

FROM INFRASTRUCTURE TO DIPLOMACY THE GAMBIA READY FOR INVESTMENT



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18th Edition
State House
Newsletter

The book celebrates African history through the lives of women who ruled, resisted, and redefined power.

From Ghana to Madagascar, Benin to Ethiopia, South Africa to Egypt to Senegal, these 21 queens expanded empires, conquered nations, protected their people from slavery and colonialism, and set new standards of leadership and femininity and defenders of their sovereignty.

First Lady Welcomes 2026 First Babies

In January, First Lady Fatoumatta Bah-Barrow welcomed The Gambia's first babies (newborns) of 2026 in the country.

At Edward Francis Small Teaching Hospital in Banjul, Serrekunda General Hospital, and Bundung Maternal hospital, she celebrated the first, second, and third newborns of the year. Each newborn received special gifts from the First Lady, a tradition that has become one of the year's sweetest moments.



In a major pledge, the Ministry of Gender and the Ministry of Health committed to support the children until they turn 18, ensuring healthcare, protection, and care as they grow.

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FaBB Foundation remains dedicated to working with partners to uplift communities and provide meaningful support to those in need across The Gambia.

A New Book Puts Africa's Women Leaders in the Spotlight

At Coco Ocean Hotel Resort, H.E. Fatoumatta Bah-Barrow had the honor of launching “Twenty-One African Queens Every Young Girl Should Know About” a new storybook by Nana Ofori-Atta.



First Lady Distributes Ramadan Food Package

In the spirit of compassion and generosity that defines the holy month of Ramadan, the Fatoumatta Bah Barrow (FaBB) Foundation carried out Ramadan food distribution initiative to vulnerable families across the country, helping to ensure that many households can observe the holy month with dignity, relief and peace of mind.

The initiative reflects a shared commitment to supporting communities and strengthening solidarity during Ramadan, a time when acts of kindness and generosity carry even deeper meaning.



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Acknowledgement

It is always an exciting but tedious period when working on the biannual State House Newsletter. Exciting because it brings the team together to reflect on the many hours spent individually covering the events and activities that form the basis of information gathered for the newsletter. It is a tedious process to summarise six months of engagements in a bulletin.

I am grateful to the team. Each member contributed to making this edition possible directly or indirectly.

The team spirit in the tripartite linkage from Admin and Protocol to Security facilitates the work of the Media and Communication Unit, from scheduling to pre-event activities, making the work seamless, for the goal is one – providing technical support to the Principal in executing his responsibility as leader of the nation.

We take this opportunity to express gratitude to His Excellency, President of the Republic, Adama Barrow, for the trust and confidence bestowed on the team in giving its utmost best to serve the country under his leadership.

Similarly, we acknowledge the administrative leadership of the Chief of Staff and his team for facilitating the behind-the-scenes needs of the MCU to ensure it delivers the best to the public. To the Website managers, under the IT crew at the Office of the President, we express thanks for the timely uploads, despite the occasional challenges with the .gov emails.

We equally recognise the important role of the support staff, the drivers in particular whose duties are tied to that of the officials, resulting in staying late when duty demands so.

All the efforts led to realising the goal of documenting the facts about the President's engagements in the form of a newsletter complementing the other channels of publishing our work.

Amie Bojang-Sissoho
Director of Press and Public Relations
Office of the President

For The Gambia, partnerships mean opportunity to align national priorities with continental platforms and create lasting prosperity for women entrepreneurs.

At The Gambia- Turkiye side event during CSW70, First Lady Fatoumatta Bah-Barrow spoke directly to OIC member states.

The focus was about equality, leadership, and safety especially online. With technology creating new forms of harm. The First Lady urged member states to move fast to protect women and girls in digital spaces, and share best practices that safeguard dignity and right.



She urged states to share best practices and commit to measurable outcomes, reaffirming The Gambia's readiness to collaborate to guarantee equality, and institutionalise mentorship.

First Lady Calls for Guaranteed Equality

At the 70th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York, Her Excellency Fatoumatta Bah-Barrow spoke at the AUDA-NEPAD-OAFLAD strategy partners roundtable, held in collaboration with the New York Africa Chambers of Commerce.

Her message was on what women in Africa needs beyond short-term fixes, her call goes beyond micro-credit. She demands for deliver value chain integration, digital access, enterprise formalisation and global market connection.



Overview

Determined to create investment opportunities, opening the gate for economic growth, President Barrow got busy with monitoring infrastructure works and inaugurating new projects in the first part of the year 2026. Realising that economic growth brings dignity to the people, and the importance of infrastructure to cater for the needs of modern society, several major projects were inaugurated in the health sector, electricity projects in rural Gambia and construction of rural roads linking investment opportunities to markets in a decentralised manner. Boosting river transportation with environmentally friendly ferry services, the transformation of Islamic education in higher learning along with best practices in good governance, this edition of the State House newsletter sets the pace for realising what is possible when the Presidency is led by an active, visionary leader with a practical approach to governance and monitoring the implementation of its development agenda.

Despite the engaging schedule at the home front, the State House Newsletter amplifies the diplomatic attractions for the period from outgoing to incoming VVIP Official and State visits.

Meanwhile, as the Commander-in-Chief, the President collaborates with the GAF and ECOMIG forces to reinforce peace and stability through capacity and peacebuilding.

Much time was also allocated to meeting and having face-to-face meetings with home-based diplomats, incoming high-profile personalities and envoys, as well as nationals, which have been captured in this edition, as part of his routine schedule.

As a politician, the President also engaged in political gatherings, sharing his government's achievements and development addenda, giving hope to the aspirations of the citizens. Thus, a look at the political scene.

The State House Newsletter is a vital tool documenting activities of the President and is critical for researchers and historians.

With the State House Newsletter, Be Informed, Be Educated and Be Enlightened!

Good Governance

Good Governance comes with continuous monitoring, demonstration of leadership and focus in realisation of programmes that bring progress for the people. This section highlights the strategic engagements of the President, providing in-depth briefings, informed urgent decision-making, and unlocking challenges in the implementation of government priority projects.

Quarterly Economic Council Meeting

The Economic Council Forum, held in March 2026, continues to brief the Presidency on the state of the economy. The forum provides an opportunity for policymakers and experts to share insights on the current situation and key economic indicators.



President Barrow acknowledged updates from key economic players and gave guidance on issues of concern.

In 2025, Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) collected D4.5 billion in Non-Taxed Revenue, equivalent to 66% of the annual target.

The Central Bank of The Gambia (CBG) is sustaining the gains for economic growth. Inflation is under control, down to 6.4% in January 2026, with food prices following suit.

Remittance inflows grew 12.5% to over US\$872 million, and international reserves are healthy at 4.4 months of import cover. The Dalasi's depreciation is linked to broader macroeconomic factors.

The Gambia at the Global Table

In March, First Lady Fatoumatta Bah Barrow joined 45 First Spouses from around the world in Washington, D.C. for a first-of-its-kind gathering.

Hosted by U.S. First Lady H.E. Melania Trump, the inaugural 'Fostering the Future Together' Global Coalition Summit brought together leaders and top voices in technology to tackle one urgent question: How do we protect and empower children in the digital age?



The focus was AI in Education, Education Technology, Digital Literacy and Online Safety for Children. For The Gambia, the summit was a chance to share grassroots realities and learn global solutions, from using AI to personalise learning, to teaching digital literacy in schools, to keeping children safe online.



First Lady Fatoumatta Bah-Barrow's presence signaled The Gambia's commitment to making sure no child is left behind in the digital future.



The event highlighted 5 R's: Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Rot. These are simple habits that can cut pollution and protect natural resources.

Facilitated globally by UNEP and UN-Habitat, Zero Waste Day calls on individuals and organisations to host events, raised awareness and adapt circular habits. In Gunjur, that meant conversation in the community, practical tips for households, and a shared commitment to a cleaner Gambia.



The Accountant General Department (AGD) has advanced in the establishment of a GovPay Revenue Platform, designed to unify, control and monitor all public sector payments through a single integrated system for a prudent accounting mechanism, connecting all revenue collection points across MDAs to replace cash handling.



In January and February 2026, AGD has collected close to GMB 2.5 million in revenue from Basse and Fatoto Bridges.

The Gambia Investment & Export Promotion Agency (GIEPA) has processed investment applications, with an estimated value of USD 204,673,795. The projects cover:

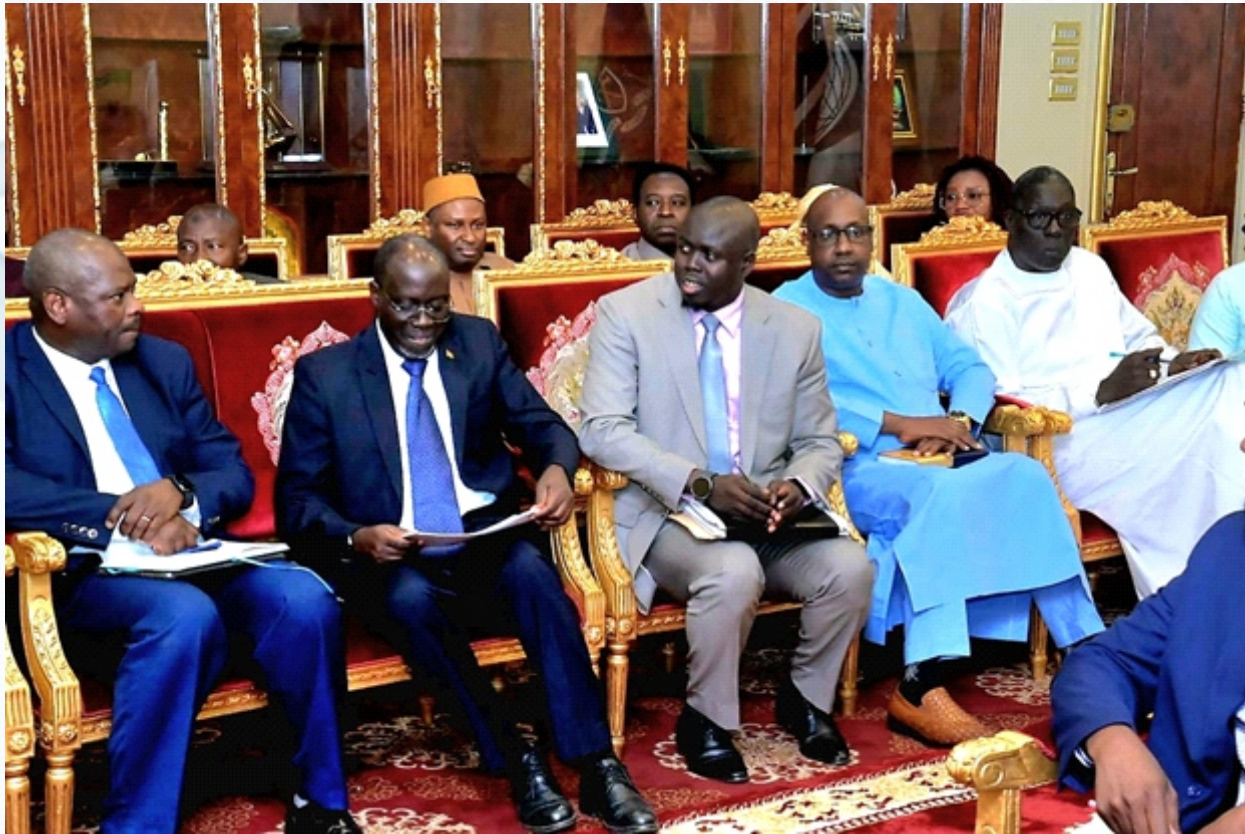
- Manufacturing
- Agriculture
- Fisheries
- Energy
- Other services.

