



NATIONAL SPORTS COUNCIL

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AG.ED - MAHMOUD L. JAWLA

A New Dawn for Gambian Sports: The National Sports Policy 2024-2034!

As Acting Director of the National Sports Council, I am thrilled to announce a significant milestone in the development of Gambian sports. In August, the Minister of Youth and Sports, Hon. Bakary Y. Badjie, officially launched the validation workshop for the new National Sports Policy 2024-2034.

The new policy outlines a clear vision and set of aspirations for Gambian sports, building upon the successes and lessons learned from the previous policy. It recognizes the pivotal role that sports can play in our society, from promoting health and well-being to fostering unity and national pride. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all those who contributed to the development of this policy, including the task force committee, the consulting firms, and most importantly, the countless individuals who shared their insights and ideas.

This policy is a testament to the collective will of the Gambian people and their unwavering commitment to the growth and development of sports in our nation.

As we move forward, the National Sports Policy 2024-2034 will serve as a roadmap for our efforts to create a more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable sports environment. We are committed to investing in sports infrastructure, supporting grassroots development, and nurturing young talent. By working together, we can build a brighter future for Gambian sports.

Let us embrace this new era of sports development and strive to make The Gambia a sporting powerhouse on the global stage.

Mahmoud L. Jawla

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Gambia Unveils National Sports Policy 2024-2034 in Historic Validation Workshop

In a significant milestone for Gambian sports, the Minister of Youth and Sports, Hon. Bakary Y. Badjie, officially opened a day-long validation workshop on Sunday 25th August to finalize the new National Sports Policy 2024-2034 at Metz Residence Hotel. This policy, developed after extensive consultation with key stakeholders, marks a crucial step forward in the nation's sports history.

The new policy outlines the vision and aspirations of the Gambian sports community, building upon the successes and lessons learned from the previous National Sports Policy (2010-2019). Recognizing the policy's pivotal role in shaping the country's sports landscape, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, in collaboration with stakeholders, initiated a comprehensive review to craft a forward-looking document that will guide the development of sports over the next decade.

In his opening remarks, Minister Badjie expressed his gratitude to the various stakeholders and sports veterans who contributed to the policy's development. He emphasized that the document reflects the collective will of the Gambian people, stating, "This is more than just a ministry document; it is a national document, essential for the development of the sports we all love."

He also acknowledged the efforts of the task force committee, established last year to oversee the policy's creation. Despite the involvement of an international consulting firm from South Africa, Gambian experts played a crucial role in guiding the process. Professor Momodou Mustapha Fanneh, through his consulting firm, worked alongside the Institute of Sports Development in South Africa, with input from representatives of various associations forming the technical group or task force.

The final draft, now under review, will be submitted to the Cabinet for adoption, paving the way for its implementation as the official National Sports Policy.

Highlighting the importance of the new policy, Minister Badjie remarked, "Over the past years, the country has been working blindly without a guiding policy. This new document will replace the old one and set the path for what we all will be doing in the development of our sports."

The minister also underscored the timeliness of the policy, noting that it coincides with the completion of the first National Sports Act. Once the policy is adopted and the Act is passed by Parliament, they will provide a comprehensive framework for guiding sports development and regulation in The Gambia.

Minister Badjie thanked the Commonwealth for financing the policy and stressed the need for a paradigm shift in how sports are perceived and managed in the country. "We cannot continue to see sports as mere recreation. Sports is an industry in itself, with the power to lift people out of poverty, maintain peace in communities, and contribute to the country's economy," he said, citing the significant contributions of football and other sports to the national economy.

He reaffirmed the government's commitment to developing sports infrastructure, which he identified as a critical area needing investment. Over the decades, the lack of infrastructure has hampered talent development at the community level. The ministry's goal under the new policy is to raise sufficient resources to invest in sports infrastructure, even if it means reducing international participation temporarily.



NSC Acting Executive Director Praises Late George Gomez Foundation's Enduring Support for Gambian Youth

At a recent presentation ceremony held at Charles Fowlis Senior Secondary School in Old Jeshwang, Mr. Mahmoud L. Jawla, the Acting Executive Director of the National Sports Council (NSC), expressed deep appreciation for the Late George F. Gomez Foundation's unwavering support for sports in The Gambia. In collaboration with KitAid, a foreign charitable organization, the Foundation donated jerseys, boots, and balls to twenty-six sports clubs National Associations and academies across the country on Monday, August 12th.

