



# NSC SPECIAL

## NAYCONF EDITION



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National Youth Conference and Festival (NAYCONF) 2024

### PREPARATIONS LEADING TO NAYCONF 2024

Months before the event, the Sports Committee, in collaboration with various stakeholders, embarked on a series of preparatory meetings to ensure the success of the festival. These meetings were pivotal in strategizing, addressing logistical challenges, and outlining the sports and conference agenda. Key stakeholders included the National Sports Council (NSC), and selected sports associations.




The just-concluded National Youth Conference and Festival (NAYCONF) 2024 in the Kanifing Municipality (KM) showcased the unifying power of sports, providing a vibrant platform for Gambian youth to display their talent, discipline, and regional pride. The event, held under the auspices of the National Youth Council and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, was a resounding success, particularly in its sporting dimension.



The Sports Committee conducted a series of planning sessions to:

- Identify venues suitable for the different sporting events.
- Mobilize resources, including financial and human capital.
- Engage technical sports experts to ensure adherence to national and international standards.
- Coordinate with regional representatives to encourage maximum participation.



 **THEME:** "ENHANCING YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN THE ATTAINMENT OF THE RF-NDP 2023-2027"

## PREPARATIONS AND TECHNICAL MEETINGS

Preparations for NAYCONF 2024 were meticulous and inclusive. The NAYCONF Sports Committee, led by Mr. Mahmoud L. Jawla, Acting Executive Director of the National Sports Council, held its inaugural technical meeting at the Charles Jaw Memorial Academy. Regional representatives discussed regulations for football, volleyball, basketball, athletics, and wrestling. Rules were clearly outlined to ensure fair play and competitive excellence.

A major highlight of the preparations was the football group draw, where teams were divided into competitive groups. Matches were hosted across the Serekunda East and West Mini Stadiums, Bova Zone, and Abuko School, each venue buzzing with anticipation.

## THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL SPORTS COUNCIL

The NSC played a critical role in organizing and managing the sports activities at NAYCONF KM 2024. Under the leadership of Acting Executive Director Mahmoud L. Jawla, the NSC ensured that all sports activities reflected professionalism and inclusivity.

The council also collaborated with sports associations, including the Gambia Football Federation (GFF), Gambia Basketball Association, Gambia Wrestling Association and Gambia Volleyball Association, to provide technical support. This effort resulted in a well-coordinated sports festival that highlighted the growing talent in Gambian sports.




A major highlight of the evening was the football group draw, which revealed the matchups for the regional teams.

Group A: Kanifing, Central River Region (CRR), Lower River Region (LRR), West Coast Region (WCR)

Group B: Banjul, Upper River Region (URR), North Bank Region (NBR)

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## INCLUSIVITY AND INNOVATION: THE AMPUTEE FOOTBALL EXHIBITION

For the first time, NAYCONF included an amputee football exhibition match, showcasing the festival's commitment to diversity and inclusivity. This event, applauded by sports authorities, highlighted the exceptional abilities of differently-abled athletes and reinforced the message that sports transcend physical limitations.



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## SUPPORT FROM GNOC

In a show of solidarity and support, the Gambia National Olympic Committee (GNOC) donated eight giant trophies to the Ministry of Youth and Sports for NAYCONF 2024. The Honourable Minister, Bakary Y. Badjie, received these trophies, which were intended to reward excellence in various sporting disciplines during the festival.

The trophies were handed over by GNOC's 1st Vice President, Lamin King Colley, marking the first time the GNOC, under the leadership of President Bai Dodou Jallow, has extended direct support to NAYCONF. This initiative aligns with GNOC's mission to promote and develop Olympic sports in The Gambia while empowering the country's youth.

Receiving the trophies, Hon. Bakary Y. Badjie, Minister of Youth and Sports, expressed gratitude to the GNOC for their timely contribution. "We are truly thankful for this generous gesture. It will undoubtedly enhance the value of NAYCONF and motivate the young participants," he said.

The Acting Executive Director of the National Sports Council, Mr. Mahmoud L. Jawla, applauded the players for their remarkable talent and determination. "This exhibition is not just about football; it is a platform to celebrate the unique abilities of these athletes and demonstrate that sports are for everyone," he stated.

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## BASKETBALL: FAST-PACED ACTION AND TACTICAL BRILLIANCE

Basketball competitions were equally electrifying. In the male category, Banjul dominated, securing gold with tactical precision, while NBR and WCR claimed silver and bronze respectively. The female finals saw the North Bank Region outshine their competitors to clinch gold, with Upper River Region (URR) and WCR following.



