



NAYCONF

National Youth Conference & Festival
BANJUL 2022



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DELEGATES DEMAND REHABILITATION OF SKILL CENTRES IN RURAL AREAS



MINISTER BADJIE VISITS NAYCONF DAILY



**NAYCONF IS AN
OPPORTUNITY
FOR COACHES TO HUNT
TALENTS, SAYS NSC BOSS**

EDITORIAL

With an unemployment rate of 41.3%, the youth call for government intervention in ameliorating issues of unemployment. The Gambia has a very young population with a high number of youth living below the poverty line. An unemployed youth is a recipe for disaster.

The lack of employment opportunities has given rise to a high rate of irregular migration, crime and drug abuse. The Gambian youth continue to hunt for jobs even if it means risking it all through the Atlantic Ocean or through the deserts. The youth at the conference sessions are with the strongest conviction that the government needs to invest more of its energy in skills acquisition as this will help the youth to become job creators instead of job hunters.

The Gambian youth has taken a paradigm shift from white-coloured jobs to entrepreneurship. During the opening ceremony, the President of the Republic of the Gambia His Excellency Adama Barrow was taken on a tour to see how young Gambian entrepreneurs are excelling and innovating new ideas into business. Many of the youth are into the rebranding of local goods and this was something that the president appreciates.

This year NAYCONF has introduced a pitching competition for the first time in history, this will allow youth to showcase their business ideas. It will also avail them the opportunity to learn, interact and expand their business. Currently, the young entrepreneurs have their stalls in all the places of the conference. It is important that we patronize them, as this is the only way that our young entrepreneurs can excel.

Meanwhile, there is a need for the government to invest more in its grant scheme as well as make the NYSS mandatory for all as this will boost a sense of hard work and patriotism amongst the youth folk. We are aware of the fact that the Nation Youth Service Scheme together with the UTG is about to launch a graduate scheme, this is indeed commendable,

Minister Badjie visits NAYCONF Daily

By Alieu Jallow

Hon. Bakary Y Badjie, Minister of Youth and Sports yesterday paid a surprise visit to the media team of the NAYCONF Daily located at St Joseph Senior Secondary School in Banjul.

NAYCONF Daily is a daily publication by the Media and Publicity Sub-committee of the ongoing National Youth Conference and Festival.

Speaking to this reporter, the minister commended the media team for the good work they have been doing since the start of the biennial youth gathering.

“The publications certainly capture and reflect the actualities of the ongoing progress in the NAYCONF. I’m satisfied with the content and satisfied with the way the layout is done, and everything that has been gathered so far,” he said.

He added: “So even if you’re not here when you read the

NAYCONF Daily, it gives you an idea of what has transpired at the convergence.”

The media team introduced a news brief in the local language to cater to people who don’t understand English.

“Some people cannot read or find it difficult to read, maybe prefer the video, visual, or something that they can see. And it’s a good way. And it’s also not only those who are lazy to read, there are some people that cannot even read at the conference,” Minister said.

Hon. Badjie further dilated that convergence is a non-discriminatory event where young people come from all regions. Some of them according to the Hon. Minister, cannot read or write and therefore, the Nayconf Daily has provided a solution.

He said this is a great addition and the organizing Committee is very satisfied with the kind of ideas that are coming up from this house Media Center.

Hon. Badjie recommended the team and urged them to continue their noble work by ensuring that they come up with some new ideas especially vox pop to seek the sincere opinions of people from different regions. The minister was received at the Media Centre by the Chairman of Media and Publicity Sub-committee Muhammed S. Bah who also doubles as the Editor-in-Chief of NAYCONF Daily.



CONFERENCE DELEGATES DEMAND THE REHABILITATION OF SOME SKILL CENTRES IN THE RURAL AREAS



By Alieu Jallow

Technical and vocational education and training play a critical role in economic growth, helping to develop skills required to improve the productivity of industries, raise income levels for citizens and improve access to employment opportunities for youth.

There has always been a huge development gap between rural and urban areas with rural communities accounting for 42.2 per cent of the country's population but holding 60 per cent of its poor, according to research.

Alagie Jarju, a delegate from the West Coast Region questioned the level of progress of some of the skills centres in Foni especially Ndemban, Bwiam and Kanilai. He calls on the Government

of the Gambia through the Ministry of Youth and Sports to rehabilitated these centres to curb the wave of rural-urban migration.

