

National Assembly, New Assembly Building, Reginald Pye Lane, Banjul, The Gambia

[OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT]

13TH SITTING OF THE 1ST ORDINARY SESSION OF THE 6TH LEGISLATURE

National Assembly Proceedings of
Wednesday, 1st April 2026

BILLS & MOTION

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1. **Prayers**

The Assembly met at 10:00 a.m. in New National Assembly Building, Reginald Pye Lane, Banjul.]

[The Speaker, Hon. Fabakary Tombong Jatta, read the prayers.]

[The Speaker, Hon. Fabakary Tombong Jatta, in Chair but later in the Proceedings occupied by the Deputy Speaker, Hon. Seedy S.K. Njie.]

The Assembly was called to Order.

2. **Communication from the Chair**

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, today's sitting marks the end of this Ordinary Session; that is the first Ordinary Session of the Assembly in the 2026 legislative year. This was precisely a four-week Ordinary Session with lots of businesses, prominent among were the consideration of the motion on the State of the Nation Address delivered by His Excellency the President of the Republic, legislative processes of critical Bills, including other important motions and reports.

Honourable Members, as always been said, the business of the Plenary can never be exhausted. We will, therefore, today start the motion on the adjournment debate to adjourn this Ordinary Session sine die. Therefore, I wish to welcome His Excellency, the Vice President and all Honourable Ministers here in present to attend to this very important sitting of the Assembly, being the adjournment debate.

This is a unique sitting of the Assembly at the end of each Ordinary Session, allowing Honourable Members the opportunity to discuss and debate on cross-cutting issues, which of course requires the attention of

the Executive. At the appropriate time of the debate, I will invite his Excellency, the Vice President and Honourable Ministers to also participate in the debate and to respond to issues raised regarding their portfolios.

Honourable Members, our Assembly journey over the course of this Session manifests our collective commitment to the betterment of our society. We have grappled with complex issues and made decisions that will impact the lives of our constituents for years to come.

Honourable Members, as we adjourn this Session, I encourage each of us to reflect on the work we have accomplished during this Session and the work that lies ahead. Let us continue to engage with our constituents, seek their feedback and work collaboratively across party lines for the greater good of our nation.

Finally, Honourable Members, I want to express my sincere appreciation for your commitment, passion and dedication to the service of our country. As we adjourn, let us carry forward the lessons learnt, the bonds forged and the spirit of cooperation that defines our democratic institution. Together we can build a brighter future for all. I thank you all.

Clerk, can we proceed?

3. Corrections and Approval of the Record of Votes and Proceedings of the National Assembly Sitting of Monday, 30th March 2026

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, the Record of Votes and Proceedings of Monday, 30th March 2026, is before us for corrections and approval. Can any Honourable Member please move that the said motion

for the corrections and approval of the records of votes and proceedings be considered and approved? Honourable Member for Sabach Sanjal.

HON ALHAGIE BABOU CEESAY [SABACH SANJAL]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. I rise to move that the Record of Votes and Proceedings of the National Assembly Sitting of Monday, 30th March 2026, be corrected and approved.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Member for Sabach Sanjal. Any seconder, Honourable Members? Honourable Member for Lower Baddibu.

HON KEMO GASSAMA [LOWER BADDIBU]: Thank very much, Honourable Speaker. Honourable Speaker, I rise to second the motion.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Member for Lower Baddibu. It has been moved and seconded that the Record of Votes and Proceedings of the National Assembly Sitting of Monday, 30th March 2026, be considered and approved.

Honourable Members, we all have copies of the said record of votes and proceedings. And as usual, we will look through it page by page, beginning with Page 1, to be followed by your comments and observations.

Page 1, Honourable Members, we now move to Page 2. Honourable Members, we will move to Page 3. Honourable Member for Sanimentereng.

HON FATOU CHAM [SANIMENTERENG]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. It is just a slight thing on the Order Paper. The record of votes rather, the pages are not numbered. They are not. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Honourable Member for Sanimentereng. I think what we will do now is to start again from the first one, and we will number it 1. That is where you have notice of upcoming

business. It is the last one below. The agenda items on the paper, corrections and approval and then motion that will be Number 1. Then the next page will be Number 2. On top of that page is, be notified that the motion, etc. and then you have the list of Members who were present up to Number 26. There will be Number 2. The list continues on Number 3 from Honourable Omar Jammeh to 58, Honourable Gibbi Mballow. Have you seen it?

And now, the next page will be Number 4, and Number 4 would be on top of the page, which is 'the motion was seconded by Honourable Fatou Cham'. And then, you have a list of Members who participated in the debate up to Honourable Alieu Baldeh. That would be Number 4.

And Number 5 will be the one that is on top, where you have Honourable Abdoulie Njai, and down you have the debate continued. And the last name there is Honourable Suwaibou Touray. That would be Number 5. And then the last page will be Number 6. Have you followed?

Now, we go back to Page 3. Any comments on Page 3? All right. Honourable Members, we move to Page 4. All right. Honourable Members, we move to Page 5. Honourable Members, we now move to Page 6. All right. Sorry, on Page 5. The Honourable Member for Sanimentereng.

HON FATOU CHAM [SANIMENTERENG]: Thank you again, Honourable Speaker. On Page 5, where you have the motion to sit beyond 6 o'clock, where the Honourable Member for Brikama North and Minority Leader, Alhagie S. Darbo, has moved the motion for the Assembly to sit beyond 6 o'clock. I think normally what we do is 'to complete business' instead of writing the whole thing as 'to complete the debate on the State of the

Nation Address 2026'. Why not we just simplify it and say 'to complete business'. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: This particular day was the debate on the State of the Nation Address. Any more on Page 5? Honourable Members, we go to the last page, Page 6. Yes, Honourable Member for Nianija.

HON AMADOU CAMARA [NIANIJA]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. Page 6, I think the first paragraph… Let me read so that we can follow: *'At the invitation of the Honourable Speaker, his Excellency the Vice President stepping in for the mover'*. I think that is what I do not agree with it because if you looked at the Constitution, Section 77[3], which reads, "*The Vice President shall answer in the National Assembly for matters affecting the President."* I think stepping in is not appropriate as far as the constitutional provision is concerned.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable, can I get your comment back again? What are you suggesting? What is your concern?

HON AMADOU CAMARA [NIANIJA]: Like I said, the Vice President… As it is captured here, the Vice President stepping in for the mover of the motion; that is what I do not agree with because the Vice President is not stepping in for the President. The Constitution provides that "*The Vice President shall answer in the National Assembly to all matters affecting the President*." So basically, we can just put it like, at the invitation of the Honourable Speaker, His Excellency the Vice President responded to issues raised in the debate and so on but not stepping in actually.

THE SPEAKER: Let us be careful with what is said. It said that if the President is not present. The President may want to come in and then sit

with us to have the debate on and then he will… In his absence, then the Vice President can come in.

HON AMADOU CAMARA [NIANIJA]: If you look at the provision, it says that… Let me read that again. "*The Vice President shall answer in the National Assembly for matters affecting the President*." So, it is very clear.

