



NATIONAL SPORTS COUNCIL

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Investing in the Future of Gambian Basketball

AG.ED - MAHMOUD L. JAWLA

The recent triumph of the Gambia U21 Basketball Team in the 2024 Amilcar Cabral U21 Tournament in Guinea Bissau marks a historic milestone for Gambian sports. With their commanding 62-48 victory over Senegal in the final, The Gambia has not only secured its first major international basketball title in over two decades but also reaffirmed the nation's potential as a rising force in West African basketball.

This victory is more than just a medal; it is a testament to the power of strategic investment and visionary leadership. The Ministry of Youth and Sports, under the stewardship of Hon. Minister Bakary Y. Badjie, has made a firm commitment to the revitalization of basketball in The Gambia. With an allocation of over D940,000 to the Gambia Basketball Association (GBA) this year alone, the Ministry has enabled the rebirth of the national basketball league and ensured the U21 team's participation in the prestigious Amilcar Cabral Zone II Tournament.

Hon. Badjie's dedication to restoring Gambian basketball to its former glory has laid the foundation for success. His belief in empowering young athletes and providing them with the resources they need to excel is evident in this remarkable achievement. It is no coincidence that with the right support in place, The Gambia has begun to rise to the challenge of competing at the highest levels.

As we reflect on this victory, it is clear that this is just the beginning of a new era for Gambian basketball.

This triumph serves as a reminder of what can be achieved when a nation invests in its youth and provides them with the tools to succeed. The Gambia is poised to build on this success, and the future of our basketball is brighter than ever. Let this victory inspire us all to continue fostering excellence in our sports and reaffirm our commitment to nurturing the next generation of champions.

Mahmoud L Jawla

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NSC Chairman Lamin Jawara, PR Manager Sara Camara, and Desk Officer for Wrestling Attend Deaf Football International Friendly

The National Sports Council (NSC) continues to demonstrate its commitment to inclusive sports and athlete development with a strong presence at the international friendly football match between The Gambia and Guinea Bissau on Saturday 31st August, organized by the Gambia Deaf Sports Association. The match, held at the Serrekunda East Mini Stadium, saw The Gambia secure an impressive 6-1 victory.

In attendance were NSC Chairman Lamin Jawara, Desk Officer for Wrestling Alhagie Abdoulie Bojang, and Communication & PR Manager Sara Camara, representing the Council and showing their support to the athletes.

Speaking at the conclusion of the game, Chairman Lamin Jawara conveyed the solidarity message on behalf of the Minister of Youth and Sports, who was unable to attend due to prior engagements. Chairman Jawara emphasized the importance of the event, stating, "We are here on behalf of the Minister, and we want to express our appreciation for the efforts of everyone involved. It is heartening to witness this strong bond between The Gambia and Guinea Bissau. These two nations are like one family, and fostering this relationship is a source of pride, especially among this group of athletes."

He further highlighted the significance of the event which showed the potential of all athletes, regardless of their circumstances. "What we have witnessed today is a clear indication that anyone can achieve greatness. We encourage these athletes to continue their hard work, as there is immense potential in both teams. I am confident that one day, we will see some of these players competing at the international level."

Chairman Jawara also commended the organizers of the event, noting that it was well-coordinated and successful. He extended a warm welcome to the visitors from Guinea Bissau, expressing his hope for the continued strengthening of the relationship between the two countries. "We are very happy that you are here today, and you are highly welcome."



National Sports Council Attends SJAG Elective Congress

The National Sports Council (NSC) reaffirmed its commitment to sports development and collaboration with sports journalists by attending the Sports Journalists Association of The Gambia (SJAG) Elective Congress on August 31, 2024. NSC

Program Manager Ebou Secka and Communication & PR Manager Sara Camara represented the Council at the event held at NaNA Hall. Program Manager Ebou Secka emphasized the crucial role sports journalists play in promoting sports and urged delegates to elect committed individuals to SJAG's new executive. He highlighted the challenges sports organizations face when leaders misunderstand the voluntary nature of sports service, calling for genuine dedication to the development of sports in The Gambia.

