU "CRIMES DE GUERRA" DOS EUA POR ATAQUES A INFRAESTRUTURAS CIVIS

O Irão condenou hoje, na ONU, os ataques dos Estados Unidos contra o país e afirmou que os bombardeamentos deliberados contra infraestruturas civis constituem uma grave violação do direito internacional humanitário e configuram "crimes de guerra".

O Ministério das Relações Exteriores do Irã acusou os Estados Unidos de cometerem crimes de guerra ao atingir infraestruturas civis durante ataques ao país. Teerã afirma que as ações violam a Carta da ONU e o direito internacional.

Em comunicado, a chancelaria também defendeu os ataques iranianos contra países árabes do Golfo Pérsico, classificando-os como atos de legítima defesa amparados pelo Artigo 51 da Carta das Nações Unidas.

O Irã citou ataques dos EUA a uma fábrica de água mineral em Dehloran e a um centro de controle de tráfego marítimo em Chabahar como exemplos das violações. O comunicado não mencionou ofensivas iranianas anteriores contra alvos civis na região.

From Policy to Action: Gambia Launches a Decade of Social Protection Reform

By Kumba Leigh

The Gambia has unveiled an ambitious National Social Protection Policy 2026–2035 aimed at building a more inclusive, resilient and coordinated social protection system capable of safeguarding vulnerable citizens from poverty, economic shocks and the growing impacts of climate change.

Launched alongside the 2025 Annual Social Protection Sector Report, the policy provides a ten-year roadmap to strengthen social assistance, expand coverage to informal sector workers, enhance coordination among institutions and ensure that support reaches those who need it most.

Presenting the annual report, Srabosti Basu, Technical Assistant at the National Social Protection Agency (NSPA), highlighted the progress made in strengthening the country's social protection system while also outlining the persistent socio-economic challenges facing Gambians.

Despite significant investments and ongoing interventions, Basu noted that poverty and inequality remain major national concerns requiring sustained efforts and coordinated action.

According to Basu, poverty increased from approximately 48 percent in 2015 to 53 percent in 2020, with the COVID-19 pandemic significantly worsening living conditions, particularly for rural households.

She added that 20.7 percent of Gambians continue to live below the extreme poverty line, while the country's Gini coefficient stands at nearly 39 percent, reflecting one of the highest levels of income inequality in the region.

"The Gambia continues to face structural economic challenges, including widespread informality, limited fiscal space, dependence on low-productivity agriculture, food insecurity, limited economic diversification, and vulnerability to inflation and external shocks," Basu said.

Basu explained that the Annual Social Protection Sector Report serves as the country's principal monitoring document for the sector, providing an overview of ongoing programmes, identifying implementation gaps, documenting lessons learned and recommending future priorities.

She encouraged policymakers, development partners and the public to read the report, noting that it contains far more detailed analysis than could be presented during the launch.

Among the report's key focus areas are the implementation of the National Social Protection Policy, government financing for social protection, adaptive social protection, inclusion of informal sector workers, and flagship programmes such as the FSD and NAFA initiatives. Basu added that the report also highlights successful interventions implemented by partners, including ChildFund, the National Nutrition Agency (NaNA), and projects supporting vulnerable women and young people.

Looking ahead, she said the report identifies several priority reforms, including the operationalization of the Social Protection Fund, the introduction of a web-based Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, and the finalization of the country's Adaptive Social Protection Strategy.

Basu clarified that while the NSPA coordinates the social protection sector, it is not responsible for directly implementing programmes.

"The report is entirely based on information submitted by implementing institutions. Our role is to coordinate, compile, analyse and present the information provided by our partners," she explained.