HON BILLAY G. TUNKARA [KANTORA & MAJORITY LEADER]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker, for giving me the floor. I want to agree with the Member for Nianija. Yes, I do understand that the motion was moved by the President and it is based on in his absence that the Vice President came to respond to the debate. But probably by the choice of words, we might say, 'on behalf of the President or the mover of the motion the Vice President came to wind up the debate', and then remove the word 'step in'.

So probably, might be the choice of words, but it all mean the same thing. I understand his point, I understand the point because the Constitution is very clear. *Vice President shall be answerable to the National Assembly on all matters affecting the President*. And the motion that we debated was actually moved by the President. So, the Vice President came to take the baton for the President to respond to issues as per the provision provided by the Constitution. But then, it maybe the choice of word. Like I said, choice of word, we can say he came to wind up the debate on behalf of the President.

THE SPEAKER: The Constitution does not debar the President from coming to respond to his own speech. What it provides for, I think, is to… where he is not coming and, therefore, the Vice President can always come in to represent the President. Honourable Member for Wuli East.

HON SUWAIBOU TOURAY [WULI EAST]: I think you have said everything. What the Majority Leader is saying, if the Vice President comes on behalf of the President, he is stepping in on behalf of the President, that is what is there. The Vice President stepped in on behalf of the President. That is what you want us to put there. Yes, I agree. Let us put that there. The Vice President stepped in on behalf of the President, fine. I am fine with that.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member for Old Yundum.

HON ABDOULIE CEESAY [OLD YUNDUM]: So, Honourable Speaker, I think it has to do with the way we are going to structure the sentence. Now, if you look at the first sentence 'at the invitation of the Honourable Speaker', that is the first word. I think, 'on behalf of the mover of the motion, the Honourable Speaker invited the Vice President to respond to issues', simple, because already we know the President is the mover of the motion. Here you have mentioned that. Now, you have invited the Vice President to come and respond to issues as simple as that without saying he step in. No.

THE SPEAKER: I had earlier thought that he was concerned with the word mover. I was going to say, not the mover. Where is it? He said 'at the invitation of the Honourable Speaker, His Excellency the Vice President stepping in for the President'. I was going to use the word 'President' there, stepping in for the President, as he quoted the Constitution. But what we are saying here is what the Honourable Majority Leader and the Honourable Member for Wuli East said by putting the two together, you are speaking the same language. Yes, Honourable Member for Upper Saloum.

HON ALHAGIE MBOW [UPPER SALOUM]: Yes. Honourable Speaker, we are talking about the motion that was moved by the President. In fact, if you look at the speech of the President, there was nowhere where he moved a motion. So, I am not too sure exactly what motion are we talking about here. He gave a speech, and he concluded on the speech. And at the end of the speech, he thanked everybody for coming. And in Parliamentary terms, generally, when you move a motion, you should mention it. I move so and so motion. So, the motion was never moved. So, I think this one we can just leave it there, and we go our way.

HON BILLAY G. TUNKARA [KANTORA & MAJORITY LEADER]: The Order Paper, Mbow. You are … Order Paper said it.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable, whether he said that or not, it is a motion. And then the motion was tabled, and it was seconded.

Honourable Members, I do not think we have Shakespeare in our midst. Let us do it the best way we think fit that we would understand because if we want to go into this semantics, we will be here until tomorrow. Everybody has his own way of seeing it.

Now, what compromise do we reach to reword it? I think… What about what the Member for Wuli East said in conjunction with yours? Wuli, can you repeat it? Wuli, no, can you construct it for us? The Vice President stepping in…?

HON SUWAIBOU TOURAY [WULI EAST]: On behalf of the President.

THE SPEAKER: stepping in?

HON SUWAIBOU TOURAY [WULI EAST]: On behalf of the President.

THE SPEAKER: You remove the mover?

HON SUWAIBOU TOURAY [WULI EAST]: Yes, by your suggestion.

THE SPEAKER: Okay, 'stepping in on behalf of the President'.

HON SUWAIBOU TOURAY [WULI EAST]: Yes, more explicit.

THE SPEAKER: Continue.

HON SUWAIBOU TOURAY [WULI EAST]: And responded to issues raised.

THE SPEAKER: Stepping in on behalf of the President and responded to…

HON SUWAIBOU TOURAY [WULI EAST]: Yes, and responded, you have to…

THE SPEAKER: And why 'and' again, stepping in on behalf of the President, responded to the issues raised.

HON SUWAIBOU TOURAY [WULI EAST]: Okay. That is fine. Then it goes…

THE SPEAKER: Are we comfortable, Honourable Member for Nianija?

HON AMADOU CAMARA [NIANIJA]: I am okay. I am okay.

THE SPEAKER: Nianija?

HON AMADOU CAMARA [NIANIJA]: It is okay now. It is okay.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, so what we have is, 'the Vice President, stepping in on behalf of the President, responded to issues raised and then wind up the debate'. All right. Are we fine?

All right. Any more on Page 6? I think we need to go and train some Members to be specialists in the language so that they will always be guiding us.

Okay. Honourable Members, it has been moved and seconded, so I now put the question.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[That the Record of Votes and Proceedings of the National Assembly Sitting of Monday, 30th March 2026, be approved with amendments.]

4. **Bills in accordance with Orders 73[4] & 75**

i. **[Third Reading] National Food Security Cooperation Bill, 2026** *[By the Honourable Minister of Environment, Climate Change & Natural Resources stepping in for the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Livestock & Food Security]*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, you would recall that the Consideration Stage of the National Food Security Cooperation Bill, 2026 was concluded on Tuesday, 3rd March 2026. Accordingly, today is appointed for the Third Reading in accordance with Order 75.

I will, therefore, now invite the Honourable Minister of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources, stepping in for the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Security, to move a motion for the Third Reading of the Bill entitled 'National Food Security Cooperation Bill, 2026'. Honourable Minister.

HON ROHEY JOHN MANJANG [MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE & NATURAL RESOURCES]: 'Salamu alaikum'. Good morning, Honourable Speaker and the entire Assembly.

Honourable Speaker, I move that the Bill entitled 'The National Food Security Cooperation Bill, 2026' having been considered with amendments to be read a third time and passed. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Minister. Any seconder, Honourable Members? Honourable Member for Upper Niumi.

HON OMAR DARBOE [UPPER NIUMI]: Thank you so much, Honourable Speaker. I rise to second the motion. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Member for Upper Niumi. Honourable Members, it has been moved and seconded that the Bill entitled 'The National Food Security Cooperation Bill, 2026' having gone through the Consideration Stage with amendments be read a third time and passed.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[That the Bill entitled 'The National Food Security Cooperation Bill, 2026' having gone through the Consideration Stage with amendments be read a third time and passed.]

'The National Food Security Cooperation Bill, 2026' is hereby read a third time and deemed to have been passed.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Clerk. He just read the title of the Bill. The bill is deemed to have been passed now.