Secka also stressed the need for positive reporting to support sports growth and expressed NSC's openness to clarifying any sports-related issues.



NSC Bids Farewell to Young Scorpions Ahead of WAFU Tournament

The Acting Executive Director of the National Sports Council (NSC), Mr. Mahmud Lamin Jawla, has commended the Gambia Football Federation (GFF) for ensuring the Gambia U-20 national football team's participation in the upcoming West African Football Union (WAFU) Zone A tournament. The tournament is set to take place in Monrovia, Liberia.

Speaking at a farewell ceremony held on Friday 8th September at Football Hotel in Old Yundum, Mr. Jawla acknowledged the continuous efforts of the GFF in maintaining the team's presence in international competitions. He remarked, "Since we started engaging in the U-20 tournament, Gambia has rarely missed an edition, and if we have, it's been no more than once."

Mr. Jawla also expressed gratitude to the coaching staff for their dedication, stating, "The coaches have worked tirelessly to ensure the task entrusted to them is completed. To the players, we always emphasize that you are part of a select group from a pool of thousands of footballers. By being here, you represent the very best at your level, and the entire nation places its hopes on you as we hand over the national flag."

He further urged the team to recognize the responsibility they carry, noting that "the whole country's hope is on you now. You have been trained well, the coaches have done their jobs, and now it's your responsibility to perform. The readiness on your faces is a sign that you are prepared to bring back the glory that Gambia is accustomed to in this tournament."

Acknowledging the challenges faced by sports development in the country, Mr. Jawla highlighted the importance of commitment and enthusiasm. "Yes, we have limited resources, but the dedication of the players, coaches, and staff compensates for what we lack in finances," he said.

Mr. Jawla, speaking on behalf of the Minister of Youth and Sports, assured the team of the ministry's support.



NAYCONF 2024 Preparations in Full Swing as Sub-Committees Begin Meetings

Preparations for the much-anticipated National Youth Conference and Festival (NAYCONF) 2024 are gaining momentum as various sub-committees commence their meetings.

The Marketing Sub-Committee, a crucial arm of the organizing body, held a significant meeting to discuss the strategies and mechanisms necessary to engage relevant stakeholders for effective partnerships and support.

Among the participants on Wednesday 3rd was Abdoulie Bojang, the National Sports Council Desk officer for Wrestling

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Gambia's U21 Basketball Team Embarks on Historic Journey to Bissau: NSC Acting Executive Director Charges Team to Uphold National Pride

As the U21 Basketball team departs for the Amilcar Cabral U21 Basketball Tournament in Guinea-Bissau, the Acting Executive Director of the National Sports Council (NSC), Mr Mahmoud L. Jawla on Friday 18th September delivered a powerful message of encouragement, emphasizing the gravity of their responsibility as they represent the entire nation.

In his send-off remarks, Mr. Jawla highlighted the significance of the national flag that was handed over to the team, symbolizing the collective hopes and dreams of over two million Gambians. "This flag holds a vast meaning, as it carries the weight of the entire nation's expectations. You are not just basketball players, you are ambassadors of The Gambia," he stated, underlining the immense responsibility the team carries as they step onto the international stage.

He called on the players to ensure that their performance, behavior, and overall conduct reflect the values and traditions of The Gambia. "Your attitude, comportment, and even the way you dress should align with the discipline The Gambia is known for. You have the ability to portray our country at the highest level, and through you, people who may not know about The Gambia will learn about our culture and our discipline," he added.

Drawing parallels with football, Mr. Jawla noted how sports have already made significant contributions to the Gambian economy, particularly through remittances from professional athletes abroad. He expressed optimism that basketball could follow a similar path and urged the players to work towards becoming professionals themselves. "With determination, hard work, discipline, and respect, you can make it to the NBA. The Gambia is known for peace and discipline, and I believe that if you put your hearts into it, you will bring something back—whether it be the trophy or medals. The entire nation is behind you," he encouraged.