In his keynote address, Mr. Jawla commended the initiative and reflected warmly on his relationship with the Late George F. Gomez, who was a former Chairman of the National Sports Council. He credited Gomez with mentoring him in sports administration, a legacy that has greatly influenced his career and that of many others within the Gambian sports community. Speaking on behalf of the National Sports Council and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Mr. Jawla expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Foundation and the family of the Late George F. Gomez for their continued dedication to empowering Gambian youth through sports. He highlighted the importance of preserving Gomez's legacy, urging all Gambians to draw inspiration from his lifelong commitment to youth development.

Mr. Jawla encouraged the young athletes present at the presentation to remain committed to their chosen sports, emphasizing that their dedication could one day bring about great talents who will represent The Gambia on the world stage. He reassured the gathering that the National Sports Council is actively engaged in discussions with the Foundation to further support initiatives like this and is planning to assist with future consignments, despite financial constraints. He affirmed the Council's commitment to fostering youth development through sports.

Other speakers include Adama Bah, Chairman of the Late George Gomez Foundation and the Foundation's president, Hon. James Gomez.



National Sports Council Acting Executive Director Launches Shuttle Time Training for Teachers

The Gambia Badminton Association, in collaboration with the Badminton Confederation Africa, today launched a one-week Shuttle Time Training Programme for teachers at the GNOC Hall on Bertil Harding Highway. The training, which runs from August 26 to September 2, 2024, aims to enhance the skills of physical education teachers in promoting badminton across schools in The Gambia.

Addressing the participants at the opening ceremony, Mahmoud L. Jawla, the Acting Executive Director of the National Sports Council, expressed his excitement at being part of this crucial initiative. He emphasized the importance of grassroots development in sports, noting that teachers play a pivotal role in nurturing young talent. "If we are to excel, our focus must be at the grassroots level. Teachers are key to this development, and one of the major focuses of our national sports policy is to ensure that grassroots sports are prioritized for the advancement of sports in the country," Jawla stated.



Minister Badjie Praises GFF Stakeholders' Tournament

Minister of Youth and Sports, Hon. Bakary Y Badjie, lauded the participating teams and organizers of the GFF Stakeholders' Tournament 2024, held on Sunday, August 25th, at the National Technical Training Center in Yundum. The one-day football jamboree, organized by the Gambia Football Coaches Association, was named after the GFF President, Lamin Kaba Bajo.

The tournament featured a series of matches between various football stakeholders, including Fans Clubs, Security, Medics, Referees, GFF Admins, SJAG, MoYS and the GFCFA. The Security Team won the tournament beating Medics 1-0 in the finals.

Minister Badjie emphasized the importance of such initiatives in fostering unity and cooperation within the football community. "Each association involved is committed to the development of sports, particularly football," he stated. "While we often focus on policies, strategies, and budgets, events like this allow us to connect on a more personal level and promote unity."

The Minister also shared his excitement about participating in the tournament, wearing the No. 10 jersey not just for show but to actively play. Reflecting on his performance in Yamoussoukro, where he scored three goals, he aimed to replicate that success. Indeed, he scored the only goal for the Ministry of Youth and Sports team, although they lost 2-1 to the Gambia Football Coaches Association in a well-contested game. The match also featured impressive skills from the acting executive director of the National Sport Council Mahmoud L Jawla.

Following the tournament, Minister Badjie, along with GFF President Lamin Kaba Bajo and Technical Director Sang Ndong, participated in a tree-planting exercise to protect the environment. This initiative was spearheaded by the Technical Director as part of the FIFA Goal Project.



Council Meeting Update

On August 10th, 2024, the Governing Council of the National Sports Council (NSC) convened for its third quarterly meeting of the year. The council, which includes elected regional and municipal Sports Chairpersons alongside nominated members, reviewed the Secretariat's activities and financial transactions for the third quarter. Additionally, the meeting provided a platform for each region and municipality to present updates on their respective sports activities.

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Gambia's Olympic Heroes Honored: Government Awards 1.5 Million Dalasi Qualification Bonus

In recognition of their efforts and achievements, the Government of The Gambia has rewarded its Olympic athletes with a 1.5 million dalasi qualification bonus. This gesture underscores the nation's commitment to supporting its sportsmen and women, who represented The Gambia at the 2024 Paris Olympic Games.

During a ceremony held at the Vice President office in State House on Friday 16th August, Vice President Muhammad B. S. Jallow welcomed the delegates and athletes, acknowledged their hard work and determination. Although the athletes did not return with medals, he highlighted their accomplishments, including breaking national records, and increasing The Gambia's presence at the Olympics from a single athlete to seven—a significant achievement for the country.

"The amount given to the athletes is a token of our appreciation," the Vice President remarked. "We wish it could be more, but the economic realities of our country limit us. Nevertheless, the issue of sports funding is being actively discussed at the cabinet level."