When operational, close to five thousand jobs will be created. The projects include fifteen new Special Investment Certificates and one Export Processing Zone License. Meanwhile, new applications were being reviewed, and MSMEs are being encouraged to take advantage of GIEPA's services.

On domestic revenue collection, the Gambia Revenue Authority (GRA) has mobilised over 25 billion Dalasis, 10% above its 2025 target and 21% growth from 2024. GRA's approved target for 2026 is over GMB28 billion, indicating the impact of digitalisation in revenue collection for customs and excise, and domestic taxes.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Trade has taken steps to balance price stability, local production, and

investment. In February 2026, commodity and wholesale prices of essentials like rice, edible oil, potatoes, etc. dropped slightly. To support local farmers, the Ministry has enforced a temporary ban on imports of onions and potatoes.



The Ministry is also reviewing the Gambia Trade Policy to align with World Trade Organisation's (WTO) principles, to attract Foreign Direct Investments.

Moreover, the Ministry of Agriculture is making strides in digitalisation and technology to transform subsistence farming into agribusiness. Currently, the Ministry is constructing agro-logistics centres in Wassu and Maka Farafenni, which have reached 60% completion. Forty agri-business farms of five hectares each have been set up country-wide, targeting women and youths. To further support agribusiness, the government is partnering with the World Bank Group to construct 204 KM of feeder roads. Projects for processing factories, cold storage facilities and land development sites have been identified.

In 2025, The Gambia's tourism sector recorded 233,113 visitors, a 3% increase from 2024. The Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture is working hard to put The Gambia back on the map as a top West African destination. They are diversifying tourism sources, exploring local tourism, and capitalising on improved infrastructure like roads and electricity in rural areas.

The government is reviewing policies, building capacity and modernising the industry to drive growth. With these efforts, The Gambia's tourism sector looks poised for further growth.

Celebrating Women Who Hold Communities Together

In April, Kerewan became the centre of celebration as Her Excellency First Lady Fatoumatta Bah- Barrow marked International Women's Day with women and girls in the North Bank Region.

The event honoured women farmers, entrepreneurs, teachers, and nurses who are who are the backbone of rural development.

Speaking to the crowd, the First Lady highlighted ongoing challenges and pledged to expand protection, support, and justice for women and girls across The Gambia.



On International Day of Zero Waste 2026, Gunjur Village became a classroom for sustainability.

Her Excellency First Lady Fatoumatta Bah-Barrow joined the Embassy of Türkiye and the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) West Coast Region, to mark International Day of Zero Waste 2026, with a focus this year on what we throw away: food.

Nearly 1 billion tonnes of food are wasted globally each year. In Gunjur, the message was local: waste less, feed more.

Madam Bah-Barrow's efforts have not gone unnoticed. She received several accolades including awards from Newcastle College University annual fashion show in the UK. Organised by Gambian student Lamin Gibba, the event celebrated her humanitarian work and showcased African-Western fashion, Gambian cuisine, and kora music.

Representing the First Lady, Counsellor Sainey Barrow Mbye praised efforts to present Gambian culture abroad. The University and the First Lady's Foundation are now exploring joint programs to empower women and girls in The Gambia.



Advancing Girls Education and Empowerment

The Educating Linda Program proudly celebrated the award of full scholarships to 40 high-performing schoolgirls, marking a significant step in supporting underprivileged families and investing in the future of the girl child.

30 beneficiaries from the provinces and 10 from the rural communities, joined by parents, development partners, educators. It was more than a ceremony, it was a national statement: invest in the girl child, and you invest in the nation.

The programme was anchored by 3 powerful panel discussions that did not shy away from real issues: education and empowerment, early marriage and teenage pregnancy, menstrual hygiene management, financial independence, leadership, gender-based violence awareness, social media responsibility, child labor, and mental well-being.

Implemented by the Fatoumatta Bah Barrow Foundation (FaBB) in partnership with the Merck Foundation, and fully funded by the Merck under the leadership of H.E. First Lady Fatoumatta Bah-Barrow, Educating Linda is building more than classrooms it's building confidence, voice, and a generation of young women ready to lead.

SOEs on the Rise: Losses Cut

President Adama Barrow received the State-Owned Enterprises (SOE's) Commission's 2025 performance report, highlighting a significant reduction in losses and a renewed focus on growth.



The President's leadership has been instrumental in driving this change, with over one billion Dalasi cuts in losses and the government's investments of over two billion Dalasi to strengthen food and energy security.



Key areas of progress include the National Food Security, Processing and Marketing Corporation (NFSPMC) and the National Water and Electricity Company (NAWEC). The improved performance will support government's initiatives, such as subsidies for farmers, social protection, and the expansion of road networks, including over 800km of new roads.

President Barrow emphasised the need for SOEs to shift from liability to profitability, assuring government support and oversight. The Commission's work has positively impacted SOEs, despite resistance to change.

From Bailout to Bonuses: SOEs Pay D137 Million Dividend to Government

For years, The Gambia's State-Owned Enterprises were known more for bailouts than bonuses. The narratives have changed in 2026.

President Barrow presided over a dividend-signing ceremony at State House, where the government received D137 million from six SOEs for the first time.

The payout breaks as:

Institution	Amount in GMD
Gambia Ports Authority	70 million
Gambia National Petroleum Corporation	50 million
Gambia Civil Aviation Authority	5 million
Gambia Publishing and Printing Corporation	5 million
National Water and Electricity Company	5 million
Gambia Radio and Television Service	2 million

In 2023, following the establishment of the SOEs Commission, the sector recorded a net loss of D2.3 billion, which further increased to D2.6 billion in 2024. However, in the 2025 fiscal year, following the introduction of an appraisal system, the above SOEs achieved a consolidated net profit of D2.5 billion, representing a remarkable D5.1 billion turnaround, equivalent to a 196% improvement within just twelve months.

Delivering remarks at the ceremony, President Barrow credited the results to what he called a deliberate, sustained, and evidenced-driven reform agenda.

Office of the First Lady

The First Lady of the Gambia, Her Excellency Fatoumatta Bah-Barrow in complimenting the government's efforts through her foundation, FABB to support the vulnerable, advocates and invests in the health, education and Social welfare, empowering women and children.

During the first half of the year 2026, Madam Barrow met with partners to support her work. Amongst them were (Merck Foundation, Qatar Foundation, Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency etc).

At the local level, the First lady engaged groups and institutions that recognise her work at the community level. They include Ministry of Gender, Children and social Welfare, Ministry of Health among others.

In a landmark achievement, Madam Bah-Barrow inaugurated the first-ever Emergency Unit the country's oldest regional hospital in the Central River Region, Bansang Hospital. Furthermore, to compliment the government's initiative of “promoting women's dignity when giving birth,” FABB is constructing new and modern maternity wings at Essau and other health facilities.

For many families in the Central River Region, Upper River Region and communities beyond, a medical emergency once meant hours on road. That distance ends as First Lady Fatoumatta Bah Barrow officially Inaugurated the new Accident and Emergency Unit at Bansang General Hospital, a facility built to bring life-saving care closer to home.

With this unit, unnecessary referrals have drop, emergency treatment have improve, and families have new confidence in their healthcare system.



For the youth who grew up kicking balls on a dusty ground, it was more than just a fence and peaches. It was proof that their voices were heard. The journey started with President Barrow Meet the People's Tour in 2022. The residents simply requested “fence the field.” However, what began as a fencing project became a mini stadium, a space designed not just for football, but for athletics, and hosting four other sports disciplines.



Strengthening Collaboration Accountability, and Rule of Law

Commitment to the Rule of Law and Effective Justice Delivery

The independence of the judiciary is part of good governance. As best practice, President Barrow annually attends the opening of the Legal Year, as it sets the tone for a fresh start for The Gambia's judiciary and reaffirms commitment to upholding the rule of law and justice. During his keynote speech in February, President Barrow emphasised the importance of a strong, independent Judiciary in maintaining peace, stability, and development. He called on the three arms of Government to renew the shared commitment to justice, strengthen the rule of law, protect the rights of all, and build a justice system that inspires confidence and promotes equity. President Barrow noted that the justice system in The Gambia has witnessed a major transformation within the 10 years of his Presidency, including hybrid courts, victim-centred reparations, among others.



The Banjul Tripartite Latimier House Principles Meeting

The Gambia continues to demonstrate its commitment to the Commonwealth and its Latimier House Principles of democracy and the independence of the three arms of Government – the Executive, Legislature and the Judiciary. During a three – day engagement at the Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara International Conference Centre, the stakeholders carved out areas of collaboration and coordination while maintaining institutional independence, strengthening democracy and the rule of law.

A defining Moment in the Country's Transitional Justice Journey

In a ceremony heavy with history, the Gambian leader, President Adama Barrow, swore in Mr. Martin Hackett as the country's Special Prosecutor, moving the nation from documenting the past to prosecution.



For nearly a decade, Gambians have demanded justice for human rights violations committed during the former regime. The TRRC revealed atrocities committed, reparations gave some relief but for many victims and families, justice remained incomplete without prosecution of alleged perpetrators.