Clerk, may we proceed?

ii. **[Third Reading] The Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Bill, 2026** *[By the Honourable Minister of Gender, Children & Social Welfare stepping in for the Honourable Minister of Health]*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, you would recall that the Consideration Stage of the 'Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Bill, 2026'

was concluded on Tuesday, 17th March 2026. Accordingly, today is appointed for the Third Reading in accordance with Order 75.

I would, therefore, now invite the Honourable Minister of Gender, Children and Social Welfare, stepping in for the Honourable Minister of Health, to move a motion for the Third Reading of the Bill entitled 'Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Bill, 2026'. Honourable Minister.

HON FATOU SANYANG KINTEH [MINISTER OF GENDER, CHILDREN & SOCIAL WELFARE]: Thank you, Honourable Speaker. I move that the Bill entitled 'The Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Bill, 2026' having been considered with amendments be read a third time and passed. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Minister. Any seconder, Honourable Members? Honourable Member for Nianija.

HON AMADOU CAMARA [NIANIJA]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. I rise to second the motion.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Member for Nianija.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[That the Bill entitled 'Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Bill, 2026' having gone through the Consideration Stage with amendments be read a third time and passed.]

THE SPEAKER: Clerk, you can read the subtitle.

The subtitle of the Bill is ***'Civil Registration & Vital Statistics Bill, 2026'***.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Clerk and Honourable Members. The Bill is deemed to have been passed.

Clerk, may we proceed?

iii. **[Third Reading] The National Climate Change Bill, 2026** *[By the Honourable Minister of Environment, Climate Change & Natural Resources]*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, you would recall that the Consideration Stage of the National Climate Change Bill, 2026 was concluded on Monday, 16th March 2026. Accordingly, today is appointed for the Third Reading in accordance with Order 75.

Therefore, I will now invite the Honourable Minister of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources to move a motion for Third Reading of the Bill entitled 'National Climate Change Bill, 2026'. Honourable Minister.

HON ROHEY JOHN MANJANG [MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE & NATURAL RESOURCES]: Thank you, Honourable Speaker. I so move the motion that the Bill entitled 'The National Climate Change Bill, 2026' having been considered with amendments be read a third time and passed.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Minister. Any seconder, Honourable Members? Honourable Member for Banjul Central.

HON ABDOULIE NJAI [BANJUL CENTRAL]: I so second the motion, Honourable Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Member for Banjul Central.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[That the Bill entitled 'National Climate Change Bill, 2026' having gone through the Consideration Stage with amendments be read a third time and passed.]

THE SPEAKER: Clerk, read the sub title.

The subtitle of the Bill is '**National Climate Change Bill 2026'.**

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Clerk. Honourable Members, the Bill is deemed to have been passed now.

Clerk, may we proceed?

iv. **[Third Reading] The Gambia Integrated Coastal Zone Management Bill, 2026** *[By the Hon. Minister of Environment, Climate Change & Natural Resources]*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, you will recall that the Consideration Stage of the Gambia Integrated Coastal Zone Management Bill, 2026 was concluded on Monday, 9th March 2026. Accordingly, today is appointed for the Third Reading in accordance with Order 75.

Therefore, I will now invite the Honourable Minister of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources to move a motion for the Third Reading of the Bill entitled 'The Gambia Integrated Coastal Zone Management Bill, 2026'. Honourable Minister.

HON ROHEY JOHN MANJANG [MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE & NATURAL RESOURCES]: Thank you, Honourable Speaker. I so move the motion that the Bill entitled 'The Gambia Integrated Coastal Zone Management Bill, 2026' having been considered with amendments be read a third time and passed. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Minister. Any seconder, Honourable Members? Honourable Member for Wuli East.

HON SUWAIBOU TOURAY [WULI EAST]: Thank you, Honourable Speaker. I so second the motion. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Member for Wuli East.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[That the Bill entitled 'Gambia Integrated Coastal Zone Management Bill, *2026' having gone through the Consideration Stage with amendments be read a third time and passed.]*

THE SPEAKER: Clerk, may we proceed?

The subtitle of the Bill is '**The Integrated Coastal Zone Management Bill, 2026'**.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Members, the Bill is deemed to have passed.

HON ALHAGIE MBOW [UPPER SALOUM]: Motion!

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Member for Upper Saloum.

[Motion!]

HON ALHAGIE MBOW [UPPER SALOUM]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. I so move a motion without notice base on ***Order 68*** of the Standing Orders, which is called *'Committal of a Bill to a Committee'*. In ***Sub-order 3***, it says… I have to read ***Order 68[1]*** to be able to get it.

68[1] When a Bill has been read a second time, it shall stand referred to the Assembly Business Committee for committal to committee.

[2] Not later than three clear working days after the conclusion of the second reading, the Assembly Business Committee, on a motion without notice, shall commit a Bill so referred for detailed investigation and report by –

a. Select, Standing or Special Select Committee; or

b. Committee of the Whole Assembly.

The question thereon shall be put forthwith and decided without amendment or debate.

[3] Three clear working days after the conclusion of the second reading having elapsed, and the Assembly Business Committee not having moved a motion for the committal of a Bill referred to it, the person in charge of the bill so referred, or any Member may move a motion without notice for the Committal of that Bill to Committee for detailed investigation and report. The question thereon shall be put forthwith without amendment or debate.

So, on this particular order, I stand to move that the Bill entitled 'Communication Bill, 2025' be referred to the Committee of Education, Training and ICT for further investigation.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Honourable Member for Upper Saloum. Any seconder? You want us to make it all Saloums? Okay. Lower Saloum.

HON SAINEY JAWARA [LOWER SALOUM]: Thank you very much. I so second the motion.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Honourable Member for Lower Saloum.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[That as per Order 68[3] of our Standing Orders, the motion moved by the Honourable Member for Upper Saloum and was seconded, that the Bill entitled 'Communication Bill, 2025' be committed to the Committee of Education, ICT & Training.]

So, the Bill entitled 'The Communication Bill, 2025' is hereby committed to the Education Committee for consideration.

Honourable Members, let us proceed. Clerk, may we proceed?

5. **Motion in accordance with Standing Orders 54[1]**

i. **Motion for the Adjournment of the Assembly Session Sine die**

[By the Hon. Member for Kantora & Majority Leader]

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, in accordance with the provisions of Orders 13[5] and 54[1] of the Standing Orders, I will now allow the Honourable Member for Kantora and Majority Leader to move a motion for the Assembly to adjourn sine die.

But before doing so, I wish to draw the attention of the Assembly to Order 54[3] of the Standing Orders, which reads and I quote:

> *During the debate on the motion on the adjournment of a session, no Member shall speak for more than fifteen minutes except that the Speaker may at his or her discretion allow the mover of the motion extra time for his or her reply.*

I will, therefore, appeal to Honourable Members to take note of the said provisions of the Standing Orders regarding the adjournment debate.

Honourable Members, the debate is scheduled for only today. Meaning, we are to start and finish today. The stipulated time for the adjournment debate is a maximum of 15 minutes.

May I now invite the Honourable Member for Kantora and Majority Leader to move the motion for this Assembly to adjourn sine die. Honourable Majority Leader.