Sannaba Jawla youth advocates said there is a lot of importance attached to skill training centres as it will help to discourage the rural-urban migration in the country. "It is important for the youth and sports to collaborate with the higher ministry to ensure that these skills centres are accessible in regions". Meanwhile, several other delegates also called for youth centres in the regions that are yet to be rehabilitated to be also given a facelift.

The Gambia launched its first Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Roadmap 2020–2024 as part of efforts to reinforce skills in the country and increase

employability and integration of its youth in the economy.

The roadmap serves as a blueprint for the joint implementation of strategic priorities identified in our National Development Plan (NDP). Particularly two of the NDP's outcomes: improved access and quality learning and relevant life and livelihood skills for all graduates and improved access to non-formal education and literacy programmes. The roadmap will also serve as the cornerstone to shape a dedicated TVET Policy that will provide the overall framework for TVET education in our country.

These delegates believe that the conference resolutions will serve as a springboard for accelerating youth growth.

NAYCONF 2022: Delegates discuss Access to information and the use Of Technology to Create Jobs



By Banna Sabally

In a bid to promote proper use of the internet and access to the information after the enactment of the bill in August 2021, NAYCONF 2022 has stirred discussion amongst delegates on young people's role in accessing information and Internet usage.

The discussion is aimed at putting the spotlight on the demands of Young people to enhance their skills and understanding so as to positively contribute to the growth of thematic areas across regions.

On Youth participation in a digital world, the delegates were introduced to the active involvement of young people in a digital society through the use of modern Information and Communication technology, such as access to the internet. This also includes not only

the internet but also various online services and content.

Meanwhile, the second session took delegates through Access to information and the Digital Economy and Bridging the digital divide. Youth were taken through opportunities that are available for young people in the Tech industry.

Omar Jarju, Chief Technology Officer, Linkedtech Solutions said young people should grab the opportunities that are readily available for them on the internet by redirecting their focus on using the internet to create content that could generate income.

“Young people can involve themselves in creating software applications which can positively impact national development by adopting digitalization and bridge the unemployment gap” Omar

Said.

While Young people continue to use the internet in huge numbers, the issues around cyber security continue to be a concern. Omar said young people need to be more creative and demonstrate a willingness to overcome challenges and learn more by exploring the new normal in cyberspace which could enable them to compete in the markets.

He advised young people to know their right to access information to be able to generate content online and know how to protect their own data by knowing whom they're sharing their data with to avoid situations that would affect them.

“Privacy is a big concern, using applications has its own side effects, let young people try to become more innovative in using social media to generate revenue” Poncelet highlighted.

Ebrima M. Jammeh, a delegate from the host region Banjul' expressed delight after taking part in the discussions. He said the program availed him the opportunity to know more about access to information law and how young people can use the internet positively and create Jobs.

NAYCONF is an opportunity for coaches to hunt talents, says NSC Boss

By Lamin Fadera

The Executive Director of the National Sports Council Marcel Mendy says NAYCONF is an opportunity for coaches to hunt talents in the various sporting events that are played simultaneously across different venues.

Mendy who doubles as the Chairman of the Sports Committee was impressed with the number of talent he saw in the event which is currently underway at the capital city of the Gambia Banjul.

“It is overwhelmingly important as far as we know that is why we deliberately came up with rules that will expose new talents, we don’t intend to go to the NAYCONF and see the same players we see in the

leagues, volleyball, football, athletics championships, that is not what we want. We want to go to the NAYCONF and see some new talents, we want to go to the NAYCONF and see people that we have not seen before,” he said.

He added: “We are happy that in some of the games we have seen some coaches watching and scouting new talents and I am optimistic, after the NAYCONF quite a new talent will emerge and identify for certain teams’ NSC boss told NAYCONF daily.

He expressed that discipline is a key part of the successful staging of an event and was impressed with the performance of the different teams competing in the various disciplines in the sporting

arena. He said no major incident has been reported so far in the NAYCONF and he encourages the teams to maintain a high sense of discipline.

“We haven’t had any report of any hitches or hooliganism, so we are grateful to God everything is going fine and we continue to pray that it will end as it started. We are going around all the venues just to ensure that everything is going fine,” he said.

The theme for the 13th edition of the NAYCONF is the role of young people in the maintenance of peace and security for the socio-economic development of the country, challenges and opportunities and the event is hosted by Banjul from the 15th to 23rd December 2022.