The Special Prosecutor now formally investigates and prepares cases that will bring perpetrators to court. President Barrow said the establishment of the office will send a clear signal that crimes and violations of

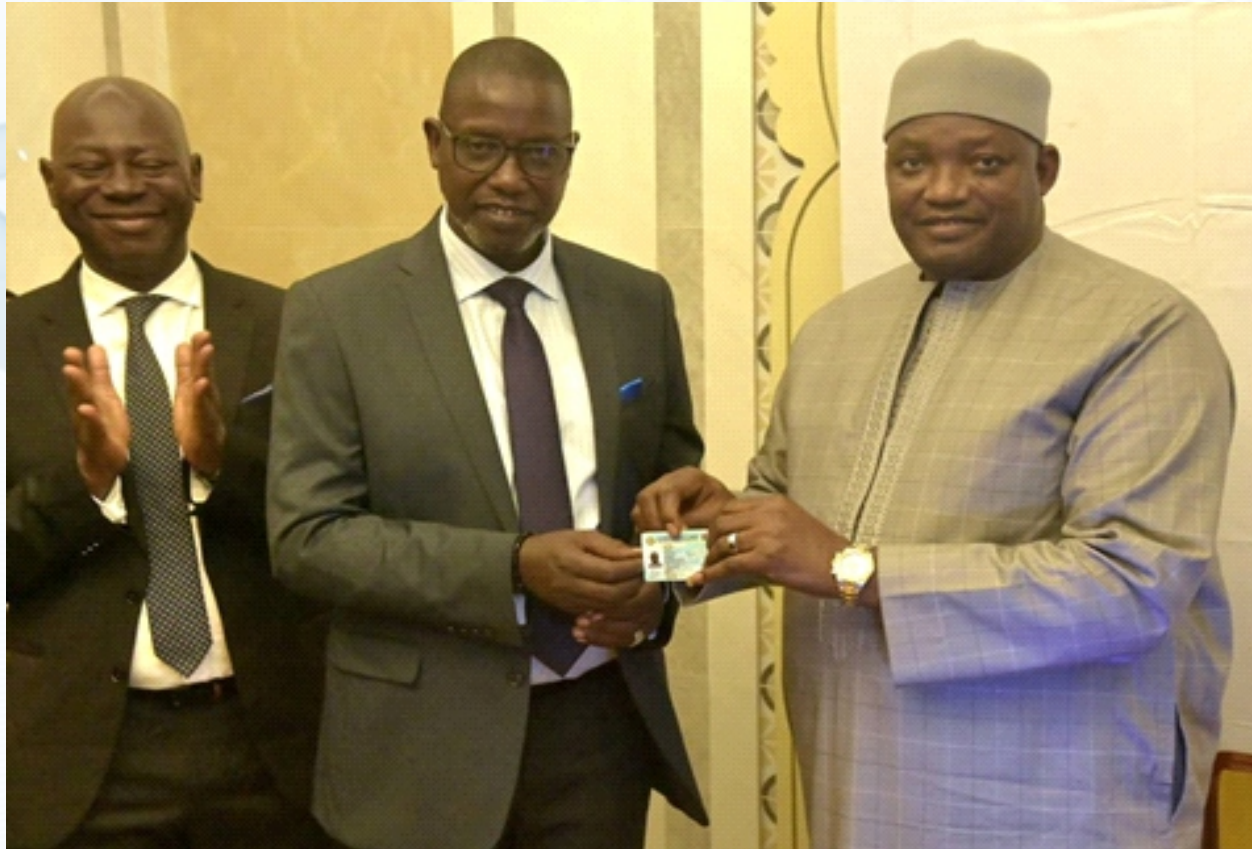
From Dust to Stadium: President Barrow Opens OJ Jallow Memorial Mini Stadium

In his effort to enhance sports development and youth empowerment, His Excellency Adama Barrow delivered a new landmark edifice for sports development with the official opening of O.J. Jallow Memorial Mini Stadium at Bakoteh.



A New Era for Digital Identity

President Barrow launched the National Identity System (GAM ID), marking a historic step in modernising how The Gambia identifies and secures citizens. Designed to last for 10 years the new biometric card is fully compliant with ECOWAS standards.



For the first time, every citizen will have one verified identity within the national system. The President urged all citizens to register promptly, and called on community leaders, youth groups, and civil society organisations to champion the transition nationwide.

“This is part of our broader commitment to invest in modern infrastructure, digital innovation, and regulatory frameworks that safeguard public trust,” President Barrow reaffirmed.



human rights are never to be repeated. He assured the public that the office of the prosecutor will function independently, guided only by evidence and law.

For Mr. Hackett, the appointment carries both legal and moral responsibility. He pledged to serve with independence and integrity, and directly addressed victims who have waited years for such development. This positions The Gambia as a small nation that can move from a truth commission to a courtroom.

New Public Service Commissioners took Oaths to Serve

Between January to June 2026, President Adama Barrow swore in officials of the Armed Forces Council, Hon. Baboucar O. Joof and Major General Ousman Gomez.

Similarly, Abdoulie Jafuneh was sworn in as Deputy Secretary to Cabinet. Meanwhile, Mr. Kebba Sallah, Mrs. Mariama Ndure Njie, and Mr. Edmond Shonubi were sworn-in as newly appointed as commissioners of the Public Service Commission.



The new officials took oaths of office, pledging to serve The Gambia with dedication and integrity. They have a crucial role to play in strengthening key government institutions as government continues its Civil Service Reforms.

DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

Inauguration of Rural Electrification Projects

Since Independence in 1965, rural areas had faced decades of neglect in the energy sector. The narrative has changed with the Barrow administration's initiatives, guided by the Recovery-Focused National Development Plan – the YIRIWAA Agenda supported by international partnerships. President Adama Barrow spearheads the rural electrification project and has so far made electricity accessible to deprived and isolated communities, marking a significant milestone in bridging the rural-urban infrastructure gap and energy independence in The Gambia.



In February 2026, the Gambian leader inaugurated rural electrification projects in 719 communities in the four provincial regions and the West Coast, putting the nation on track to achieve universal access to electricity by the end of 2026, well ahead of the 2030 global target.

This expansion is transforming rural communities, enabling classrooms to be vibrant hubs of learning with computers and digital tools, and healthcare facilities to refrigerate life-saving vaccines and treat patients effectively.

The initiative is part of the Barrow administration's efforts to expand electricity supply to rural communities, enhancing livelihoods and driving local development. The project is expected to accelerate economic growth, boost security, and improve healthcare services in the provincial regions.

As President Barrow flips the switch, bringing power to 1000 schools & 100 health facilities in The Gambia, thousands erupted in cheers, welcoming the President's progressive developments.

Connecting The Gambia: 103km of New Roads Open in LRR and West Coast

After decades of isolation, President Barrow has commissioned new roads in the Lower River and West Coast regions ending the rainy season lockdown and opening Kiang West and Brufut to Markets, health care, and national economy. In April, President Barrow commissioned the landmark 91-kilometer Kiang West Roads Project in the Lower River Region (LRR), marking another major milestone in national infrastructure development. The project delivers on a long-held aspiration for LRR Communities, who have endured isolation for decades.



The road network connects 20 communities in two phases:

Phase One: Sankandi, Jiffarong, Bajana, Kuli Kunda, Keneba, Manduar, Kuyang, and Karantaba.

Phase Two: Jolli, Tankular, Keneba, Kemoto, Mandina, Janneh Kunda, Jula Kunda, Burang, Taburankoto, Misira Tenda, Jissay, and Kanto Kunda.

Over 80,000 Residents Benefit from Brufut-Madiana-Kunkujang-Mariama Kunda Road

With renewed commitment to inclusive infrastructure, President Barrow inaugurated 12-kilometer Brufut-Madiana-Kunkujang-Mariama Kunda-Tujereng Road in the West Coast Region in May. Aligned with the National Development Plan - 'Yiriwa', the project strengthens national resilience and inclusivity by improving connectivity and driving economic transformation for an estimated 80,000 residents.



For decades, communities along this route endured severe hardship, especially during the rainy season when poor road conditions cut off access to markets, health centres and schools.

From Brufut to Tujereng, the new roads connect people to services, opportunities, and to the future envisioned in Yiriwa: an inclusive, resilient, and prosperous Gambia.

Q-Group House – Foundation for Digital Economy

In April, President Barrow inaugurated QGROUP and unveiled its first data centre, QFiber. The facility now manages and secures national data while connecting homes, businesses, and communities. The QGroup building now lays groundwork for a more inclusive digital economy.

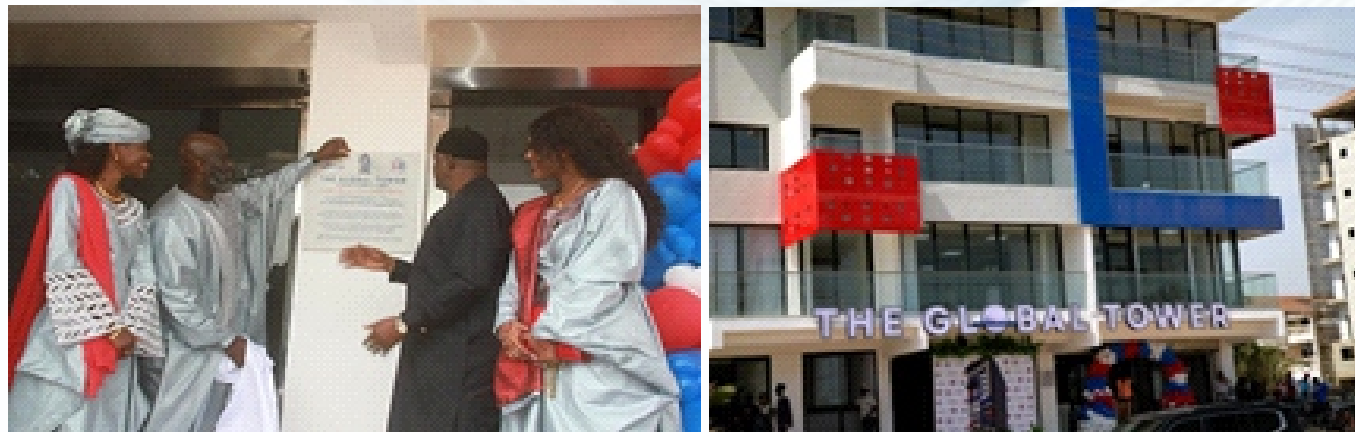
Hailing the project as a model of Gambian innovation, President Barrow said QGroup's contribution aligns with the 'YIRIWA' National Development Plan through world-class technology.



Qgroup CEO Mr. Muhammed Jah described it as a bridge between industries and people, and thanked the government for its partnership. The institution is one of the largest employers and a consistent top taxpayer.