HON BILLAY G. TUNKARA [KANTORA & MAJORITY LEADER]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker, for giving me the floor.

Honourable Speaker, as per the agenda and calendar of this august Assembly from the period of 2nd March to today, 1st April 2026 that the Assembly be adjourned sine die pursuant to Section 98[1b] of the 1997 Constitution and in accordance with orders 13[5] and 54[1] of the Standing Orders, 2019.

Honourable Speaker, throughout the deliberations of this Assembly during the First Ordinary Session, the Assembly considered and adopted Records of Votes and Proceedings of its daily sittings as required by Order 35 of the Standing Orders.

Honourable Speaker, in fulfilment of Orders 48 and 94 of the Standing Orders, the Honourable Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs delivered a statement to the Assembly on implementation and monitoring of the annual budget.

I invite the Assembly to take note of the Oral Questions administered to His Excellency the Vice President and Honourable Ministers in accordance with Order 41 as it relates to their respective portfolios.

In particular, notice of the appearance of the following Members of the Cabinet are hereby as follows:

His Excellency the Vice President;

Honourable Minister of Finance & Economic Affairs;

Honourable Minister of Environment, Climate Change & Natural Resources;

Honourable Minister of Basic & Secondary Education;

Honourable Minister of Tourism, Arts & Culture;

Honourable Minister of Interior;

Honourable Minister of Lands, Regional Government & Religious Affairs;

Honourable Minister of Health;

Honourable Minister of Transport, Works & Infrastructure;

Honourable Minister of Petroleum & Energy;

Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Livestock & Food Security;

Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation & Gambians Abroad;

Honourable Minister of Defence;

And lastly Honourable Minister of Fisheries & Water Resources.

Honourable Speaker, the Assembly also considered statement delivered by Honourable Member for Foni Kansala on the cross-border conflicts, internal displacement, and protection of Gambian sovereignty in Foni border communities. On the matter of the day pursuant to Order 51 of the Standing Orders, the statement was delivered and deliberated on by Honourable Members in accordance with Order 51[7] of the Standing Orders.

Honourable Speaker, in compliance with Order 100 of the Standing Orders, the under mentioned Honourable Ministers formally presented responses to respective Assembly reports adopted by National Assembly and are as

follows: Ministers' reply on the Report of Joint Committee on Environment and Agriculture probing into the activity of transhumance in The Gambia by the Honourable Minister of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources and Honourable Minister of Interior. Also, Minister's reply on Report and Resolution of the National Assembly Petition Committee on petition from concerned staff of the Gambia Tourism Board by the Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Members, as regards to Bills, I call to remind this august Assembly to take notice that the following Bills were considered and passed during this Session:

- National Security Council [Amendment] Bill, 2026 *[By His Excellency the Vice President of the Republic]*;
- Intellectual Property Bill, 2025 *[By the Honourable Attorney General and Minister of Justice]*;
- The Gambia Integrated Coastal Zone Management Bill, 2026 *[By Honourable Minister of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources]*;
- The Gambia National Climate Change Bill, 2025 *[By the Honourable Minister of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources]*;
- Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Bill, 2026 *[By the Honourable Minister of Health]*;
- National Food Security Cooperation Bill, 2025 *[By the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Security]*.
- The Gambia Investment and Export Promotion Agency [Amendment] Bill, 2025 *[By the Honourable Minister of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment]*.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Members, the following reports of the undermentioned National Assembly Committees were considered and adopted:

- Report of Joint Committee on Public Accounts and Standing Committee on Human Rights on Prerogative of Mercy Bill, 2025 *[By the Co-Chairperson of the Joint Committee]*;
- Report of Select Committee on Agriculture's Study Visit to Sonaco's Ghana Processing Factories in Senegal *[By the Vice Chair of the Committee]*;
- Report of Select Committee on Regional Government, Lands, Ombudsman and IEC on its visit to the Parliament of the Republic of Senegal *[By the Chairperson of the Committee]*;
- Report of Select Committee on Environment, Sustainable Development and NGOs Affairs on National Environment Management Bill *[By the Vice Chair of the Committee]*;
- Report of Select Committee on Environment, Sustainable Development and NGOs Affairs on the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Bill, 2025 *[By the Vice Chair of the Committee]*;
- Report of Select Committee on Environment, Sustainable Development and NGOs Affairs on Waste Management Bill, 2025 *[By the Vice Chair of the Committee]*;
- Report of Select Committee on Environment, Sustainable Development and NGOs Affairs on The Gambia National Climate Change Bill, 2025 [By the Vice Chair of the Committee];
- Report of the Select Committee on Monitoring Government Projects' oversight visits to selected project sites across the country from April to May, 2025 *[By the Chairperson of the Committee]*.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Members, special recognition registered with the tabling and unanimous adoption of the ***Report of the Special Select Committee of the National Assembly*** established to inquire into the sales and disposals of the assets identified by the Commission of Enquiry into the financial activities of public bodies, enterprises and offices as regards to the dealings with former President Yahya A.J.J. Jammeh and connected matters *[By the Chairperson of the Special Committee]*. It shall reflect the Assembly's fidelity to the will of people committed and commitment to accountability and manifest a solid check and balance on Government.

Honourable Speaker, during the course of the Session, this august Assembly received and deliberated upon and/or duly adopted the following motions:

- Pursuant to Section 100[1] of the 1997 Constitution, motion to consider and reaffirm the Assembly's commitment to one China Policy *[By Honourable Sainey Jawara, Member for Lower Saloum]*;
- Pursuant to Section 100[1] of the 1997 Constitution, motion for resolution of the Gambian artefacts and sacred heritage removed during colonial rule with special attention to Salikenni Village *[By Honourable Sulayman Saho, Member for Central Baddibu and Minority Chief Whip]*;
- Pursuant to Section 79[c1] of 1997 Constitution, motion to consider and ratify the Gambian membership to Africa Mineral Strategic Group (AMSG) *[By the Honourable Minister of Petroleum and Energy]*;
- Pursuant to Section 77[1] of the 1997 Constitution and Order 24[1] of the Standing Orders, motion on the State of Nation Address 2026 *[By His Excellency the President of the Republic]*;

- Pursuant to Section 77[3] of the 1997 Constitution, debate on the State of the Nation Address, 2026 *[By His Excellency the Vice President of the Republic]*;
- Today, Honourable Speaker, Pursuant to Orders 13[5] and 54[1] of the Standing Orders, this present motion on the adjournment debate that this Assembly to stand adjourn sine die.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Members of the National Assembly, as we conclude this fruitful Session, it is an opportune time on behalf of both sides of the Assembly to reflect on course of this Assembly, especially in its commitment to serve the nation.

I thank all Honourable Members for your dedication to duty, especially your unshaken spirits to serve your electorates and ever ready to engage in dialogue and selfless contribution.

It is worthy to assure all people of this country that the Assembly remained resilient and will continue to effectively dispense its constitutional mandate and advance better strategies to ensure genuine scrutiny is always achieved in all sectors of our governance.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Members of the National Assembly, nation building is a responsibility of every one. And even when we disagree, we must still fulfil the mandate bestowed on us by working together and putting the country first.