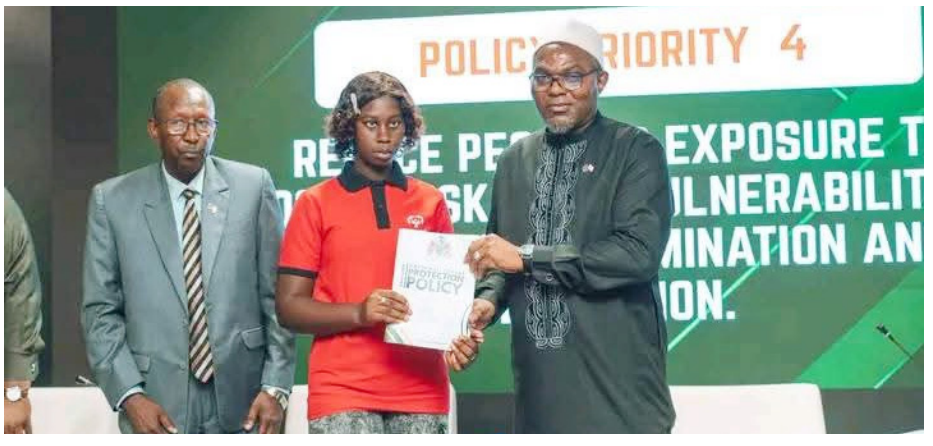
Commenting on the report's coverage of 22 institutions and 42 programmes, Basu said it captures data submitted by 22 institutions, comprising 17 government agencies, three development partners and two non-governmental organisations. Collectively, these institutions reported on 42 social protection programmes, including 12 pilot initiatives introduced in 2025, reflecting the continued expansion of social protection interventions across the country.

She said economic inclusion has emerged as a central priority, with the report highlighting a significant shift in the focus of social protection interventions. Economic inclusion now ranks as the leading area of intervention, followed by gender equality, employment and entrepreneurship, and child protection and early childhood development.

"According to the report, Brikama Area Council recorded the highest concentration of social protection programmes, followed by Basse and Janjanbureh. While Basse experienced a significant increase in program coverage compared to 2024, some urban areas saw declining activity, reflecting an increasing emphasis on rural and agricultural communities," She noted.

Basu said future efforts should focus on achieving a more balanced geographical distribution so that assistance is aligned with local needs across all regions.

She said youth and persons with disabilities receive greater attention, and among programmes reporting beneficiary data, 21 targeted young people, 20 targeted persons with disabilities, 19 targeted adults, and 14 focused specifically on children. Many programmes serve several beneficiary groups simultaneously, recognizing that poverty and vulnerability often overlap across different segments of society, and delivery models also vary according to institutional mandates.



In an exclusive interview following the launch, National Social Protection Agency (NSPA) Executive Director Saikou Jeng said the new National Social Protection Policy builds on the achievements of its predecessor rather than replacing it.

He said the previous policy laid the institutional foundation for the country's current social protection system, including the establishment of the NSPA.

"The previous policy delivered significant successes by strengthening coordination and creating the institutional framework we have today," Jeng said.

"However, the new policy responds to emerging realities and introduces strategic priorities that were not adequately addressed before. One of its most significant innovations is Adaptive Social Protection, which aims to prepare communities before disasters occur rather than responding only after crises strike."

Jeng noted that as climate change, flooding and economic shocks become more frequent, adaptive social protection has become essential.

"The new policy emphasizes prevention, preparedness, rapid response and long-term recovery to ensure communities are better equipped to withstand future shocks," he said.

He revealed that the Government has already initiated a Disaster Risk Financing Strategy, while the NSPA is developing a comprehensive Adaptive Social Protection Framework to strengthen the country's capacity to anticipate, withstand and recover from emergencies.

"Our objective is not simply to provide emergency assistance after disasters occur," Jeng explained. "We want to establish systems that prevent and reduce the impact of shocks before they happen, while ensuring rapid response mechanisms and sustainable recovery support for affected communities."

"Social protection requires substantial investment, and no government can finance everything alone. Even wealthier countries continue to work closely with development partners. Our objective is not to replace development partner support but to strengthen collaboration, mobilize more resources and ensure that no vulnerable Gambian is left behind," Mr Jeng said.

As implementation of the National Social Protection Policy 2026–2035 gets underway, stakeholders agreed that the policy, together with the accompanying sector report, provides a shared vision for a future social protection system that is more coordinated, adequately financed, inclusive and better equipped to protect Gambians from poverty, inequality and the increasing risks associated with economic and climate-related shocks.

Islam

بِسۡمِ اللّٰہِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ الرَّحِیۡمِ

The Quran repeatedly commands Muslims to establish prayer (Salat)

While the Quran doesn't explicitly list the five daily prayers by name with their exact timings, it strongly indicates and emphasizes the importance and timing of prayer through various verses. Verses like Surah Hud (11:114), Surah Isra (17:78), and Surah Taha (20:130) are frequently cited as pointing to these prayer times.

• ***Times of prayer:***

While not explicitly naming the five prayers, the Quran mentions prayer times related to the sun's position: before sunrise, during the day (including the afternoon), and at night.