The Global Tower Sets a New Record

In June, President Barrow inaugurated The Global Tower, the longest building in the country. It is more than architecture; it is a testament of ambition designed to create more jobs and attract partners. It signals a new era for commercial real estate in The Gambia. The President described the building as proof of what is possible when vision meets investment.

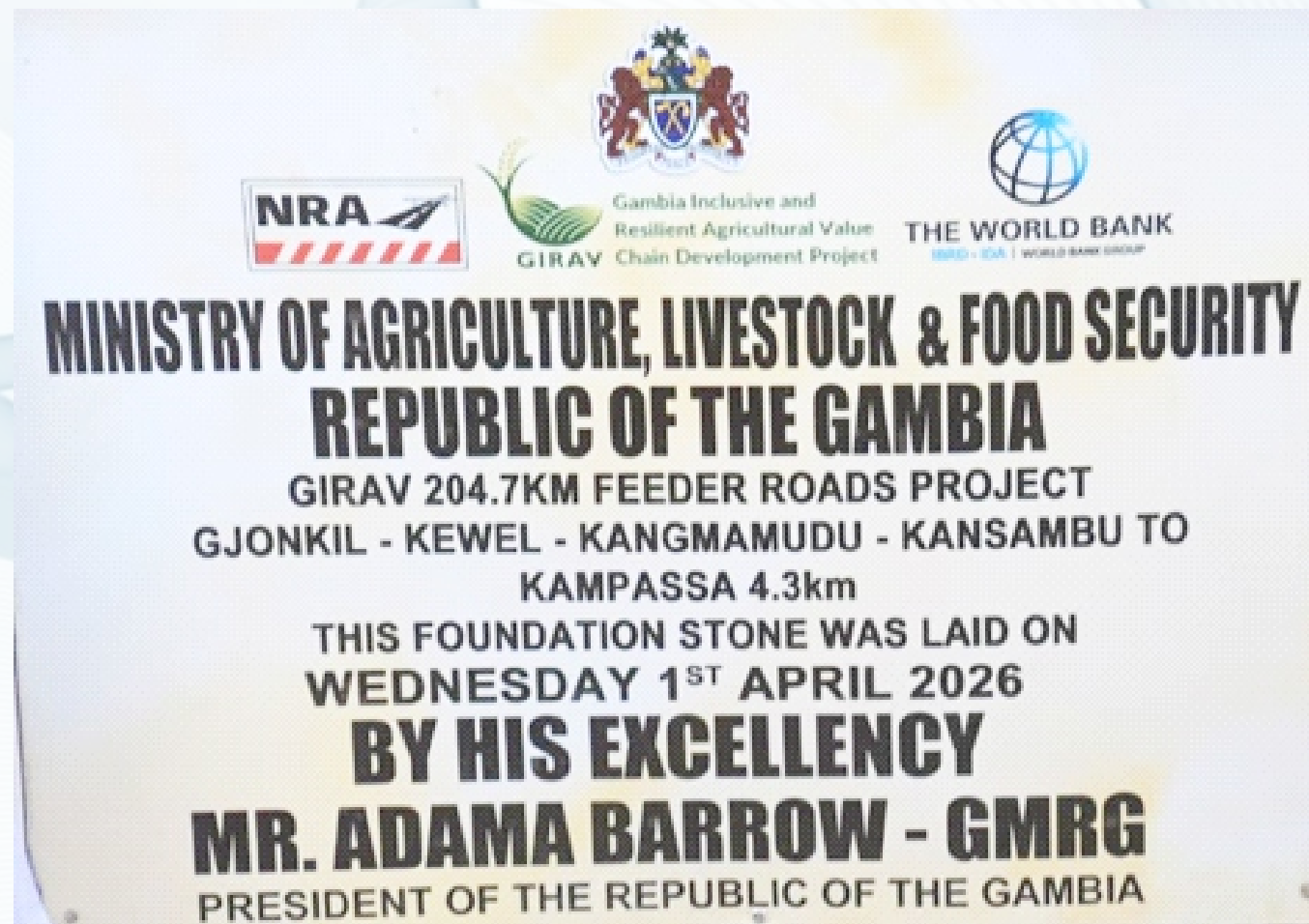


The CEO Mr. Saul Frazer, thanked President Barrow for his support in turning the vision into reality.

Roads: Linking Agriculture to Markets

Since time immemorial, farming communities in rural Gambia have had challenges accessing markets due to poor road conditions. Under the leadership of President Adama Barrow, that narrative is changing. Having connected the country on both sides of the River Gambia – the north and south banks, the Barrow administration has taken up construction of feeder roads to improve inclusivity in rural Gambia. The construction of feeder roads is a significant milestone as it bridges the gap between rural communities and main highways, unlocking economic potential and ultimately enhancing the quality of life for residents.





The Government of The Gambia, in partnership with GIRAV and the World Bank, initiated the construction of 204.7 feeder roads across the country. President Adama Barrow, in the first quarter of the year, spearheaded a six-day foundation stone laying countrywide.

The goal is to revive and expand agriculture as a source of sustainable food security. The partnership has also motivated young people to take up agriculture as a source of livelihood, from production, processing to marketing, and making the value chain a viable economic endeavour.

Gambia Boost River Transportation with New Eco-Friendly Ferry

For decades, commuters crossing the Banjul-Barra River had faced severe challenges. Delays were the norm; students, workers and traders endured hours of uncertainty. But amidst the struggle, a glimmer of hope emerged; a new ferry is finally breaking ground. For the frequent commuters of this route, it was more than just infrastructure; it was a promise of change.

The Gambia's river transportation got a boost with a new eco-friendly ferry, 'Barra'. The vessel carries more than 800 people, 4 trucks and 20 vehicles. It is designed to provide reliable river transport and support the growing population. The hybrid ferry design combines diesel engines with solar power, showcasing The Gambia's commitment to eco-friendly infrastructure, packed with safety features like CCTV cameras, firefighting systems and 2000 life jackets.

The donation package includes a state-of-the-art fire truck designed for high-reach rescue operations, a 67-seater bus to improve the deployment of personnel and support teams, integrated generators to power equipment in the field, welding machines and other critical tools. With improved mobility, power and rescue capability, fire service personnel will be better equipped to serve communities across the country.



President Barrow noted that the gesture reflects bilateral cooperation between The Gambia and Spain in the areas of public safety, disaster preparedness, and emergency management. The new equipment arrived at a time when the Government is prioritising modernisation of essential services under the National Development Plan.

Private Sector Investment

President Barrow Echoes Government Private Partnership at Diplomat Towers Launch

The Barrow administration has been encouraging public-private partnerships and has put in place policies and infrastructure like energy, roads among others to attract investors and support businesses. In March, President Adama Barrow inaugurated "The Diplomat" Twin Towers, a project that aligns with The Gambia's 'YIRIWA' National Development Plan, which prioritises infrastructure, urban transformation, private sector growth, job creation, and economic diversification. "The environment is improving, prospects are strong, and the future is promising," President Barrow said, urging businesses to seize opportunities. The project initiated by Swami International and ACE Communication showcases local potential and transforms the landscape in urban Gambia.



WCR – Kombo and Foni

- Lamin Daranka (John Pickering School) to the Gardens and Rice Fields – 1.5 km
- Gunjur to Berending – 6.1 km
- Kanpanti, Kapa to Ballen – 4.3 km
- Kasamai to Bajagarr – 6.0 km
- Sibanor to Gifanga – 4.7 km
- Bulajorr to Katakorr – 6.3 km
- Tampoto to Jakoi Sibrik – 9.0 km
- Somita, Batendin to Jakoi Paima – 7.6 km

At the general meetings held in various regions, President Barrow reaffirmed his commitment to strengthening regional connectivity and driving agricultural productivity.

President Barrow Receives Fire Service Equipment from Spain

The operational capacity of The Gambia Fire and Rescue Services has received a major boost as President Barrow received a donation of modern fire service equipment from the Kingdom of Spain, facilitated by the Ministry of Interior and Spanish partner, Start-Up.



The international standard ferry built by Dutch shipyard Damen is now boosting socio-economic growth, reducing congestion and improving connectivity within the vibrant Banjul-Barra maritime corridor.



In March 23rd, thousands of people joined The Gambian leader, President Adama Barrow, in commissioning the 'Barra', a brand-new green ferry, marking an important milestone in the country's transportation sector.



During the commissioning, people came out in numbers to cheer President Barrow for the great initiative. The elders of Barra could not hide their joy; they gathered to recite the Holy Quran and pray for the President and the nation.

At the commissioning ceremony, President Barrow emphasised the need for sustainable operational frameworks to support this massive investment, urging the Ferry Services to prioritise minimising cost, maintenance and customer service. Speakers praised the President's visionary leadership in driving infrastructure development and promoting sustainable mobility in The Gambia.

Access to reliable transportation services supports decentralisation and decongestion of urban settlements, allowing families to remain connected while accessing services.

Promoting Excellence in Higher Education

Opening of Al-Hikma University

Language has long been a challenge in advancing Islamic education in The Gambia. Following decades of introducing Arabic Islamic Education in the formal Western education system, formal Islamic education is taking root and getting recognition in our education system. At the higher education level, the inauguration of Al Hikma University, a beacon of academic and Islamic excellence, opens opportunities for more aspiring academics irrespective of religion or gender.



With mechanisation, farmers can tackle larger areas, improve yields, enhance quality, and open up new opportunities for trade and income generation.

The machinery rollout demonstrates the government's commitment to modernising agriculture, a crucial sector for The Gambia's economic diversification and food self-sufficiency- aligning with the Recovery-Focused National Development Plan - YIRIWAA

The Presidential tour in rural Gambia wrapped up in the Lower River Region (LRR) and the Foni in the West Coast Region (WCR) areas, connecting key communities:

LRR and WCR - Foni

- Sare Jamma to Minna - 4.5 km (LRR)
- Gjonkil, Kewel, Kangmamudu to Kampassa 4.3 km (Foni Jarol, WCR) -
- Wasadou, Adullay, Fass Chabai, Kangiramba Busary to Bulengant - 7.0 km (Foni Jarol, WCR)
- Bondali to Jorem Bundakunda - 4.2 km (Foni Bondali)
- Burambang, Bulegant, Tib Kankurang to Bambara - at, km (Foni, WCR) 7.5
- Nyentempo, Fass Chamen, Nfee, Jending, Jilahr to Bulunto - 7.2 km (Foni, WCR)

"I am proud to preside over the handing over of these modern agricultural equipment to our hard-working farmers. The assortment includes Mini-combine harvesters, Power Tillers, Rice Threshers, Maize Shellers, Rice Milling Machines and Maize Milling Machines. My Government takes immense pride in this milestone and will continue to prioritise farmers in its development initiatives, and I want to assure you that this assortment of equipment is only the tip of the iceberg."