In this same vein, I wish to continue urging all politicians, especially various political leaders including all of us in this august Assembly, to continue the approach of this election year with thoughtfulness and deep sense of responsibility towards our beloved country. I call on every one of us to remain diligent and well guided in our exchanges and especially in

our utterances. As many times, discussion and reiterate with a spirit of peace and civil engagement, debates and cooperation, all things are within reach.

Honourable Speaker, as we adjourn today, I wish to reassure our citizens that all matters raised or businesses considered in this Assembly were done in the best interest of every citizen of the country as a whole.

Honourable Speaker, on behalf of both sides of the Assembly, I seek the pleasure to express our honest appreciation to you for the firm, fair and deep sincerity in which you have presided over the proceedings of this Assembly throughout the Session. We extend the same appreciation to Honourable Deputy Speaker, for his noble role and support rendered in your absence.

I also wish to recognize and appreciate the Clerk of National Assembly, his Deputies, Table Office and the entire staff of National Assembly Service for their professionalism, attentiveness and unwavering support to all Members of the National Assembly in the execution of the legislative oversight responsibilities.

Honourable Speaker and Honourable Members of the National Assembly, as per Section 98[1b] of 1997 Constitution and in accordance with Orders 13[5] and 54[1] of the Standing Order 2019, I therefore beg to move that this honourable Assembly be adjourned sine die.

THE SPEAKER [*DEPUTY SPEAKER, HON. SEEDY S.K. NJIE, IN CHAIR***]:** Any seconder? The Member for Nianija.

HON AMADOU CAMARA [NIANIJA]: Honourable Speaker, thank you very much. I so second the motion, and I also want to take the opportunity

to take part in the debate. But before doing so, by consensus I just want to move that we limit the time for each Member to 7 minutes.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, the Honourable Member for Nianija moved a motion for Members to limit the debate to 7 minutes including himself. Any seconder? Member for Old Yundum and Deputy Majority Leader.

HON ABDOULIE CEESAY [OLD YUNDUM & DEPUTY MAJORITY LEADER]: Thank you, Honourable Speaker. I so second the motion.

[Question Proposed, Put, and Not Agreed to]

[That this Assembly limit the debate per Member to 7 minutes, including the mover of the motion; that is the seconder of the previous motion.]

THE SPEAKER: A division is called by one of the Honourable Members. Honourable Member for Nianija.

HON AMADOU CAMARA [NIANIJA]: Before we go into voting, let me amend my motion. let us make 10 minutes instead of 7 minutes,.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, Order, please! Honourable Members, we voted on the motion prior to its amendment. Therefore, that motion cannot be amended again. We only need a fresh motion. The Member for Nianija.

HON AMADOU CAMARA [NIANIJA]: Yes, you are right. Thank you very much. Then let me move another motion that will limit the time… *[Interrupted]* Allow me, please. I move that we limit the time to 10 minutes including my humble self.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, wait. Order! One of the Members from this end, on my right, call for a division. So, we have not exhausted that process. Let us exhaust that process. Honourable Members, Order! Those in favour of the motion to limit the debate to 7 minutes, please raise your tags. Those not in Favour for us to limit the motion to 7 minutes, raise your tags, and those abstaining. Order, Honourable Members from Pakala and Lower Saloum.

Honourable Members, the results are as follows: 'Ayes' [6], 'Nos' [25], and Abstentions [0]. Therefore, the motion is lost. Yes, Member for Nianija.

HON AMADOU CAMARA [NIANIJA]: Thank you. Still on the procedure, before I continue on my intervention, I move again that we limit the time to 10 minutes.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, any seconder? The Member for Sabach Sanjal.

HON ALHAGIE BABOU CEESAY [SABACH SANJAL]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. I so second the motion.

THE SPEAKER: The motion has been moved and seconded, so I now put the question.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[That we limit the time for debate on the adjournment to 10 minutes.]

HON ESSA CONTEH [JIMARA]: Division!

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, there is a division called by the Member for Jimara. Order, Honourable Members. He is within his rights.

Order, Honourable Members. Order, please! Honourable Member, Order! Even you are distracting and disturbing…

[Question Proposed Put, and Agree to]

[That we limit the time for debate on the adjournment to 10 minutes.]

Honourable Members, thank you. On your behalf, I want to welcome His Excellency the Vice President, Mr. Muhammad B.S. Jallow, alongside the Cabinet Ministers, that of Basic and Secondary Education, Environment and Climate Change, Trade and Industry, and as well as Communication and Digital Economy, and of course, technicians. So, you are most welcome. The Honourable Member for Nianija, please continue.

HON AMADOU CAMARA [NIANIJA]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. I also want to thank the Office of the Speaker and the Office of the Clerk and, of course, the entire leadership of National Assembly, Majority and Minority. I also want to welcome the Vice President and members of the Executive; the various Ministers present here.

Honourable Speaker, it is adjournment debate, but first I would start with the national issues then go specific to my Constituency. First of all, we have witnessed last week the State of the Nation Address delivered by His Excellency the President, which was very detailed and, of course, with a lot of rich text in it and a lot of positive outputs as far as the Government is concerned.

For us in Nianija and, of course, other parts of the country, we are living witnesses and we can testify to the fact that this Government is by the people, and it is here for the people. Because if you look at the state of The Gambia today, yesterday and even before yesterday, there are

noticeable differences. These are facts. No matter how much probably you do not want to support or do not support this Government, but this Government has proven beyond reasonable doubt that it is here for the people because it is delivering for the people.

You see, if you go to Nianija today, I can tell you that it is a fact. For those who normally frequent Nianija, if you go there, just go to a Bantaba and tell them. Let me say it in Fula with your permission, Honourable Speaker. If you go to any Bantaba and tell them *'lamu Adama Barrow wana hail dara'*, *'Ngurri Adama Barrow nekut dara'* if you are not careful, you will not leave here alive. I can tell you because the reasons are there physical. There has been the first regime here, of course, the second regime, but Nianija started realizing what we call Government in the Government of Adama Barrow.

If you go to the entire communities, you see electricity talk less of the roads. Of course, if you go to health, the health centre is coming. If you go to education starting from Chamen to Palen, Buduck, Sinchu Alasan, Mbayen Burama, Jailan Bakadaji, all these have new structures. And this is something which we have been yearning for, but we have never had until now.

You see, in 2017, when the President went there and in his speech, I quote: "I was even lost entering here; I thought I am going to the cattle because the moment you enter Nianija, the only thing you would be seeing is cow dung". But today, if you go, you do not see cow dung, you will see what they called *'godorong'*. You see *'godorong'* and electric poles. So, we are very thankful to this Government as it is here for the people. And that is a fact.

Honourable Speaker, moving on to peace and security, if you look at Paragraph 142 of his address, he mentioned that election is coming and it is the responsibility of every Gambian, especially us as Members of the National Assembly, to make sure we preach and nurture peace. We might have our political differences, but that does not mean we should incite violence or instigate people to antagonize other people and so on. That is not election because we all know what we have done to be here. Had there be violence, none of us would be here.