Mr. Jawla's message was clear: the team is not only representing The Gambia in competition but also showcasing the nation's values to the world. As they embark on this historic journey, the entire country stands united in hope and anticipation for their success.



Gambia Badminton Association Elective Congress

The Gambia Badminton Association (GBA), today successfully held its Elective Congress at Saint Peter's Hall in Lamin on Saturday 28th September. This significant event marked the election of a new executive committee, tasked with leading the association toward future achievements.

In addition, badminton kits were presented to athletes, reinforcing GBA's dedication to nurturing and empowering players across the country.

The event was graced by NSC, Ebou Secka, Program Manager, and Sara Camara, the Communication and Public Relations Manager.



A Perfect Playground for Football Excellence

Walking on the newly installed, standard-recommended artificial turf at the Independence stadium feels smooth and cushioned underfoot. The grass fibers are soft yet firm, offering just the right amount of bounce. Unlike natural grass, there is no uneven terrain or loose dirt, making each step stable and consistent. The artificial blades of grass give a clean, fresh aesthetic, while the underlying padding creates a sense of comfort, absorbing pressure and reducing strain on the feet and joints. You feel an even, springy sensation as you walk, making it perfect for football.

Unlike natural grass, where the terrain can be uneven with patches of dirt or divots, the artificial turf offers a flawless and consistent surface.



Rank	Nat	Name	Time
6	USA	McLAUGHLIN-LEVRONE Sydney	22.40 <i>Official</i>
5	GAM	BASS BITTAYE Gina Mariam	23.01 <i>Official</i>
8	BEL	NKANSKA Delphine	23.03 <i>Official</i> =PB
7	HUN	TAKÁCS Boglárka	23.05 <i>Official</i>
3	USA	IRBY-JACKSON Lynna	23.34 <i>Official</i>
2	SLO	MIHALINEC ZIDAR Maja	23.37 <i>Official</i>
4	BEL	ROSIUS Rani	23.56 <i>Official</i>

Gina Mariam Bass Bittaye Secures 2nd Place in Women's 200m at Brussels

Gina Mariam Bass Bittaye secured an impressive 2nd place finish in the women's 200m invitational at the Brussels Diamond League Final in Belgium, clocking in at 23.01 seconds. This event featured some of the world's top sprinters, making her achievement particularly notable. Bittaye, The Gambia's leading female sprinter, demonstrated her world-class ability by holding her own against a highly competitive field.

Her performance at the Brussels meet adds to an already stellar season, as she continues to establish herself as one of Africa's fastest women. Over the years, Bass has consistently represented The Gambia on the international stage, earning respect for her speed, resilience, and determination. This 2nd place finish solidifies her standing as a key contender in global athletics as she eyes future competitions, including potential Olympic and World Championship opportunities.

National Assembly Ratifies Agreement to Bring WAFU Zone A Headquarters Back to The Gambia



The National Assembly on Tuesday 17th September unanimously ratified the agreement between the Government of The Gambia and the West African Football Union (WAFU) Zone A. The motion, presented by the Honourable Minister of Youth and Sports, Mr. Bakary Y. Badjie, received no objections from parliamentarians.

In his address, Honourable Bakary Y. Badjie emphasized the importance of the agreement for The Gambia's development, both in football and broader socio-economic terms. With the ratification by the National Assembly, the agreement will be submitted to CAF and FIFA, paving the way for WAFU Zone A to be officially registered as a sub-regional, internationally affiliated organization with its headquarters in The Gambia.

National Basketball U17 Male and Female Team Trial Selections





The Gambia Boxe Chinoise Federation Prepares for International Training and National Competition

The Gambia Boxe Chinoise Federation is organizing an international training course and national competition on September 27-28, 2024, featuring participants from six African countries. Established in 2019, the Federation focuses on promoting Boxe Chinoise, targeting youth over 12 to address high crime rates through self-defense, discipline, and empowerment.