Upper River Region

8.2km Sare Fodike - Sare Jammu Mballow road and the 5.4km Chamoi Bunda - Limbambulu, totalling 14 km of road.

These communities will have improved access to Basse, the regional capital. Farmers can transport and trade their produce faster, reach wider markets and enhance food security.

**Central River Region**

Sinchu Alhagie to Pateh Sam 3.2km road and the 32km road connecting Cha Kunda, Sare Soffie, Chargel, Madina Duta Wally, Nyamen Kunda, Dobong Kunda among 53 communities to Bansang highway.



Speakers at Sare Sofie expressed gratitude for the foresight of President Barrow's government to provide feeder roads their ancestors dreamt of since the colonial era.

The Alkalo of Sare Sofie Sering Sey, whose village is 32km off the main highway, recalled women in labour suffered to access health services because of the poor road condition.

Agriculture Equipment

Cutting-edge machinery transforms agriculture and increase food production, ensure food security and increase farmer income. The Gambia's agricultural sector is experiencing that transformation as President Adama Barrow presented a diverse range of equipment including 56 Power tillers,



60 Rice milling machines, 100 Rice threshers, 20 Mini rice combine harvesters, 60 maize milling machines, 10 Manual drum seeders, 25 Garden tiller, 19 Tricycles, 7 Steaming kits, 5 Bush cutters, 10 Four-row tractor-drawn seed drills, 12 Maize shellers, and 5 Bush cutters (rotary weeder) to Gambian farmers at a major event held in the Central River Region.



In January, President Adama Barrow officially inaugurated the university. The inauguration is a testament to the government's effort to integrate Islamic values with modern education, aimed at creating a holistic learning environment. The school is set to empower Gambian youth and drive socio-economic progress.

Delivering his statement, the President's words resonated with the audience, as he highlighted the institution's potential to transform lives and drive growth beyond The Gambia. The University aligns with national policies like the National Madrassah Integration Strategy (GMIS) and the Education Sector Policy 2016-2030.

A Milestone for Gambian Higher Education: 2,584 Graduates as President Barrow Champions Skills and Innovation

The first half of 2026 was a defining moment for education in The Gambia as President Adama Barrow presided over two major academic milestones. In May and June, respectively, he conferred degrees to graduates at the University of The Gambia (UTG) and the University of Science, Engineering and Technology (USET).





UTG graduates 1,633

At the 18th Convocation Ceremony held at the UTG Faraba Banta Campus, 1,633 degrees on graduands drawn from UTG's ten schools. The ceremony marked record achievements: 54 home-trained medical doctors, 11 dental surgeons, and the first cohort of 7 PhDs in Law.



The discussions focused on key areas including promoting public-private partnership, youth empowerment and sustainable economic transformation. President Barrow reassured them of his government's continued support for youth-led enterprises and indigenous businesses as partners in national development.

Foundation Stones Laying for New Feeder Roads

Day one – Nuimi and Jokadou

Foundation stone for a 7.3 km road connecting Ndoffan to Kerr Wali, before proceeding to Fass Njaga Choi, where 9 km of road works for five communities connecting to Ndungu Kebbeh

Fass Njaga Choi known for many development interventions, would have easier access and connection to other communities, leading to the Lumo market at Ndungu Kebbeh and other social amenities in the Jokadu district and beyond.



The excitement of having 16.3KM of roads connecting eight Communities in Nuimi and Jokadu was highlighted with traditional music. The Serer “Gamba” at Kerr Jatta and “Sabarr” at Fass Njaga Choi. Jokadou district which benefits from 12.8 KM jointly from Kerr Selen and Kuntaya would further open the district communities to socio-economic opportunities.

Promoting Investment in Africa

7th Financial Afrik Awards Opens in Banjul

The 7th Financial Afrik Awards and Arab-Africa Investment Forum took place in Banjul, promoting Africa's resilience, innovation, and investment potential. The event brought together delegates from 23 countries to foster cross-border collaboration for sustainable growth. President

Adama Barrow delivered the keynote speech. He emphasised the need for offering alternatives to public debt and enhancing Africa-Arab economic and diplomatic relations to open opportunities for capital, expertise, and global engagement.

He affirmed The Gambia's readiness for business and investment. The forum offered a unique opportunity for the President to discuss with partners and investors to explore collaboration opportunities in infrastructure development, including energy, and digitalisation to enhance the nation's development.



Young Gambian Entrepreneurs Eye Public-Private Partnership in Advancing National Development

Entrepreneurs constitute the future leaders and drivers of a nation's economic prosperity. They innovate, create jobs, empower communities and drive growth. The Barrow-led administration is doing its part by creating an enabling environment for entrepreneurs and investors to bring their ideas to life. In February, the Gambian leader, President Adama Barrow, engaged young Gambian entrepreneurs under the umbrella of 'The Builders Association' during a courtesy visit.

In a major boost to Pan-African collaboration, UTG's School of Agriculture was named after former African Development Bank President Dr. Akinwumi Adesina. Impressed by UTG's progress, Dr. Adesina pledged \$250,000 for an endowment to support student scholarships and awards for lecturers.

Valedictorian Ebrima Sumareh, whose speech recounted a journey of perseverance from humble beginnings was celebrated.

This is the third convocation held at the Faraba Banta campus since its relocation, reinforcing its role as the centre of UTG's academic expansion beyond urban areas.

USET graduates 951 students

The breakdown of USET graduates includes 36 from the College of Science and Engineering, 668 from the Institute of technology, and 247 from the Institute of Innovation and Entrepreneurship. These graduates are equipped with practical and industry-ready skills to drive industrial growth and support The Gambia's socio-economic development.



With 2,584 graduates from both schools, this is a testament to The Gambia's commitment to advancing academic excellence and technical skills as a cornerstone for youth empowerment, job creation and national transformation.

On the Political Scene

President Barrow is transforming politics in The Gambia. For the first time his Party, the National People's Party - NPP, brought together young people in a National Youth Summit. In line with the Government's drive for development-oriented, skilled young people and conscious of the Government's development agenda, the NPP is organising to orient its youthful membership, focusing their attention on development politics. Building on that progress, the National People's Party's 2027–2031 Manifesto commits them to creating more opportunities for young people through education, skills development, entrepreneurship, digital innovation and decent jobs.



The themes of its first national summit speak directly to that vision and the interlinkage of the conversation on Migration, Entrepreneurship, Civic responsibility and Digital transformation. They are connected to building a future together.



The Gambian leader acknowledged IDEAS' interventions in The Gambia and urged them to continue the good work as the country sets to end its transition through peaceful elections at the end of 2026.

UN Country Team Partners to Accelerate NDP Delivery

The United Nations Country Team visited the State House for high-level talks aligning UN support with The Gambia's national priorities.

The top agendas were:

1. Climate resilience: addressing the impact of climate on agriculture and food security
2. Economic stability: mitigating the effects of global economic crises.
3. Irregular migration: strengthening efforts to address root causes and provide alternatives for the youth
4. Transitional justice: advancing processes to promote accountability, healing and social cohesion

“The NDP remain our roadmap” President Barrow said as he counts on UN partners to align resources and expertise to continue delivering results for the Gambian people.

Both sides reaffirmed commitment to The Gambia's sustainable development and social cohesion. The engagement signals stronger coordination between government and UN agencies to translate policy into tangible outcomes for communities nationwide.

In another engagement, the Gambian leader discussed with the UN and the African Union Sahel Region to deepen partnership in migration opportunities and investments.



To protect taxpayers' money, the Board outlined a policy document on strategic governance, operational, and financial plans to maintain the beautiful edifice of both facilities. The Chairperson of the Board, Ambassador Mawdo C. Juwara, pledged that they would collaborate with local and international partners to meet the government's expectations and ensure infrastructure under their purview brings maximum benefit to the people of The Gambia.

The OIC Secretariat set up for hosting the 15th Islamic Cooperation Summit has been transformed to the Banjul Convention Centre with a Board of Directors to govern its management.

Higher Education Board Leaders

In January, President Adama Barrow discussed progress and objectives in higher education and research with the Chairpersons and Executive Directors of key education boards. The boards have set up institutional frameworks with the right systems in place to drive progress on The Gambia's Education Development and Transformation Agenda (GEDTA). The meeting highlighted the government's focus on quality education as a key driver of national progress. The Barrow administration has initiated three education funds to empower its youth through innovative initiatives. First is the Tertiary and Higher Education Trust Fund (THET) that focuses on mobilising and investing resources to support infrastructure and access to higher education. The National Research and Innovation Fund (NRIF) is also a game-changer as it aims to empower innovations and research projects to boost Gambia's global innovation. The Students Revolving Loan Scheme will provide financial mechanisms to make higher education accessible to all Gambian students regardless of financial background.



The Call for Peace in The Sahel

Mission of the African Union for Mali and the Sahel (MISAHEL) and International IDEA are teaming up to boost peace, security, and democracy in the Sahel, with a focus on The Gambia. The emphasis is on Africa's advantage in unlocking its full potential by pooling resources and expertise, and a strong unified voice. In an audience with the MISAHEL and IDEA delegation, President Adama Barrow emphasised peace as the bedrock of democracy, calling on Africans and partners to tackle security issues together, leveraging their connections.



H.E Adama Barrow shared his government's stand: "We understand why many young people seek opportunities elsewhere. Our responsibility is to make sure that hope also exists here at home. That is why we continue working to strengthen agriculture, tourism, manufacturing, ICT and other productive sectors that create sustainable employment."

Advanced Health Care Comes to The Gambia

After years of planning and construction, The Gambia's largest and fully equipped modern hospital is now open, as President Barrow commissioned the National Emergency Treatment Centre and Biomedical Engineering Hospital.



What was once a vision is now standing before us, bringing advanced emergency and biomedical care home for every Gambian.

With lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic and the growing burden of non-communicable diseases, including hypertension, diabetes, cancer, kidney disease, and cardiovascular conditions, that are driving most hospital admissions and deaths, the facility will end delayed diagnosis and long waiting appointments for scans and overseas treatment. Instead, patients can now get imaging and lab work in-country.