Delegates recommends support for migrant returnees

By Awa Macalo

Mr. Hayib Gaye said there is a need for the decentralisation of the rehabilitation support facilities in all migration centres for easy accessibility, and psycho-social support, as well the introduction of migration focal persons or officers in Gambian Embassies across the globe. This, he said will guide and protect the welfare of Gambian migrants.

Delegates from Kanifing Municipality, Abdoulie Gaye said the government needs to prioritise migrant returnees to assist their reintegration through an allocation of a percentage from the national budget.

Mr. Gaye expressed that “Most Gambian migrant returnees, especially deportees from European countries find it

challenging to reconnect to the society due to financial challenges.” He added that such people should be considered and allocated a percentage in the national budget to uplift and give them new life.

Mr. Musa Camara from the Ministry of Foreign affairs, international cooperation and the Gambians abroad, Musa Camara said that based on legally enforceable international frameworks, best practices, and bilateral cooperation agreements, the partnership between the Gambia and the European Union helps to provide the normative foundation for the governance of migration.

“The country has signed an existing relationship with Switzerland and Italy in 2021, symbolising long-term cooperation between the two countries. Both agreed

on the positive development of the migration cooperation since the signing of the migration agreement whilst acknowledging in parallel the need to take a balanced approach to the areas of projects and returns,” he added.

He however said that the government is equally aware of the enormous challenges associated with irregular migration, including the immeasurable human and social cost to the country as the young people become victims of human rights violations, exploitation and abuse, including psychosocial trauma, in their journeys.

They also encounter a lot of difficulties in accessing services to address their protection needs upon return.

NAYCONF participants discuss conflict resolution

By Sulayman Waan

As the National Youth Conference and Festival (Nayconf) progresses smoothly in Banjul, delegates at the Peace and Security thematic session were trained on conflict resolution mechanisms.

The session provided participants with the opportunity to further discuss ways and means of mitigating conflicts.

Conflict resolution is conceptualized as the methods and processes involved in facilitating the peaceful ending of conflict and retribution.

The conflict resolution topic was presented by Mr. Bakary Sonko, a peace advocate who reminded participants that conflict analysis should be accurate and factual to ensure easy conflict resolution.

“One cannot analyse a conflict by sitting in one place. An analyst should make proper findings and ask questions while analyzing a conflict situation,” he said.

Mr. Sonko said conflict analysis is based on one’s observation. He said conflict sometimes escalates and is erratic owing to the way it is handled.

He noted that sometimes mediation teams will discuss with both parties to cease fire but in the end, the conflict will intensify to another level. “If two people are fighting someone will

just come and tell them to stop fighting without knowing the root cause of the conflict,” he said.

“Under normal circumstances, if a group of people is denied something in a society they will tend to get it by all means possible. This is what prompt people other people to become freedom fighters for a particular community,” he said.

Sonko said to ensure sustainable easy conflict resolution and peace in the country there is a



greater need for the government to establish a National Peace Commission (NPC).

“This commission will ensure there is sustainable development such as proper healthcare services and facilities, efficient water supply, and others because there cannot be sustainable peace without sustainable development. These two are interlinking,” he said.

Yankuba Manneh, a national delegate said: “In my view, there is a disconnect of efforts between the government and the Civil

Society Organizations (CSOs) poised to promote peace and security in The Gambia. There is a dearth of political will in this drive and the government needs to up its game as the CSOs complement their efforts. There should be a complementarity,” he said.

“The government must at all times provide the basic necessities of life by creating that enabling environment for this realization because these essential needs of life once they are not met,

they have a potential to provoke conflict,” he added.

Saihou Sissoho, a participant from Banjul said there is a greater need for conflict analysts to provide accurate information to the public domain. “They should conduct a balanced and thorough analysis,” he said.

Yankuba Manjang, a peace educator said to address conflict, there is a need for a mediation party to engage both parties to ensure there is negotiation and resolution of that conflict.



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Youth & Sports Minister urge young people to take NAYCONF seriously

By Awa Macalo

Hon. Bakary Y. Badjie, Minister of Youth and Sports, has urged the participants of the National Youth Conference and Festival (NAYCONF) to take the biennial event seriously.

The minister was addressing delegates at the official opening of the conference component of the NAYCONF.