## FOOTBALL: A BATTLE OF STRATEGY AND SKILLS

Football remained the crown jewel of the sporting events. The male football final witnessed a thrilling penalty shootout between the North Bank Region (NBR) and Kanifing Municipality (KM). NBR clinched victory with a 4-2 win, crowning themselves champions. In the female category, Banjul's City Girls triumphed with a narrow 1-0 win over the West Coast Region (WCR), securing their spot as the best female football team.




## Volleyball: Power, Precision, and Resilience

Volleyball showcased the agility and teamwork of participants. In the female division, NBR emerged victorious, followed by URR and WCR. The male competition saw Banjul take the gold, WCR secure silver, and NBR earn bronze.

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## WRESTLING: REGIONAL DOMINANCE

In the group category, North Bank Region (NBR) displayed remarkable prowess, securing the top spot. Their wrestlers demonstrated superior technique, stamina, and resilience, clinching crucial victories against formidable opponents. Upper River Region (URR) followed closely in second place, showcasing their own depth of talent, while NBR's second team rounded off the podium in third place, solidifying the region's dominance in the competition.



The individual categories were fiercely contested, with athletes delivering electrifying performances that kept spectators on the edge of their seats. The results were as follows:

- 66 KG: Banjul's wrestler clinched the gold medal with a display of agility and tactical superiority, overcoming tough opposition to secure a decisive victory.

## ATHLETICS: SPEED, STRENGTH, AND ENDURANCE

The track and field events at Abuko School were dominated by KM, which amassed the highest number of medals, demonstrating their excellence in sprints and relays. WCR excelled in field events, and Banjul shone in team relays, underscoring the diversity of athletic talent across regions.



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- 76 KG: North Bank Region claimed gold, with their wrestler demonstrating unmatched technique and strength, earning applause from the audience.
- 86 KG: Upper River Region's representative won gold, showcasing remarkable stamina and skill to emerge victorious in a tightly contested category.
- 100 KG: Banjul's wrestler struck gold again, solidifying the capital city's reputation for producing top-tier athletes in the heavier weight classes.
- 120 KG: North Bank Region's heavyweight wrestler dominated the category, securing another gold for the region with a commanding performance.

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## WRESTLING RANKING

On the overall wrestling rankings, North Bank Region emerged as the undisputed champion, amassing two gold medals and one silver. Their consistent performances across multiple categories underscored the depth of talent and rigorous preparation within the region.

## SPORTSMANSHIP AND UNITY



Throughout the festival, sportsmanship and unity prevailed. Regional representatives, guided by inspiring speeches from Mr. Lamin S. Jawara, Chairman of the National Sports Council, emphasized discipline and fair play. The competitions not only celebrated talent but also fostered camaraderie and mutual respect among the youth.

He urged all teams to approach the competitions with maturity, discipline, and decorum, while reminding participants that sportsmanship, unity, and fair play remain central to NAYCONF's mission. Mr. Jawara further encouraged the regions to use the platform to showcase their collective spirit of youth empowerment and national pride.



## THE CEREMONIAL MATCH KICKOFF

The highly anticipated clash between Banjul and URR concluded the day's male football fixtures at the Serekunda West Mini Stadium. The ceremonial kickoff was performed by the Honorable Minister of Youth and Sports, Bakary Y. Badjie, who underscored the importance of Nayconf in fostering discipline, unity, and sportsmanship among Gambian youths.

URR asserted control in the early stages, applying sustained pressure and maintaining possession. Their efforts paid off in the 15th minute, when a superbly executed free kick found the back of the net, giving them a deserved lead and energizing their supporters.

Banjul sought to respond, intensifying their attack as the first half progressed. However, URR's well-organized defense remained steadfast, repelling numerous attempts to equalize before halftime.

The second half featured a more balanced contest, with both sides displaying strong possession play and creating promising chances. Despite their best efforts, neither team could find a breakthrough until the final moments of the game.

With just 15 minutes left on the clock, Banjul's persistent attacking finally bore fruit as they scored the equalizer, sending their fans into jubilant celebrations. The goal capped off a spirited performance and ensured a tense and competitive finish to the match.

The evenly matched contest ended in a 1-1 draw, setting the tone for what promises to be an exhilarating Nayconf football tournament. Both teams showcased determination and skill, leaving spectators eager for the upcoming fixtures.

Final Score: Banjul 1-1 URR