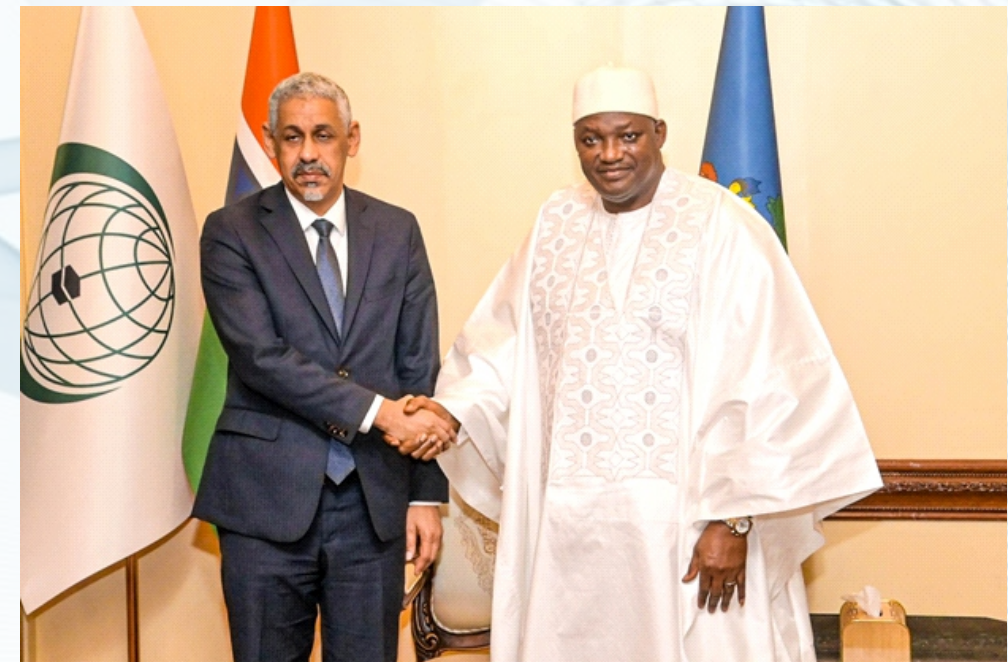
Alongside the hospital, the Ministry of Health has a Conference Centre and is set to build capacity for a new generation of Gambian specialists and reduce reliance on foreign experts.

The Government plans to expand the 1,500 beds, construct a kidney transplant centre, an open-heart surgery centre, and a cancer treatment centre.



President Barrow Welcomes TIBU Africa to The Gambia

President Adama Barrow welcomed Mr. Mohammed Amine Zariat, President of TIBU Africa, and a Moroccan delegation following the launch of TIBU's flagship programme in The Gambia, the first time the initiative entered an anglophone African country.



President Barrow framed TIBU not just as athletics, but as policy. He referenced the recent Ramadan football tournament as proof of sport's role in peace and cohesion.

In February and May, President Barrow sponsored peace tournaments, bringing together more than 25 teams from Brikama and surrounding West Coast villages to push unity and youth engagement. The President's message is clear: peace is built in communities and sport is one of the fastest ways to get there. The programme seeks to establish modern basketball courts and training for coaches and physical educators using school programmes and community initiatives to deliver health, skills and economic opportunity. This aligns with the Government priorities, with 60% of the Gambian youth under 40. The Barrow administration is clearly looking beyond classrooms for tools that keep people engaged and employable.

Banjul International Convention Centre Board to Maintain Infrastructures

The Banjul International Convention Centre Board Directors, tasked to ensure prudent management of the International Conference Centre and the VVIP lounge at Banjul International Airport, aligned with the administration's efforts to adopt best practices such as transparency, good governance and economic development was at the presidency to sit with the President on its mission.



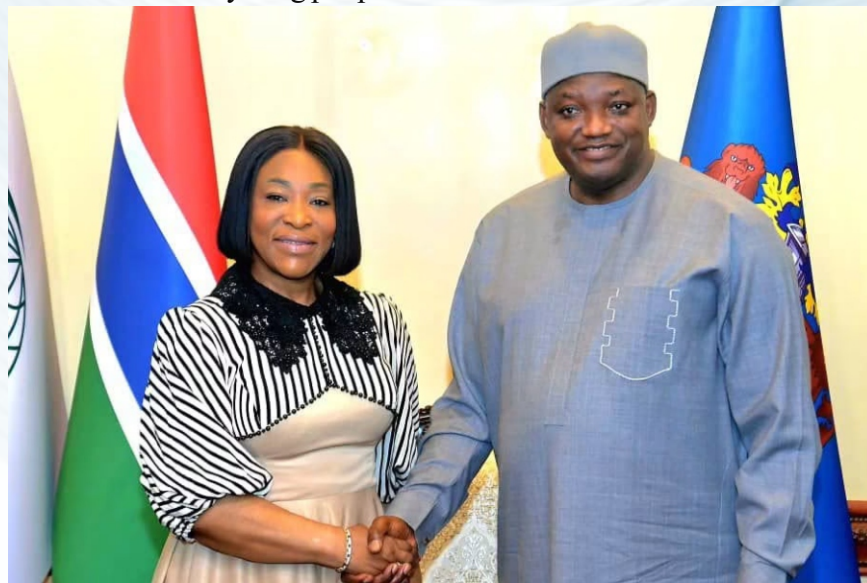
During the last six months, President Barrow has engaged with the **UNFPA West Africa Regional Director, Dr. Sennen Hounton** on maternal mortality, gender issues and women & youth empowerment through initiatives that align with the National Development Plan (NDP) and partnerships with stakeholders, aiming to improve healthcare, promote equality, and empower women and youth for a prosperous nation. President Adama Barrow reiterated his administration's commitment despite limited resources. Under his leadership, The Gambia has been stationing community ambulances and establishing health facilities in remote areas, geared towards reducing maternal mortality and enhancing healthcare. Aligned with the



UNFPA Country Programme, Dr. Hounton acknowledged The Gambia's progress in these areas, citing examples from the First Lady's maternity ward refurbishments and the government's rural investments. He proposed collaboration to eliminate maternal mortality and enhance youth skills in realising the NDP.

President Barrow Discusses The Gambia's Future

A conversation about The Gambia's future unfolded as President Barrow discussed migration, diplomacy, and human rights with Her Excellency Shirley Ayokor Botchwey, Secretary of the Commonwealth. The Gambian leader called for member states to look inward to build wealth through knowledge, and to creatively fund programmes that empower women and young people.



The discussions also touched on healing as the President urged the Commonwealth organisation's support for reparations and technical assistance to strengthen public confidence in the justice system.

On democracy, the President affirmed a free, fair and transparent election, with the Commonwealth's support welcomed.

For her part, Secretary General Botchywey reaffirmed the Commonwealth's commitment to walk with The Gambia as the nation continues its democratic journey.

Protecting What We Eat: A National Food and Drug Lab Opens in The Gambia

In a decisive move to protect public health, food safety standard and enhance consumer confidence, President Adama Barrow inaugurated the nation's first National Food and Feeding Quality Laboratory, the landmark facility ends decades of reliance on overseas testing.



For years, food and feeding samples from The Gambia were sent abroad for analysis, with added costs and delays. The state-of-the-art facility serves as the central hub for testing, research, and certification of food and feeding products, marking a major step in the Government's drive to safeguard what citizens eat and ensure compliance with both local and international standards before reaching the local markets.



It marks a major step in the Government's broader drive to build a resilient food system, reduce food-borne illnesses, and assure Gambian consumers that what they eat is safe, nutritious, and of the highest quality.

The President urged the business community to recognise that regulations are not barriers to success but bridges to sustainable growth. He assured manufacturers, importers, and processors of consumer goods that his government will continue to collaborate with them in ensuring consumers get the right and safe product. The inauguration signals the Government's firm commitment to protecting citizens and positioning The Gambia to compete confidently in regional and global trade.

The Gambia is Set for Health Tourism

Under President Adama Barrow, The Gambia is laying the groundwork to become a destination for quality medical care. The move aligns with the country's National Development Plan NDP, which places health at its core: better, universal access to quality care and stronger infrastructure.

That vision took a tangible step forward when President Barrow presided over the generous donation of medical items worth \$400,000, quoting the adage "Health is wealth." The donations by Alataa Charity Foundation and Baitulmaal complement the Government's effort to advance health, benefiting citizens and positioning The Gambia as a destination for quality medical services. The equipment has strengthened hospitals and clinic nationwide, expanding capacity and raising standards of care. President Barrow challenge health professionals to embrace responsibility and drive the vision forward, while urging them to serve the nation with dedication.



DIPLOMACY

The Smiling Coast: A hub for Genuine Investment

At the 9th Nigeria International Energy Summit (NIES) in Abuja, President Adama Barrow highlighted The Gambia's strategic position, stable environment, and vast opportunities in energy, agriculture, tourism and more for investors ready for win-win partnership.

The address is a clear message that The Gambia is open for business, drawing interest from Nigerian companies, Exim Bank, and other regional partners, signalling new opportunities for The Gambia's growth and prosperity.



Improving Life and Livelihood



As the country advances, the government is treating decent jobs, skills development, and legal labour pathways with utmost urgency. Strengthened Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) systems and new bilateral labour agreements for safe, regular, and orderly migration. Already Gambians are working legally in Europe and the Middle East.

In 2025, 122 schools went digital, equipped with smart televisions, laptops, projectors, and other IT equipment to prepare students for a new economy. To ensure that tuition does not limit anyone's potential, the government has established three funds: [the Students' Revolving Loan Scheme](#), [the National Research and Innovation Fund](#), and [the Tertiary and Higher Education Trust Fund](#).

Over GMD12 million has been disbursed to 112 women's groups, benefiting more than 10,000 women. Another 1,702 adolescent girls and young women completed financial literacy training, and following their graduation had access to grants totaling GMB117.2 million

On justice, The Gambia is set to make history. A specialised Gender-Based Violence court has been inaugurated in 2026, only the sixth of its kind in Africa, the court will cut delays and deliver accountability in gender related cases.

To realise the water right, the government has drilled 110 solar-powered water systems nationwide. 68 are complete, serving 142 villages and benefiting about 82,896 people. The remaining 42 are due for completion by the end of 2026. To protect those water tables, over 300 public latrines have been built in rural and riverside communities to prevent pollution.

Audiences

Consulting with diplomats, development partners and other stakeholders is an important part of the President's routine. Such closed-door engagements provide an opportunity for face-to-face dialogue and closer reflections on partnerships and national development priorities.