So, let us preach peace and make sure we observe this election in peace. And as we know, the winner is already known. It is a fact. So, let us campaign and do the election in peace, and the winner will continue to be the winner.

Honourable Speaker, moving on to Nianija, I have just mentioned briefly that we have our road, and we are thankful, but there are just few roads which need to be adjusted. We are definitely interested in the stretch starting from Chamen going via Paleng to Buduck. You know if you have nothing, you will want to have something. But if you have something, you will want to have something more. So, that is the situation we are in now.

We need the road to be tarred like a main road. And, of course, the road from Nyanga Bantang to Jailan Bakadaji is also very important because we have very important communities inside. So, these two are the roads we need, and we need the attention of the Government on that.

Your Excellency the Vice President, please take note that we need these roads. Once we have then, please do not even consider Nianija anymore if you have any road project because once we have it, we are okay.

On the side of electricity, I would not comment because we have some few villages which are yet to be electrified, including my own village. I am always proud to say that my own village is not yet electrified. But we have already seen that the tenders are going on; everything is going on. So, before the end of 2026, there will be universal access to electricity in The Gambia, and that is a fact, everybody knows that. We will be among the first countries in Africa to have universal access to electricity. So, I think that is a big plus to the Government.

Honourable Speaker, moving on to education. I have to make a special emphasis on this one. I want to thank the Minister of Basic and Secondary Education and, of course, the Minister of Higher Education. These two Ministers are very exceptional, proactive and pragmatic in their ways of dealing with their Ministries' issues. You always see them visiting schools making sure that actually the policies they have in place at the level of their Ministries are being implemented at the grassroot level.

So, Honourable Ministers, we want to thank you. Please, keep it up. We want Ministers like you and, of course, like all other Ministers. But this is a special time because this is the area I am talking about. And of course, the Minister of Higher Education is also very exceptional. Today, if you go to the University, some of us who are pursuing some courses there can attest that Majority of the students are on scholarships, and this is all done by the proactiveness of this Minister and, of course, the Government by far. So, we want to thank you. Please, keep it up and be assured of our support as far as the National Assembly is concerned.

Honourable Speaker, last but certainly not least is our Nianija 'faros'. This is something we always talk about, and since 2017, we have been talking

about the same issue. We understand there are many agricultural projects focusing on rice irrigation or rice cultivation and so on. But our case is a special issue because it is not like an upland rice cultivation where you do irrigation and so on. These are 'faros', swampy areas.

So, it is not like you demarcate it or whatever; the only thing we need is access road. I know it is difficult; it might be expensive and so on, but we need access to these faros. You see from where the swamps start up to the river is all water.

So, now if you have your piece of land around the river, to access that land is a problem. And you see women crossing lakes and even deep waters to access those faros. So, it is something we beg the Government to consider. I do not know how it can be done, but I know certainly it can be done in one way or the other. But actually, it is a different whole case scenario as this upland irrigation is happening.

So, it is something we are very interested in because we have faros ranging from Chamen down to Jailan Bakadaji. Each community has its own faros, but they have not actually single routes but main routes. Once these routes are made motorable, and we do not actually need these good roads to access these faros. We need just simple roads whereby you will put maybe gravel for people to walk on and use their donkey or horse carts to go into the forest, so not actually vehicles and so on.

Honourable Speaker, these are the issues that I have. I also want to reiterate thanking the Offices of the Speaker, the Clerk, Majority and Minority Leaders, and all Members. Let us keep up the spirit. We are in an election year. Like I said, let us not antagonize each other as we are colleagues, and we will continue to campaign. We will continue to sell the

agendas of our various political ideologies. But Insha'Allah, we all know and the facts are there. Come December, we all know what will happen. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Member for Nianija.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[That this Assembly do consider the Motion for this Ordinary Session to stand adjourn sine die.]

Honourable Members, any Member who wishes to take part in the debate may do so by show of tags. And of course, many of you made it to my list. In fact, we have forest of you here. Now, we will begin the debate with the Member for Jokadu.

HON SALIFU JAWO [JOKADU]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker, for giving me the floor. Let me first of all welcome the Vice President and all the other honourable Cabinet Ministers here in present.

Honourable Speaker, I fully concur with the previous speaker; that is the Member for Nianija. Let us begin the celebration now. Come December 5th, 'Insha'Allah', His Excellency President Adama Barrow will be back to State House because the facts are already there as he highlighted. The developments that His Excellency and his Government are currently embarking on within the length and breadth of this country are things that we can all see. These are facts that are not hidden.

As we are speaking now, he is currently touring the country; doing what? Laying foundation stones to construct roads for the people of this country, and those roads were so bad, unmotorable especially during the rainy season. But currently these 204 kilometres roads are all going to connect

communities and farms so that when people harvest their produce, they will ply these roads easily and then get to markets or back to their homes without any difficulty.

When it comes to electricity as the Member for Nianija highlighted, more than 90% of the Gambian communities are now on electricity, which is something very commendable. Honestly, it is very commendable, Honourable. We are not even thinking about it now. Thanks to His Excellency the President and his innovation, this dream has come true, and 'insha'Allah', the rest are also on the pipeline. It is going to be 100% before end of this year, 'insha'Allah'. Honourable Speaker, all the sectors are progressing. So, I think we should all rally behind this Government to see that The Gambia moves forward.

Honourable Speaker, when it comes to roads, just recently in the Jokadu, the road linking Kuntaya, Kerr Amadou and Kerr Omar Saine is under construction. But I am still appealing to the Honourable Minister of Works that there is another very important road in the northern part of Lower Niumi connecting to Jokadu, just like the Hakalang road that connects the southern part of Upper Niumi and Jokadu. This road connects starting from Fass Njaga Choi to Kerr Jane then to Bali Mandinka, and then connects the main highway at Dasilami.

That route is a very important road connection, which we were even having a bus service in the late 80s and early 90s. But because of its dilapidated and unmotorable state now, all those opportunities have stopped. And I am appealing to the Honourable Minister to at least consider that very important road for us in the anticipated 700 kilometres road that need to be constructed in the country.

Honourable Speaker, health also, in my area since independence we were having only one health centre in Kuntaya. And so, the communities in the interior were finding it very difficult to access health services. But thanks to the Government and the Honourable Minister of Health, we have another health facility, very modern one, in a community called Cheesaymajaw. So, the interior also is lucky now because the communities are not very far. All those communities around that end are not very far from Cheesaymajaw. So, they can access Cheesaymajaw easily. So, that is a very big plus for us. And then there is another anticipated also health post that needs to be constructed in Medina Madum called Bantanding Wolof. Now, I am also just appealing to the Honourable Minister for them to fast track so that that health post also is constructed.

Now when it comes to safe clean drinking water, there are community boreholes dug under the Minister of Fisheries. But in my area, boreholes are already dug, but still now the work is not completed. So, I want the Honourable Minister to take note so that those boreholes can be completed now.