During a recent courtesy visit on Thursday 26th September, the Federation briefed NSC Acting Executive Director Mahmoud L. Jawla on the events and sought financial support from the Ministry of Youth and Sports. Mr. Jawla advised submitting a formal proposal to secure the funding. The Federation aims to develop a national team, enhance technical skills, and build a strong foundation for the sport in The Gambia.

Mr. Jawla, in response, advised the Federation to formalize their request by submitting a proposal to the NSC, which would then be forwarded to the Ministry for consideration. The Federation's efforts align with the broader national strategy of using sports as a tool for youth empowerment, discipline, and international representation.

The upcoming events are part of the Federation's ongoing work to strengthen Boxe Chinoise as a competitive sport in The Gambia. Among their objectives is the establishment of a national team that will compete internationally, while also building a foundation for the sport within local communities. The Federation's work aims to equip young Gambians with valuable skills, foster international collaboration, and promote the sport across the continent.

The Gambia Boxe Chinoise Federation also aims to train local referees and coaches to ensure the sport's sustainability and competitiveness, while encouraging youth participation in physical activities that build self-discipline and resilience.



Mustapha Touray Selected to Represent The Gambia at FIBA Africa Regional Youth Camp

The Secretary General of the Gambia Basketball Association (GBA) Alieu Nyang has confirmed that Mustapha Touray will represent The Gambia at the 2024 FIBA Africa Regional Youth Camp, set to take place from October 14 to 17 in Douala, Cameroon. This basketball camp, organized by FIBA, brings together some of Africa's most promising young basketball talents for a rigorous training camp, aimed at identifying and nurturing future basketball stars.

FIBA selects players based on their potential, offering them the opportunity to train with some of the best coaches from Africa, alongside NBA coaches. The camp provides an invaluable platform for young players to showcase their skills and, if they perform exceptionally, to earn further invitations to additional camps and exposure to the international basketball community.



Ministry Allocates Over D940,000 to Gambia Basketball Association (GBA)

The Ministry of Youth & Sports, following a thorough assessment meeting with the Executive of the Gambia Basketball Association (GBA), agreed to provide a grant of D441,000 to support the revitalization and strengthening of basketball league in The Gambia.

This decision came after Hon. Minister Bakary Y. Badjie invited the GBA Executive to his office to discuss strategies for restoring the sport to its former glory.

Additionally, the Ministry allocated D500,000 to facilitate the U21 national team's participation in the Amilcar Cabral Zone II tournament currently underway in Guinea Bissau.

With this combined financial support totaling D941,000, the Ministry reaffirms its commitment to reviving basketball and enhancing its status in the country.

NSC Mourns the Passing of Malick Jarra



The National Sports Council (NSC) has expressed deep sorrow over the passing of Malick Jarra, the First Vice President of the Gambia Handball Association. Jarra passed away on Friday 20th September at the Edward Francis Small Teaching Hospital (EFSTH) in Banjul.

In a statement, the NSC extended its heartfelt condolences to the Gambia Handball Association and the wider sports community. Malick Jarra was recognized for his instrumental role in the development and revival of handball in recent years, dedicating both his time and personal resources to the growth of the sport.

On behalf of the NSC, its staff, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and the sports fraternity, Acting Executive Director Mahmoud L Jawla expressed deep sadness and conveyed his sympathies to the bereaved family. He described Jarra's death as an irreparable loss and prayed for his soul to rest in Jannahtul Firdaws.



Gambia U21 Basketball Team Crowned Champions of the Amilcar Cabral U21 Tournament in Guinea Bissau

In a groundbreaking achievement for Gambian sports, the Gambia U21 Basketball Team emerged victorious at the 2024 Amilcar Cabral U21 Tournament in Guinea Bissau on Monday 23rd September, defeating Senegal 62-48 in a thrilling final. The historic win not only solidifies The Gambia's growing dominance in regional basketball but also marks the nation's first major international basketball title in over two decades.