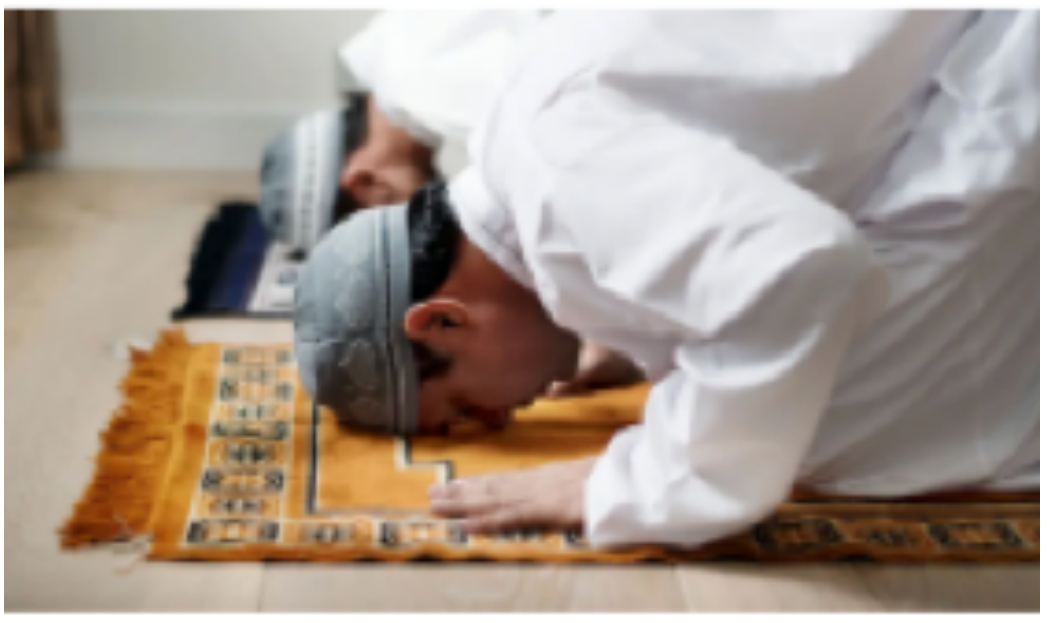
• ***Specific verses and their interpretations:***

• Surah Hud (11:114): "And establish prayer at the two ends of the day and the approaches of the night. Indeed, good deeds do away with misdeeds. That is a reminder for those who remember." This is often interpreted as referring to Fajr (dawn), Maghrib (dusk), and potentially Zuhr and Asr (noon and afternoon) prayers.

• Surah Taha (20:130): "...and glorify the praises of your Lord before the rising of the sun and before its setting, and during some of the hours of the night, and at the sides of the day, that you may become pleased with the reward which Allah shall give you." This verse is interpreted as referring to Fajr, Zuhr, Asr, and Isha prayers.

• Surah Baqarah (2:238): "Guard strictly (the obligatory) prayers, especially the middle prayer, and stand before Allah with obedience." This verse is believed to refer to the Salat al-Wusta, often interpreted as one of the middle prayers (Zuhr or Asr).

SURAH HUD AYAT 114 IN ARABIC TEXT



وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفَيِ النَّهَارِ وَزُلَفًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ ۚ إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ذِكْرَىٰ لِلذَّاكِرِينَ

Wa aqimis Salaata tarafayin nahaari wa zulafam minal layl; innal hasanaati yuzhibnas saiyi aat; zaalika zikraa liz zaakireen

SAHIH INTERNATIONAL

And establish prayer at the two ends of the day and at the approach of the night. Indeed, good deeds do away with misdeeds. That is a reminder for those who remember.

YUSUF ALI

And establish regular prayers at the two ends of the day and at the approaches of the night: For those things, that are good remove those that are evil: Be that the word of remembrance to those who remember (their Lord):

ABUL ALA MAUDUDI

And establish the Prayer at the two ends of the day and in the first hours of the night. Indeed, the good deeds drive away the evil deeds. This is a Reminder to those who are mindful of Allah.

MUHSIN KHAN

And perform As-Salat (Iqamat-as-Salat), at the two ends of the day and in some hours of the night [i.e. the five compulsory Salat (prayers)]. Verily, the good deeds remove the evil deeds (i.e. small sins). That is a reminder (an advice) for the mindful (those who accept advice).

PICKTHALL

Establish worship at the two ends of the day and in some watches of the night. Lo! good deeds annul ill-deeds. This is reminder for the mindful.