Honourable Speaker, when it comes to security, I have a post in Kuntaya and also another one in Kerr Jane, but there is another community in the far end of the other side called Kerr Alhagie Malick. So, I am appealing to the Interior Minister for that place to also have a very good security post because it is at the border and then theft cases normally happen there. But if those two communities at the borderline have this security post, I think it will reduce so many risks. So, I want the Honourable Minister of Interior to also take note of that.

So, on that note, Honourable Speaker, I thank you very much for giving me the floor. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Member for Jokadu. I now give the floor to the Member for Upper Saloum.

HON ALHAGIE MBOW [UPPER SALOUM]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. And thank you very much His Excellency the Vice President and all the Cabinet Ministers and their technicians for coming this morning to listen to the issues that we intend to raise concerning our own people, our constituencies, and also The Gambia at large.

Honourable Speaker, I would start first with the issue of access roads in Upper Saloum. Tremendous efforts have been made because the longest road that was never done since God created earth is from Kerr Gibi all the way to Nianija through Chamen, the Deputy Speaker's own place. We want to say thank God; this current Government actually has fixed that road, which is almost over 30 kilometres.

And if you live in that area, politics aside, sentiments aside, you will really understand how the people actually suffered since God created Gambia. You have a stretch that goes close to over 50 villages from Upper Saloum connecting Nianija and Niani. And everything that you see is not even these red stones [gravel], everything is just sand and the worst is when it rains.

But now, we feel very comfortable to pass through because the road is constructed; the waterways actually are fixed, so you want to say thank. You know, even Allah teaches us that when He provide something good for us, we should thank Him so that He can provide more. And I stand here to

say thank you to the Government of The Gambia for providing such to our people.

And let us be very careful here, Honourable Speaker. You know, when you say that, they say 'no' it is their responsibility because it is public fund. Even a small child understands that, but the issue is there are different priorities of Government. Government cannot do every single thing in every corner of The Gambia. It is impossible. But when there is a priority in your area, I think it makes a lot of sense to say thank you.

We are not thanking you because you take money from your pocket, no, but because of your priority in our own area. You put priority in our own people; that is what we are thanking. The money belongs to all of us, but can the money be provided to every person, every corner of this country? The answer is no.

So, this is exactly where prioritization comes in, and even our own self, in our own homes, we prioritize. We cannot provide everything for our families, so we prioritize. So, when something is prioritized, I think it makes a lot of sense to say thank you for the person that has done that.

Now, when this road was constructed, Honourable Speaker, at the time we were made to understand that some access roads also would be provided. And in fact, I made a personal call, and I was informed at the time that some access roads will be provided like some 2 to 3 kilometres joining the road, but that is yet to be done. I want to call the Minister of Transport to take note of an access road from Kerr Gibi going to Jarring Abdoulie Leigh, from Kerr Gibi going to Mbayen, from Kerr Gibi going to Mbambara and Kenne Kenne because even though the road is constructed, but access to those villages is an issue until today. So, let us work to support them to

ensure that everything is actually inclusive because to get to the road is still a problem, but the majority of them actually are on it.

The second aspect of access to roads, Honourable Speaker, is the issue of access to rice fields. You know, when people say that the fresh water is everywhere in The Gambia, sometimes, I said, maybe you have not gone across every part of The Gambia. In the sight of Upper Saloum, it will take you some kilometres to get access. So, what we have is salt water. Salt intrusion is what we have. The salt intrusion is the reason why we cannot do any rice farming during the dry season. Right now, if you go to the riverbanks, you will see trees actually dying because of the salt intrusion.

So, our women and men have to actually cross to travel almost 3 to 5 kilometres to be able to have access to that fresh water so that they can do farming. And it is very difficult. You see some videos circulating a few days ago; that is exactly what is happening in Upper Saloum as well.

So, what we are saying is help us with access to the fresh water, and we will do the work. We are not asking for anything else. Do the roads for us and we do the work,

And to do that, Honourable Speaker, you look at access roads from Jareng, they have a lot of faros from Fardu. From Dukuro they have them, but it takes only like 3 kilometres but to go there is a big issue. Then you go to Bantanto as well, Pakala Waff, Dantasala, the same thing from 3 to 5 kilometres. That is the only issue we have. Give us access, we do the work. And you go to Bati also, the faros going to Hanseru about 5 kilometres is all we are asking for.

And I want to ask the Minister of Agriculture to take a look at that area. I will be personally going there myself to make an official handing over of

those areas. Go and check. Help our people and help the nation. If you do that, we do not need to buy.

Honourable Speaker, to move on, the Saloums and the Nianijas, you know our areas were always at the back regarding all economic indicators from water, electricity, road network, you name it, but there is tremendous improvement.

I also want to thank, Honourable Speaker, the Minister of Water Resources for the tremendous efforts they have done to supply water in our area. Now, if I count on top of my head, I can give you 34 different communities where Government intervention has gone in terms of water supply. That tells you a lot. In the past 3 or 4 years, Government has actually intervened in more than 35 different communities out of 83 villages; from the Government intervention, from the Ministry, from the CDF, from His Excellency Adama Barrow himself, from Honourable Hamat Bah, and from myself. We have covered more than 35 different communities.

But still we have a gap, and that is the reason we say when somebody does good, you say it. I have not seen the Minister here, but I just want to say thank you both the previous and the current Minister for the intervention is very good even though we have gaps, and I understand the Government cannot provide for everybody. I do understand that, but we still have gaps in that area. And I would say those gaps with the Ministry so that they can actually intervene in those particular areas.

Honourable Speaker, what I would also suggest in that area is water. I know it is difficult, but I think there needs to be a proper mapping of the water issues across the country, and let us see what we can do together: Minister of Finance, Minister of Water Resources, and the National

Assembly to close these gaps. When we do the mapping, we will be able to do costing; how much is it going to cost, just like what we are doing with the road network right now. We are using our own money to construct roads most of the time. So, let us do the same thing for water. For that to happen, let us map it and also understand how much it will cost. And then we will do our best to do that.

And the last intervention, Honourable Speaker, I have is about the issue of the National Roads Authority created by an Act of the National Assembly in 2002, 2003 thereabout. The only thing they asked it to do for the most part is road maintenance etc.

Honourable Speaker, by my own estimates for the past 5 or 6 years, the amount of money that the Government actually has spent on road construction is ***over 10 billion***. And most of the 10 billion is given to non-government companies. I said this a few weeks ago, and I am going to repeat this again. We must like ourselves. If we take 10 million and give it to a foreign company, they will do the work. But most [80 or 90%] of that money, I can tell you, will be funnelled outside The Gambia. And to do that, you need Dollar, Euro or Pound Sterling, and that will cause a strain on our own Dalasi.

Let us equip our own institutions. You know, in many countries you have the Army Corps of Engineers, the Police engineers, but why can we not see what we can do together; National Roads Authority, the Police, the Army. Let us create something and give them our own money to construct. In that case, whatever we are going to pay is going to be in Dalasi, and that will cause less strain on our Dalasi.