Foday "GoNoLimit" Gorgi Sowe: The MVP of the Tournament

Foday Gorgi Sowe, affectionately known as "GoNoLimit," stole the show in the final with an outstanding 15-point performance, securing his MVP accolade in the tournament and making it four MVP accolades to the Gambia. His dazzling display of skill, determination, and leadership on the court was instrumental in securing The Gambia's victory over their long-standing rivals, Senegal.

As Sowe raised the MVP trophy, the Gambian fans erupted in celebration, recognizing the immense talent of their rising basketball star. His performance, coupled with the overall dominance of the team throughout the tournament, has sent waves of excitement and pride across the nation.

The Road to Glory: Gambia's Unstoppable Run

The journey to the championship was anything but easy, yet The Gambia proved their mettle by dominating every match in the tournament. One of their most memorable moments was their crushing 68-24 victory over the host nation, Guinea Bissau, in the earlier rounds. Ebrima "EB" Drammeh led the charge in that game with 23 points, earning him the MVP award for his remarkable contribution.

Throughout the tournament, Gambia's defense remained rock-solid, shutting down opposing teams' offenses with precision and discipline. Coach Daniel Nyaki played a pivotal role in crafting a winning strategy, and his emphasis on teamwork and strong defense proved to be the difference. "We came here with a mission, and the boys have shown their resilience, especially in defense," said Coach Nyaki. "This victory belongs to The Gambia."

Historic Victory Over Senegal

The semi-final clash with Senegal will go down in Gambian sports history as one of the most thrilling basketball encounters. Gambia, overcoming Senegal for the first time in an official basketball competition, sealed a 52-43 win. The significance of this triumph cannot be overstated, as it marked a new chapter in The Gambia's rivalry with their more established neighbors.

Coach Nyaki reflected on the milestone victory: "This win against Senegal is monumental. We've had challenges over the years, but today we showed that The Gambia is ready to compete at the highest level."

The Ministry of Youth and Sports' Strategic Support

This historic triumph is also a testament to the Ministry of Youth and Sports' unwavering support for basketball in The Gambia. This year, the Ministry, led by Hon. Minister Bakary Y. Badjie, allocated over D940,000 to the Gambia Basketball Association (GBA). This funding revitalized the national basketball league and ensured the U21 team's participation in the Amilcar Cabral Zone II Tournament. Hon. Badjie's vision to restore Gambian basketball to its former glory is now becoming a reality. "This victory is a result of collective effort. Our athletes have proven that with the right support, they can achieve greatness on the international stage," said the Minister. A Nation's Pride

With this victory, The Gambia has firmly positioned itself as a rising basketball powerhouse in West Africa. As the nation looks ahead, the future of Gambian basketball is brighter than ever.



Gambia's U21 Basketball Team Embarks on Mission to Bring Home the Amilcar Cabral Trophy: Minister Leads National Flag Handover Ceremony

In a powerful show of support for the Gambia's U21 Basketball team on Wednesday 18th September, Hon. Bakary Y. Badjie, Minister of Youth and Sports, led the official handing over of the national flag as the team prepares to travel to Bissau for the prestigious Amilcar Cabral U21 Basketball Tournament. Speaking during the ceremony, the Minister expressed his pride in presenting the national flag, emphasizing the significance of the team's mission to represent The Gambia on the international stage.

The Minister wished the team the best of luck as they embark on their journey and urged them to give their all in securing victory and bringing the trophy back home. "Once you hold the national flag, you are not just athletes—you are ambassadors of The Gambia. Go out there and do your best to win the trophy for your country," he said.

The Minister also praised the growth of basketball in the country, attributing this to the efforts of the leadership within the Gambia Basketball Association. He acknowledged the association's dedication to revitalizing the sport and restoring its past glory, with a vision of elevating basketball to the same level of popularity and funding as football. "The Ministry is committed to supporting basketball, both locally and internationally. Within our limited resources, we will continue to do everything we can to ensure success," he pledged.

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