DR. GHALI

And keep up the prayer at the two extremities of the daytime and in the early reaches of the night. Surely the fair deeds will put away the odious deeds. That is a Reminding to the mindful.

ABDEL HALEEM

[Prophet], keep up the prayer at both ends of the day, and during parts of the night, for good things drive bad away- this is a reminder for those who are aware.

MUHAMMAD JUNAGARHI

دن کے دونوں سرے پر اور رات کے کچھ حصوں میں نماز قائم کرو، نیکیاں برائیوں کو دور کر دیتی ہیں یہ نصیحت ہے نصیحت پکڑنے والوں کے لئے

QURAN 11 VERSE 114 EXPLANATION

For those looking for commentary to help with the understanding of Surah Hud ayat 114, we've provided two Tafseer works below. The first is the tafseer of Abul Ala Maududi, the second is of Ibn Kathir.

Ala-Maududi Ibn-Kathir

ALA-MAUDUDI

(11:114) And establish the Prayer at the two ends of the day and in the first hours of the night. Indeed the good deeds drive away the evil deeds. This is a Reminder to those who are mindful of Allah.

113. This was to urge Salat at three times, that is, morning, evening and Isha. This shows that this was revealed before Salat had been made obligatory five times a day during the Miraj.

114. This is the remedy for eradicating evil from the world: Do good deeds and defeat evil with them. The best way of making you virtuous is to establish salat, which will remind you of Allah over and over again: which will produce those good characteristics in you that shall help you fight successfully against the systematic and united front of evil that has been formed against the mission of the truth. This will also enable you to establish practically the system of virtue and reform.

Surah 17 Al-Isra, Ayat 78-84

17:78) Establish Prayer from the declining of the sun to the darkness of the night; and hold fast to the recitation of the Qur'an at dawn, for the recitation of the Qur'an at dawn is witnessed. (17:79) And rise from sleep during the night as well- this is an additional Prayer for you, Possibly your Lord will raise you to an honoured position. (17:80) And pray: "My Lord! Cause me to enter wherever it be, with Truth, and cause me to exit, wherever it be, with Truth, and support me with authority from Yourself." (17:81) And proclaim: "The Truth has come, and falsehood has vanished. Surely falsehood is ever bound to vanish."101 (17:82) What We are sending down in the course of revealing the Qur'an is a healing and a grace for those who have faith; but it adds only to the ruin of the wrong-doers. (17:83) Whenever We bestow favours upon man, he arrogantly turns away and draws aside; and whenever evil visits him, he is in utter despair. (17:84) Say, (O Prophet): "Each one acts according to his own manner. Your Lord knows well who is best-guided to the Right Path."

Tech & Innovation

West Africa's Reliance on the Sun for Power

West Africa is witnessing a quiet revolution one driven not by politics or industry but by the power of the sun. As electricity shortages continue to plague millions across the region, solar power has emerged as a beacon of hope, promising a sustainable and accessible future for households, businesses, and entire communities. From rural villages to bustling capitals, solar technology is reshaping lives, boosting economies, and reducing dependence on costly and unreliable fossil fuels.

Despite its vast natural resources, Africa remains the world's most electricity-starved continent. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), nearly 600 million people in sub-Saharan Africa lack access to electricity, with West Africa being among the most affected regions. Countries such as Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Guinea suffer from frequent power outages, forcing businesses to rely on expensive diesel generators and households to depend on kerosene lamps and candles for light.

The impact of this energy crisis extends beyond inconvenience. Limited electricity access has stifled economic growth, hindered education, and strained healthcare systems. Rural clinics often lack refrigeration for vaccines, students struggle to study after sunset, and businesses face difficulty operating efficiently. For years, governments and international organizations have sought solutions, but the challenge of electrification remains daunting.

Amid these challenges, solar power has emerged as an affordable and scalable solution. With an average of 2,000 to 3,000 hours of sunshine per year, West Africa possesses immense solar potential. Companies and governments have begun investing heavily in solar projects, recognizing the technology's ability to provide clean and reliable energy.

One of the most successful initiatives is Easy Solar, a company that has been transforming lives in Sierra Leone and Liberia. Since its founding in 2016, Easy Solar has connected over a million people to electricity through affordable solar home systems. These systems include solar panels, batteries, and LED lights, enabling households to enjoy uninterrupted power without reliance on the national grid.

"Before we had solar power, our children couldn't study at night," says Fatou Jallow, a mother of three from rural Sierra Leone. "Now, we have light, and we can even charge our phones without going to town."