The discussions held at the regional and national levels emphasised our collective responsibilities, aligning with the 2026 Independence Day anniversary theme: **“Harnessing The Gambia's Human Capital and Infrastructural Resources for an Inclusive Leap to Prosperity.”**

State of the Nation Address

The 1997 Constitution of the Republic of The Gambia requires the Head of State to address the National Assembly on the state of the nation. In March 2025, His Excellency President Adama Barrow stood before the National Assembly witnessed by Cabinet Ministers, diplomats, development partners and citizens, to deliver his State of the Nation Address (SoNA), highlighting the nation's key accomplishments, priority programmes, and plans ahead.



The Gambia is shifting gears. President Barrow outlined heavy investments in industrial parks, urban agricultural hubs, and Special Economic Zones to move the country “away from raw exports towards value addition, manufacturing, and exports.” At the same time, reforms to the Essential Commodities Act 2015 are underway to better monitor stocks and prices, while preserving a liberal market system.

Addressing other dignitaries at a Ministerial reception at the Abuja Continental Hotel, President Barrow emphasised that energy security in Africa is a pressing moral and practical necessity. He called for unity, vision, and bold leadership to drive change, reaffirming The Gambia's commitment to expanding energy access and sustainability.



Over thirty Nigerian companies and Exim Bank expressed optimism about potential partnerships in agriculture, tourism, and energy.

President Barrow's participation in NIES 2026 aims to boost regional energy cooperation, attract investment, and strengthen dialogue on renewable energy and sustainable development in Africa.



The Senegal-Gambia 4th Presidential Council

In a strong show of cooperation, their Excellencies, President Adama Barrow and President Basirou Diomaye Faye jointly officiated the opening of the Senegal-Gambia Presidential Council in Dakar.



As the highest decision-making body for bilateral cooperation, the Presidential Council drives joint action on priorities affecting its citizens. The two nations signed new cooperation agreements on energy, border management, digital economy, youth development, technology, culture and tourism, and higher education, research, science and technology.



In addition, health facilities have been expanded and upgraded nationwide to strengthen service delivery and ensure investments in human capital and access to healthcare are a right, not a privilege. The ongoing road projects from the Greater Banjul Area to feeder roads across all regions are “arteries of inclusion and national integration” that reduce isolation, facilitate trade, and open new economic opportunities.

The Independence Day celebration witnessed the inspection of the parade and the participation of students and security forces in various activities. The President acknowledged the dedication of troops and citizens, describing the occasion as “a moment of pride and unity for our nation.”

National Dialogue Day

In 2024, President Adama Barrow declared 16th February as a National Dialogue Day, preceding the annual Independence Day Anniversary on 18th February.

The Office of the President, in coordination with the National Dialogue Preparatory Committee, held nine (9) regional consultative dialogues concurrently across the country from 5th to 6th February 2026. Representatives of various social groups discussed key national issues and the implementation strategies to improve national development and promote inclusive communities.



The preparatory committee extensively engaged grassroots communities on pressing matters and workable solutions. These consultations foster communication and allow communities to address shared challenges effectively.

The regional consultations ended with the 3rd National Dialogue held at Banjul International Convention Centre on February 16th 2026. Stakeholders converged at the SDKJICC to deliberate on issues and recommended ways forward.



NATIONHOOD - THE GAMBIA @61

Independence Address

“Independence is hollow if it does not deliver”, President Barrow said as The Gambia commemorates 61st years of Independence, emphasising that a nation's sovereignty must be measured by tangible improvements in the lives of citizens, not by ceremony alone.



President Barrow, in his address at the 61st Independence anniversary, stated that health, education, food security, infrastructure, and democratic governance are the foundations of sovereignty. He stressed that a nation that cannot power its homes, feed its people, educate its youth or protect rights cannot fully claim its freedom.

Since 2017, the Barrow administration has expanded the national grid and commissioned renewable energy projects, including large-scale solar investments, reflecting The Gambia's commitment to energy independence, climate responsibility, and economic competitiveness.



President Barrow called for stronger cooperation in defence and security, trade and investment, agriculture, fisheries, transport, health, education, environment, digital transformation, and border management sectors he described as “critical to the prosperity and stability of both nations.”

For his part, President Faye described the Council as a results-driven framework. He pointed to tangible proof of what joint commitment can deliver, citing the Senegambia Bridge and the Senelec-NAWEC electricity interconnection, which is powering homes and businesses on both sides.

Reaffirming Senegal's commitment, President Faye said Dakar will prioritise unlocking economic integration, expand trade opportunities for businesses, and tackle the pressing challenge of illicit fishing that threatens livelihoods in coastal communities. To move from commitment to impact, both leaders agreed that the roadmaps adopted during the council will be driven forward by establishing joint working groups to coordinate implementation, monitor progress, and fast-track decisions agreed upon into real benefits for Gambians and Senegalese.

A Decade of Partnership: President Barrow Receives Message from President Xi Jinping

Ten years after the restoration of diplomatic relations, The Gambia and People's Republic of China are ushering in a new chapter of partnership built on mutual respect and development built on a win-win model.

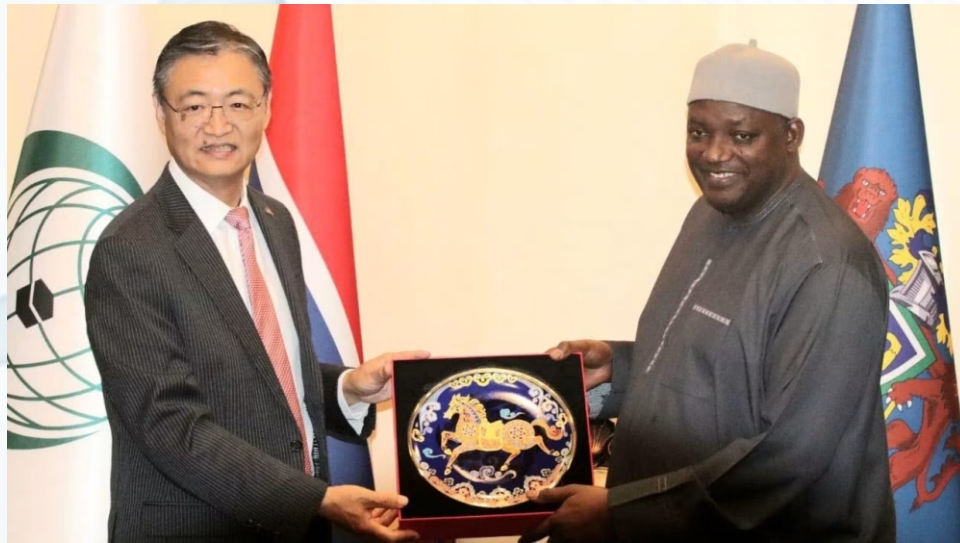
The Ambassador of the People's Republic of China delivered a special message to President Barrow on behalf of President Xi Jinping, marking the 10th anniversary of renewed friendship between the two nations.

In his message, President Xi expressed appreciation for President Barrow's earlier correspondence and reaffirmed China's commitment to a mutually beneficial relationship. A key highlight in the message was the commencement of the planned power plant project, a signal of China's continuous investment in The Gambia's energy sector.

President Barrow welcomed the gesture, referencing ongoing plans for solar plants to strengthen domestic power generation and national security. He further outlined three priority areas for deeper cooperation: health, agriculture and electricity. The Chief of Staff at the Presidency, Mr. Alieu Loum, reiterated The Gambia's steadfast adherence to the One-China policy at bilateral and multilateral levels. He highlighted active cooperation in the National Malaria programme, small and smart projects for community impacts, the Foreign Service Academy and the agricultural support programme. The China-Gambia relationship has transformed into tangible development outcomes from infrastructure to health, education, agriculture and energy.

President Barrow Bids Farewell to Outgoing Russian Ambassador and UNFPA Representative

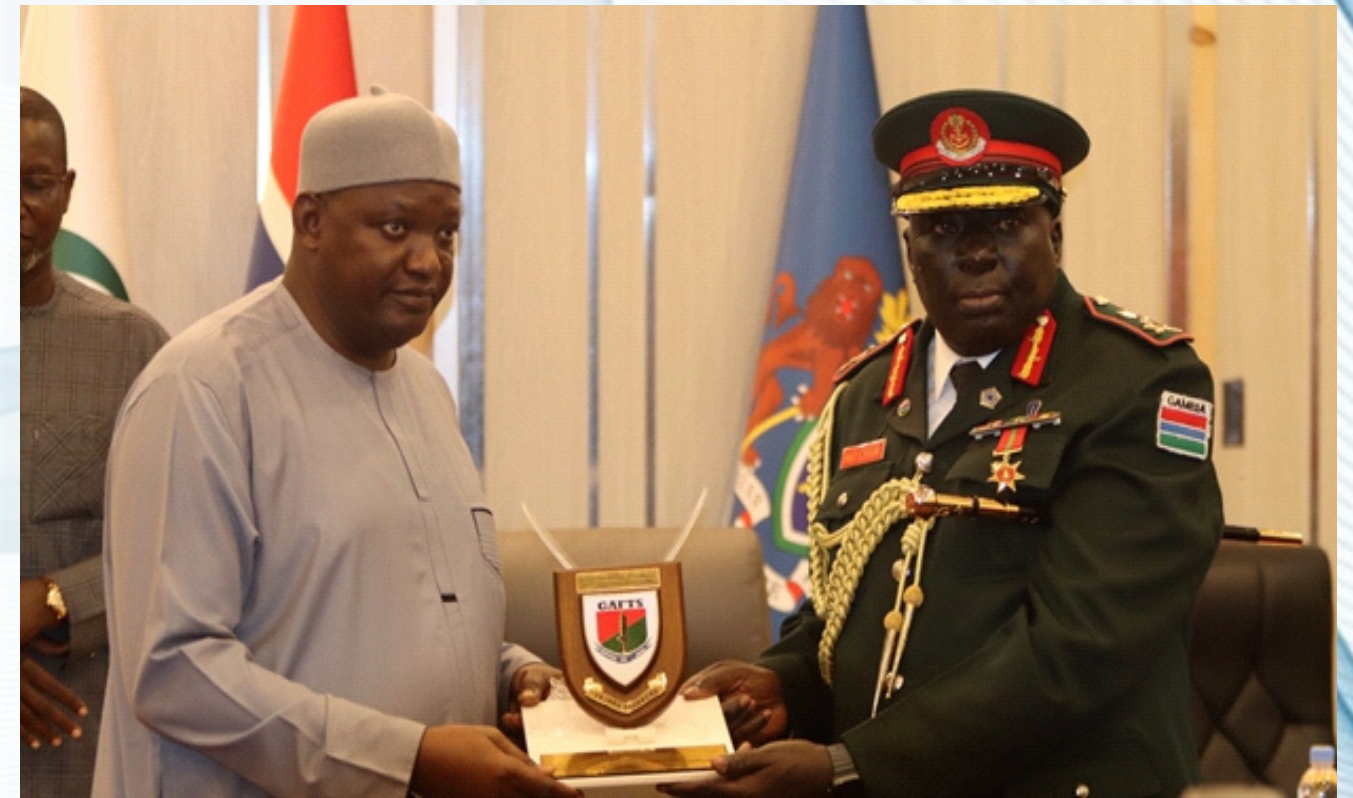
In other diplomatic engagements, President Barrow bade farewell to H.E. Dmitry Kurakov, Ambassador of Russia to The Gambia and H.E. Ndeye Rose Sarr, Country Representative of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).