Lamin Jawara, Chairman of the National Sports Council (NSC) expressed his deep appreciation for the athletes' performances and thanked the government for its unwavering support. He highlighted the continuous efforts to develop sports in the country and noted the importance of the long-standing collaboration between the government, the NSC, and the Gambia National Olympic Committee (GNOC).

Yoro Njie, Secretary General of the GNOC, also expressed his gratitude to the government, particularly the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and the National Sports Council. He emphasized that the long-term relationship between these entities has been crucial to the success Gambian athletes are now achieving. Njie encouraged the athletes to continue their exceptional performances for the country and appealed for even more support to sustain and build upon these achievements.

Speaking on behalf of the Minister of Youth and Sports, Ndey Marie Njie, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Youth and Sports conveyed the nation's pride in the athletes. She commended the team for their dedication and participation, revealing that government had fully funded the 7 million dalasi budget for the Olympic Games. She also emphasized government's commitment to youth empowerment, which is reflected in their investment in sports.

"The motive of visiting the Vice President is to show appreciation to the athletes for their performance in the Olympics by presenting them with a cheque of 1.5 million dalasi. This is meant for six athletes, in addition to the One million dalasi already awarded to Gina Mariama Bass for her gold medal wins at the All-Africa Games in Ghana and her qualification to the Olympics," the Permanent Secretary stated.

Pictorial Highlights From The National Sports Policy 2024-2034 Validation





Bakau Sports Committee Introduces Newly Elected Executive to National Sports Council

The newly elected members of the Bakau Sports Committee, led by President Ousman Drammeh (Cho), paid a courtesy call on the National Sports Council (NSC) on Thursday, August 22, 2024. The visit aimed to formally introduce the new committee and strengthen ties with the country's sports governing body.

The delegation, led by Cho, who is also the founder and CEO of BK Milan FC and the team manager of The Scorpions, was warmly received by the Acting Executive Director of the NSC, Mr. Mahmoud L. Jawla. In his remarks, Mr. Jawla congratulated the new executive members for taking on the responsibility of managing sports in Bakau. He emphasized the importance of overseeing not just football, but all sports disciplines within the community, noting that the NSC is committed to assisting in this endeavor.

"It is crucial to remember that our mandate extends beyond football," Mr. Jawla stated. "We must consider the interests of those who participate in and support other sports. The Council is here to help connect you with various sports associations to integrate these disciplines into your activities."

Cho, addressing the gathering, highlighted the significance of the visit, stating that it was not only to introduce the newly elected committee but also to extend an invitation to the NSC to attend the upcoming Bakau Super Cup Final. He pointed out that this event would provide the Council with firsthand insight into the current state of infrastructure at the Bakau Mini Stadium and witness the progress being made.

The NSC's Programme Manager, Mr. Ebrima Secka, underscored the vital role of young people in the development of sports in Bakau. He expressed confidence in the newly formed executive committee, urging them to prioritize discipline among clubs during their nawettan (local league) season.

The visit also included words of encouragement from the NSC's Desk Officer for Wrestling, Mr. Abdoulie Bojang, who congratulated Cho and the executive committee. He emphasized the importance of maintaining professionalism and maturity in their roles, given Cho's extensive experience in Gambian sports.

Adding to the discussions, the Communication and PR Manager at the NSC, Mr. Sara Camara, advised the committee to utilize communication tools effectively to ensure transparency, particularly in decisions involving appeals. He assured them of his support and guidance.

The visit marks a promising start for the newly elected Bakau Sports Committee as they embark on their mission to develop and promote sports in the community, with the support and guidance of the National Sports Council.



President Barrow Reviews Renovation Progress at Independence Stadium

President Adama Barrow recently inspected the ongoing renovations at Independence Stadium, aimed at transforming the historic venue into a modern, multi-functional facility. The President was joined by the Minister of Youth and Sports, Hon. Bakary Y. Badjie, and the Stadium's General Manager, Mr. Ebou Faye, during the tour.

Mr. Faye briefed the President on the renovation's progress, indicating that the project is on track to be completed by the end of the year. He assured that the upgraded stadium would meet the Confederation of African Football (CAF) standards, with plans to invite CAF for inspection and certification upon completion, allowing the stadium to once again host international matches.

President Barrow expressed satisfaction with the progress and praised the efforts of the contractors and consultants involved. He urged them to maintain their momentum to ensure the timely completion of the stadium's transformation.

Commenting on the current ban preventing the stadium from hosting home matches, President Barrow remarked, "It is unfortunate that the stadium is banned for home matches. I believe the previous government should have addressed this issue. It's not our fault, and it's not our doing. We will fix it and consider building another one in the future."

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