Other companies, such as Nigeria's Lumos and Mali's Zola Electric, are also leading the charge, providing pay-as-you-go solar energy solutions that make electricity accessible to low-income families. By allowing customers to pay small daily or weekly installments via mobile money, these companies are overcoming financial barriers and expanding energy access at an unprecedented rate.

One of the most promising solar developments is the rise of solar mini-grids. Unlike traditional grid expansion, which requires extensive infrastructure and significant investment, solar mini-grids provide localized electricity generation and distribution. These systems consist of a small solar farm connected to a village or town, offering an independent power source that is both reliable and cost-effective.

Countries like Senegal and Burkina Faso have embraced this technology, with dozens of mini-grids already operational. In Senegal, the government has partnered with private companies to install over 300 mini-grids, bringing electricity to thousands of rural communities.

"We no longer have to travel miles to charge our phones or buy expensive fuel for generators," says Mamadou Cisse, a shop owner in a village powered by a solar mini-grid. "Now, we have electricity 24/7, and our businesses are thriving."

Despite the rapid progress, challenges remain. The upfront cost of solar panels and batteries can be prohibitive for many low-income households, even with financing options. Additionally, solar energy storage technology needs to improve to ensure a consistent power supply during cloudy days or at night.

Grid integration is another concern. While solar mini-grids are effective for small communities, large-scale solar farms require connection to national grids, which are often outdated and inefficient. Governments must invest in modernizing electricity infrastructure to maximize the potential of solar energy.

Moreover, policy frameworks need to be strengthened to attract more private investment. Unclear regulations and bureaucratic hurdles have slowed down solar expansion in some countries, deterring investors from entering the market.

Despite these challenges, the future of solar power in West Africa looks promising. Technological advancements, falling costs, and increasing government support are paving the way for a solar-powered revolution. If the momentum continues, millions more people could gain access to clean and affordable energy within the next decade.

For the people of West Africa, the sun is more than just a source of light, it is a pathway to a brighter future. And as solar panels continue to dot the landscapes of villages and cities alike, one thing is clear: the region is finally stepping out of the shadows and into the light.

Sports

Minister Badjie Reaffirms Commitment to Preserving Gambia's Sporting Legacy , Supporting Athletes

By Lamarana S. Jallow

The Minister of Youth and Sports, Honourable Bakary Y. Badjie has reaffirmed the Government's commitment to preserving The Gambia's sporting heritage while expanding support for athletes across all disciplines as part of efforts to build a stronger and more inclusive sports sector.

Speaking at "A Day with Gambian Sports Legends", held under the theme "Honouring the Pioneers, Inspiring the Future" at Paradise Suites Hotel on Saturday, Hon. Badjie said the Government, under the leadership of President Adama Barrow, remains committed not only to developing sports infrastructure and nurturing young talent but also to recognising and supporting the pioneers whose sacrifices laid the foundation for the nation's sporting achievements.

The event, organised by the Sports Journalists Association of The Gambia (SJAG), brought together some of the country's most celebrated sports icons, administrators, journalists and stakeholders to celebrate the contributions of Gambian sporting legends.

Opening his address with a quote from former United States President Abraham Lincoln, Minister Badjie commended SJAG for creating what he described as a historic platform to honour the men and women who helped shape Gambian sports.

"A nation that does not honour its heroes will not long endure," the Minister quoted, adding that Gambians must continue to remember and celebrate those who have served the nation with distinction.

He said the gathering was not merely an opportunity to reflect on the past but also to inspire the next generation of athletes while preserving the legacy of those who paved the way.

The Minister reaffirmed that the Ministry of Youth and Sports, with the support of President Barrow's administration, is committed to supporting every sporting discipline across the country, regardless of popularity or financial standing.

"We are fully committed to supporting every sporting discipline in this country not just the popular ones or the well-funded ones, but all sports. That commitment also includes looking after our veterans because they are our living libraries of Gambian sport," he said.

Highlighting ongoing efforts to preserve the country's sporting heritage, Minister Badjie pointed to the initiative to name sections of the Independence Stadium after iconic Gambian sports personalities, including Alhagie Momodou Njie (Biri Biri), Ousainou Njie and others.

He also recalled the recent naming of the newly inaugurated multi-purpose mini stadium in Bakoteh after the late Omar Amadou Jallow, describing such recognitions as lasting tributes to individuals whose contributions transformed Gambian sports.