“Be it conferences, sports or culture, you all have a great job to do. I know there is a competition part in the NAYCONF, but I advise that you maintain absolute decorum throughout the process,” he said.

He described the organisation of NAYCONF as a fulfilment of the mandate of the ministry's satellite institution, the National Youth Council.

“It is incumbent for us all to reflect on how far we have gone after so many NAYCONFs, what the gains are as well as the challenges regarding the implementations of the resolutions,” he said

He further expressed that the NAYCONF goes beyond only passing resolutions; instead, it aims to foster a sense of patriotism among young people. “Any country's greatest resource is without a doubt its young people,” he said.



He said “the Gambia has a young population, one that is vibrant and looking forward to having a greater Gambia. As we gather at this historic place to mark the opening ceremony of the biggest youth gathering, we renew our commitments towards creating a Gambia that is safe for every youth; the Gambia that the youth could be proud of, this is what we envisage”.

“We call it a NAYCONF with a difference because of the so many innovations in this year's convergence; we are getting international delegates for the first time. We did all these to have a great NAYCONF. I, therefore, urge all the youth to take the NAYCONF seriously; be punctual and regular,” he said.



Banjul and KM top Group A and B in Female Volleyball

By Lamin Fadera

Banjul is through to the semifinals of the female Volleyball competition registering maximum points in three games in the ongoing volleyball championship at the Manneh Sillah court.

The city girls' latest victory came after Lower River Region failed to produce players for the third time in a row against different opponents in the NAYCONF. Banjul has automatically been given the points 25 sets to zero in both sets and a two-nil victory.

Coach Marie Wadda's side booked qualification to the semifinals on the 19th of December 2022, she told the NAYCONF daily that her main objective is to defend the title she won in 2017 in Basse.

'As I said earlier, we want to defend the title and we are taking it game by game, our objective is to win and qualify for the semifinals of the competition. I know my players have experience and hopefully, we want to defend this title here" said Wadda.

In group B, West Coast Region produces a hard-fought victory against Central River the Region in the final game in group B.

The first set was won by the CRR side by 25 sets to 23 and the second and third set was won by WCR by 28 sets to 26 and 15 sets to 13 respectively. Speaking to the head coach of WCR and emotional Awa Sanneh was in a joyous mood after a nail-biting encounter with the CRR team. She told the NAYCONF daily that the

win was a good one for her side because it was a game that decides her side's fate on their way to the semifinals and they really want to win the title and take it to WCR.

'This is a very important game to me because it was a game that was between me and the semifinals, so we have conquered it and we are very happy. We are looking forward to the semifinals".

Kanifing Municipality produces remarkable progress to the semifinal of the female volleyball after a resounding victory over the Upper River Region on Monday 19th December 2022. They won by 25 sets to 13 and 25 sets to 17 respectively.



Catch them young is one of the objectives of the wrestling family, says Bojang

By Lamin Fadera

In a bid to promoting our culture and traditional sports, NAYCONF is a platform where young talents are exposed and nurtured.

Catching them young is one of the objectives of the wrestling family and NAYCONF is that platform where young people can showcase their talents,” says Abdoulie Bojang, Desk Officer for wrestling, National Sports Council.

He said the youth gathering is one of the great platforms where potential wrestlers can be empowered and scouted.

“Well this is our idea, we want to catch them young and the youth gathering is a great platform for the young wrestlers to be scouted by different clubs. We have seen some wrestlers who

were participating since 2012 but we want to discourage that, we have seen new wrestlers with great potential and NAYCOF has provided that opportunity for the young people say Bojang

On the challenges

He highlighted the challenges they encountered during the preliminaries of the wrestling competition, one of the factors is that some regions didn't understand the rule of the competition and they wanted to compete which was a challenge for us yesterday.

“Yes, we had some challenges during the preliminaries because we had some wrestlers who want to compete and didn't have a license to compete. But what they told us is that they, the North Bank Region were not informed about the issue.”

He said according to their rules only the registered wrestlers will be taking part in the competition, which affects some regions. This rule was later realized to allow all regions to participate, but with a warning.

“However, after this agreement with regions, North Bank Region later informed us of their withdrawal from the competition”.

Each region was told to select 5 wrestlers but some regions didn't have the numbers. This was a great opportunity for the regions to present their best wrestlers to compete in the competition.

The set categories for wrestling range from 76kg to 120kg.