He encouraged deeper cooperation in health, solar energy and other areas of mutual interest and commended the Republic of Russia and UNFPA for their support.



The farewell celebrated years of partnership and reaffirmed The Gambia's commitment to strong bilateral and multilateral cooperation.



This training of Cadets on Gambian soil will surely reinforce the ethos and core values that align with national objectives, which is necessary to ground our Officer Cadets in an acceptable operational culture.

The new Commissioning Course forms a critical element of the GAF officer development pipeline. It will remain strictly structured to produce tactically sound and ethically upright junior officers, operationally capable of discharging leadership responsibilities upon being commissioned.



The Commandant and staff of the GAF Training School are commended for the commitment to excellence through the process. The outcome is the consequence of your collective effort, confirming that excellence, unity, and teamwork go together.

To reinforce this momentum, eight new operational vehicles were handed over to DLEAG to strengthen the agency's capacity to conduct and respond rapidly to intelligence across the country.

At a brief ceremony, President Barrow urged DLEAG to uphold the highest professionalism in its work and assured them of the government's continued support and commitment in the fight against illicit drugs. Additionally, the President called for collective action to minimise the menace of illicit drugs in society.



The new vehicles come as The Gambia tightens enforcement along porous borders and expands community outreach.

COMMISSIONING PARADE OF CADETS - COURSE 01

For the first time, The Gambia has trained and commissioned its own military officers in country. The commissioning parade of Cadet Course 01 marked more than graduation. It set the stage for a new era of in-country military officer training and career development for The Gambia Armed Forces.



The programme was deliberately rigorous. Cadets were tested and hardened in mental courage, physical endurance, and leadership character to meet the professional standards expected of commissioned officers.

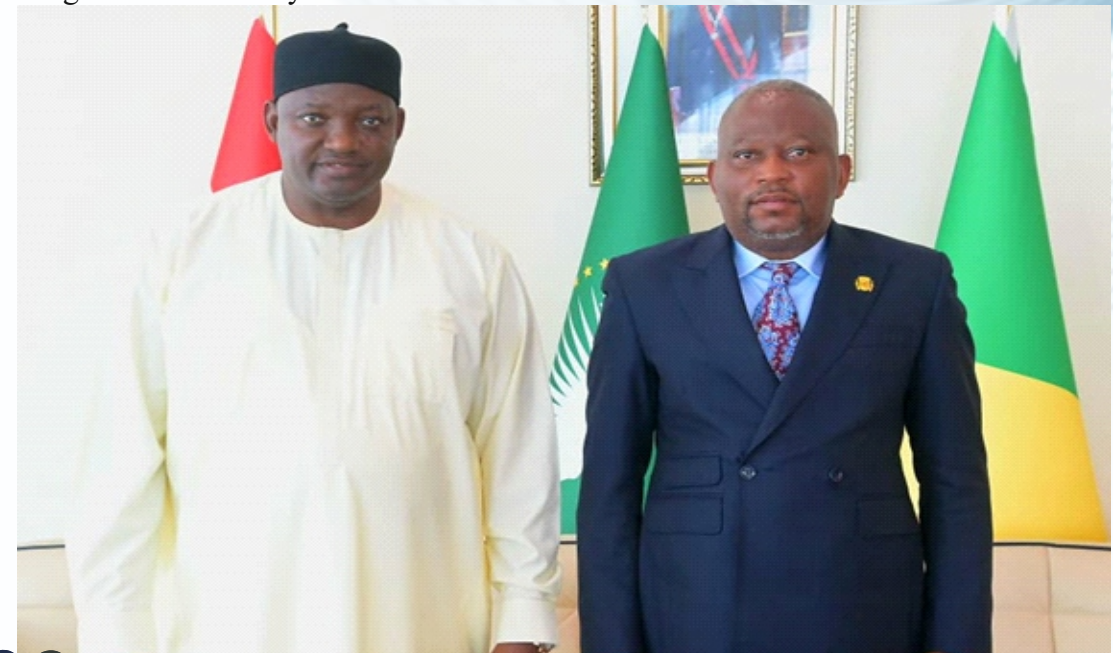
The Pursuit of Africa's Democracy

President Adama Barrow's respect for democracy has always been demonstrated through his actions and engagements. In the first half of 2026, President Barrow attended two Presidential inaugurations in the Republics of Guinea and Congo, signalling that democratic processes are not just policies but a principle of regional solidarity.

Conakry and Brazzaville were converging points for many African Heads of State and delegations, all honoured guests of Presidents Mamadi Doumbouya and Denis Sassou Nguesso in January and April, respectively.



Following years of military rule, in the December 2025 Presidential election, Guineans elected General Mamadi Doumbouya as their democratically elected Leader -a milestone President Barrow described as a victory for the Guinean people and a shared achievement for Africa's democratic aspirations, on the sidelines of the inauguration in January 2026.



Similarly, in April, Congolese President, H.E. Denis Sassou Nguesso invited President Barrow as an honoured guest at his swearing-in ceremony in Brazzaville, reaffirming The Gambia's commitment to democratic governance, including free and fair elections.



Crowds of Congolese lined the routes to Stade de l'Unité to celebrate the inauguration of President-Elect Nguesso for another term. The green landscape with palm trees, music, a mosaic of cultural rhythms, colourful attire, artistic displays of dancing, and cheerful crowds set the scene for a solemn ceremony-marked by taking the oath of office, signaled a new mandate of leadership for a country with a population of over five million and a public acknowledgment of the responsibility to enhance the lives and livelihoods of its citizens.



President Barrow noted the ECOWAS region faces challenges, stressing that safeguarding the region and its democratic values is a shared duty, and called on all stakeholders to collaborate and protect stability and democracy, reiterating his commitment to a transparent, free, and fair election.

PRESIDENT ADAMA BARROW BIDS FAREWELL TO ECOMIG CONTINGENT

Another Senegalese ECOMIG contingent completed its tenure in The Gambia. President Barrow thanked ECOWAS leaders and Senegal's President Bassirou Diomaye FAYE for their support, highlighting the strong bond between The Gambia and Senegal. The officers were awarded certificates, a commendation of professionalism as a reference for their future work.

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Boosts to Anti-Drug Fight with New Fleet

Illicit drugs are a menace to society, derailing national development and negatively impacting the lives of people, particularly the youth. Though the fight against drugs seems insurmountable, the Drug Law Enforcement Agency (DLEAG) of The Gambia has logged tangible gains in recent years.



The President appreciated the good behaviour of Gambians abroad and urged them to continue being good ambassadors of the country. The officials of the Embassy in Saudi and High Commission in Sierra Leone took the opportunity to clarify issues regarding the challenges highlighted, and the President assured them of the use of diplomatic channels in addressing their concerns.



DEFENSE & SECURITY

New ECOMIG Force Commander Pledges Support for The Gambia's Stability

In January, President Adama Barrow welcomed Col. Aliou Tine as the new ECOMIG Force Commander, praising former commander Col. Ndiagne Diouf's service. The President assured Commander TINE of the Government's full support, emphasising collaboration with local authorities to maintain the country's reputation for peace and security. The new Commander pledged proactive measures that align with ECOWAS' strategic security goals to address potential threats.



The turnout at the Unity Stadium is a symbolic representation of the 94.90 % trust and optimism about the progress and prosperity Nguesso's leadership could offer to a country endowed with natural resources and a youthful population.

President Barrow's attendance at both inaugurations underscores a consistent dedication to African democracy - standing with elected leaders and their citizens at these pivotal moments. For the Barrow administration, supporting credible elections and peaceful transfer is not ceremonial, but a practical expression of pan-African solidarity.

Gabonese President's Maiden Visit to The Gambia

H.E. President Brice Clotaire Ougui Nguema made his maiden visit to the Smiling Coast following his election in 2025.



The Gambia is amongst the first countries visited, manifesting the strong bond of friendship between the two nations.



The two African countries formalised their relations in September 2021 to build on economic, financial and social relations. During the three-day visit, President Ougui Ngeuma held tete-a-tete with his host, visited the outstanding infrastructure in the country, including the modern health facilities – The 1500-bed National Emergency Treatment Centre at Farato, the Food and Drug Quality Control Laboratory in Brusubi and the modern Faraba Banta University Campus. He also visited the historic crocodile pool at Bakau Katchikally.

President Barro honoured his colleague with a state banquet at the State House in Banjul. The Gambia and Gabon also renewed their commitment to engage in bilateral cooperation as they put emphasis on African integration, through trade and cooperation.

ECOWAS MID-YEAR SUMMIT

Since he took office in 2017, President has shown dedication to ECOWAS and its authority by attending the Heads of State and Government's Summit. The latest was held in Lungi, Sierra Leone under the Chairmanship of H.E. Julius Maada Bio, whose term ended at the end of 69th Summit of the Authority and handed over to the Senegalese President, H.E. Bassirou Diomaye Diakharr Faye.



In another milestone at the ECOWAS Commission, H.E. Dr Omar Touray handed over the Presidency to Senegal's former Defence Minister. The Republic of Senegal has a critical role as it takes over the leadership of ECOWAS in addressing burning issues of peace and security, terrorism, trade and other vital concerns in the region.



President Barrow also witnessed the inauguration of the Julius Maada Bio International Conference Centre in Lungi and addressed both gatherings, the opening of the centre and the ECOWAS Summit.

MEETING GAMBIANS ABROAD

It has become a norm that President Barrow will meet Gambians when he travels outside the country. Following the completion of Umrah – a Muslim religious ritual in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and on the sidelines of the 69th ECOWAS Heads of State and Government Summit,



His Excellency met with Gambians in Jeddah and Freetown respectively. They discussed developments taking place in their country of origin, documentation, repatriation and work permit issues.