"These are not just names placed on walls," the Minister said. "They are promises that we will continue to honour our legends and ensure they remain an important part of our sporting journey."

Minister Badjie paid special tribute to veteran football coach Cherno Barra Touray, describing him as a pioneer, mentor and one of the architects of Gambian football.

He recalled that when The Gambia qualified for its historic maiden appearance at the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) in Cameroon, the Government ensured that Cherno Barra Touray and several other sports veterans were included in the official national delegation in recognition of their invaluable contributions to the country's football development.

Looking ahead, the Minister disclosed that the proposed National Sports Development Fund will include a dedicated support mechanism for deserving sports veterans once it becomes operational.

He explained that the National Sports Authority will develop the eligibility criteria and implementation framework to ensure that former athletes who made exceptional contributions to national sports receive the recognition and support they deserve.

Minister Badjie also pledged the Ministry's continued partnership with veteran sports associations and other stakeholders to preserve the history of Gambian sports through books, documentaries and other archival initiatives.

He urged young athletes to appreciate and learn from the experiences of former sportsmen and women who excelled despite limited facilities and resources.

The Minister concluded by expressing gratitude to Gambian sports legends for their decades of service and sacrifice, assuring them that the Government remains committed to safeguarding their legacy while continuing to invest in the future of sports development in The Gambia.

The event honoured several distinguished sporting icons, including Cherno Barra Touray, Lamin Owens, Essa Faye, Dodou Capi Joof, Bai Malleh Wadda, Binta Daffeh, Elizabeth Bahoum, Nafisa Secka, Sheikh Faye, Omar Faye and Jabou Jawo, among others, in recognition of their outstanding contributions to the development of sports in The Gambia.

Africell Becomes Official Partner of Team Gambia for Glasgow 2026

By Alhagie Babou Jallow

Africell has been unveiled as the Official Partner of Team Gambia for the Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games, in a major boost to the country's preparations for the global multi-sport event.

The partnership, announced during an official unveiling ceremony in Banjul, reflects the Gambia National Olympic Committee's (GNOC) efforts to strengthen collaboration with the private sector in support of Gambian athletes competing on the international stage.

Speaking at the ceremony, Africell representative Musa Sise described the agreement as a landmark achievement and reaffirmed the telecommunications company's commitment to supporting sports development and national pride.

"This partnership reflects Africell's continued commitment to national development through sport. We are proud to stand with the Gambia National Olympic Committee and Team Gambia as they prepare to represent the nation on the international stage," Sise said.

GNOC Second Vice President and Commonwealth Sport Focal Point Bakary K. Jammeh hailed the partnership as a significant milestone for Commonwealth sport and the Olympic movement in The Gambia.

He said the collaboration would not only strengthen support for Team Gambia but also deepen engagement with Gambians living abroad during the Games.

Jammeh announced that Gambia Day will be celebrated on 26 July in Glasgow, bringing together members of the Gambian diaspora, athletes, coaches and sports personalities.

According to him, the event will showcase Gambian culture through traditional music, dance and cuisine while creating opportunities for networking with partners and launching a sports talent identification initiative among Gambians living overseas.

"We are inviting all Gambians in the diaspora, sports personalities, coaches and athletes to Gambia Day. It will be a celebration of our culture and a platform to connect with our people abroad. Our partnership with Africell will help make this vision a reality," Jammeh stated.

GNOC Secretary General Yorro Njie said the agreement reflects increasing confidence from the private sector in supporting sports development and the Olympic movement in The Gambia.

GNOC President Bai Dodou Jallow described the partnership as another important step in the committee's drive to build lasting relationships with corporate partners while ensuring Team Gambia receives the support it needs to compete successfully.

"This is an important moment for us. We are representing our country at the Commonwealth Games, and one of our key objectives is to build strong partnerships. Having Africell join us as an Official Partner is a significant development. It shows that the private sector is now coming on board to support the Olympic movement in The Gambia," he said.

Looking beyond Glasgow 2026, President Jallow expressed hope that the partnership would continue into future international competitions, including the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games in neighbouring Senegal.

"We are looking for an even greater partnership in the future. With the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games in Senegal on the horizon, we don't want to go to Dakar alone; we want to go with Africell," he added.

The partnership is expected to enhance Team Gambia's preparations for the Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games while reinforcing Africell's commitment to supporting sports development and promoting national pride through the achievements of Gambian athletes.

GNOC to Fully Sponsor Two Gambian Journalists for Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games Coverage

Gambia Daily

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