All this money we are paying to non-government companies, … You know, I do not hate anybody, I do not hate any company, but I love The Gambia more than anywhere. I love my country more than any other country in this world, and that is why I am saying we need to reflect and take a look at the activities of the National Roads Authority.

Let us equip them. Let us equip the Army; let us equip the Police; we have engineers. In fact, let us equip even USET, that is GTTI. They are producing barbed wire; there is a lot. They can do together. Why can we not provide them with the finances? If we have to change the laws, please, let us change the laws, both the NRA Act and the GPPA Act. If we have to change, let us change it. Let us support our Gambia because there is no place better than our own. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: The Member for Upper Saloum, thank you very much. I now recognize the Member for Jeshwang. Jeshwang, you have the floor.

HON SHERIFF SARR [JESHWANG]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. First of all, I thank the Head of State for his State of the Nation Address, and I would also thank the Offices of the Speaker, Deputy Speaker, the Clerk and the support staff of the National Assembly for a job well done during this Session. Honourable Speaker, I would very much thank the Vice President and his Ministers for always answering to our call.

First of all, Honourable Speaker, I would talk about peace because we are talking about development, and development cannot happen without peace. So, I am appealing to all of us to maintain peace, preach peace and discuss peace in any level that we are because this is year 2026 which is an election year. And we know in election year everything comes across. People are angry; people go beyond their lines; people act as Jolas and

some act as Fulas. Let us control our tempers and know that it is only one day. We will discuss. We have a day to go. It is only a single day; that is the end. So, let us preach and discuss peace so that this development can continue.

Honourable Speaker, coming to my area, Jeshwang, we thank the Government of the day for providing us with roads. Thank you very much, but we still need more. Honourable Speaker, there are many critical roads in those areas. The Sankung Sillah road is very critical, and it connects Sankung Sillah, inside New Jeshwang area that leads to Ebo Town, Tallinding and then Abuko. Those concrete roads are very key. You go to Babung Fatty road; it is also very key. These are crucial.

Definitely, we need Government to take its stand to make sure that these roads are also part of the approved roads coming up for KMC.

Honourable Speaker, on the same issue of roads, there is a road in Kanifing South linking the back-way road which is also very important, Honourable Speaker, because it is being used by many private vehicles going to Bakau. That road is very key in Kanifing South, and also the road around the Kanifing South Main Mosque that goes to the Kairaba Avenue. These roads also need to be fixed.

And also, in pipeline, the road behind the French High School that goes to the Main Pipeline Highway is a cause of concern. So, we are appealing to Government to also put these roads into consideration when approving feasibility study so that they can be part of ongoing road projects that will happen in the coming years.

Honourable Speaker, there also is a construct road in Kanifing Layout that leads to Mbowen Clinic. That one also is very important. So, we are also appealing to the Government to see what they can do on that road.

Coming to the Old Jeshwang, currently the road linking Kanifing Estate and Jeshwang behind GTTI is not in a good state, and Government needs to act to see how best they can help us to take care of that road.

In Kanifing Estate also, the road within the D Block linking the C Block is a cause of concern. It has been there for years, and it is still the same road, just like those roads in Nianija; those roads that link Nianija and Chamen before the current roads. That road is still like that, and Kanifing Estate is next to the capital. So, I am appealing that instead of Nianija, let us go back to Kanifing Estate.

Honourable Speaker, I think I have discussed this particular land issue here. The Minister and the Vice President are here. Roads are built in Jeshwang Constituency. You see, Ebo Town and New Jeshwang areas are developed and the roads are constructed in that area, but the wetland is a concern. There was a time I went there together with the Vice President and also the Minister to look at the situation on the ground.

But, Honourable Speaker, the situation still remained the same or even getting worse. People are still dumping; people are still building, and they will fill those buildings with waste materials, and the next minute, they start constructing. And those areas I have been fighting every day. There is an association in Ebo Town called Youth Development Association. They are doing a very good job, but every day they fight with neighbours that are doing it deliberately. They would go outside, bring in waste materials and dump them into the riverside and then start construction.

The Minister was there; we went there. They were warned but up till now it does not stop. So, I think Government should take a stand now. And then as the rainy season approaches, what are we expecting as far as these roads are constructed already? We might expect a lot of flooding because the roads are already. Okay.

So, that means, the water is leading to the river. And if the river is blocked, the water bounces or comes back to the community. And then people would start complaining that the road that was given to us is not good. It is not to our advantage because we have started realizing flooding.

So, steps need to be taken. Let us do the needful. This wetland area from Old Jeshwang linking to Ebo Town towards New Jeshwang is getting worse. People are still consulting, but they do not care and most of these people are not Gambians; they are foreigners.

So, Honourable Vice President, I am please appealing to the Government through you to take a stand. We should go back there again and do the needful. I mean, at times we compromise. When we were there, we were threatened. I was there with Honourable Minister and my wife. We were threatened that they are not going to vote for us. But it was very clear that if they want to vote, let they vote, but let us do what is right. They cannot threaten us with votes. If at all they are affected tomorrow, we will be called again to say they have not been cared for.

So, if they call us to say that they are not being care for, let us do the needful. So, I think it is time we go back to those areas and evict them with immediate effect. If not, there will be a problem during this rain season.

Honourable Speaker, before I land, I would come to the war between Israel, America and Iran. Honourable Speaker, it is time we act as a government. I know Government is doing its best, but it is definitely terrifying and inhuman to see what Israel and Americans are doing to the Palestinians. You see, what these people are doing to innocent young ones is inhuman. A school was bombarded where innocent children were going to school. What comes out of it? Nothing.

Last week, Israelis passed a law in their Parliament. What did they pass? Death penalty. They were celebrating it inside the Parliament with their champagne bottles. And what are the human rights organizations saying? Nothing, absolutely. But if it were passed in The Gambia, they would sanction us as a Parliament.

Honourable Speaker, it is time we stand as a nation. It is time we stand as an Ummah. These are our Ummah. We are Muslims and this call this very clear we are Muslims. There are Christians among us who are also suffering. It is not fair. In the month of Ramadan, you would see people struggling to look for what to take to break their fast. They cannot take or do it because every day they have been bombed. They have been sent home forcefully or asked to leave their homes.

By who? A single nation wants to control the whole gulf, and nobody talks about it. It is really unfair; it is not fair. America is doing the same under the leadership of the so-called Donald Trump. Who is he? Is he not a human being like us? He has your powers. We also have our powers. And 'wallahi' Allah will judge. It is very clear in the Quran that Palestine will win, and they will certainly win. 'Insha'Allah', they will win. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for… Order! Thank you, Member for Jeshwang and my son for that contribution. I now invite, … Of course, my son, I hope the Minister of Works and the President will not hear you said Nianija has everything now. Thank you because you want more. The Member for Niamina West, you have the floor.

HON BIROM SOWE [NIAMINA WEST]: Thank you very much, Speaker. I would join my colleagues today in the debate on adjournment sine die. I thank Honourable Speaker, the Clerk, the Vice President and his Cabinet team here present. Of course, I also have to thank the President of the Republic. I would also thank the Table Office for sparing our times because I have observed that we do not spend much time on corrections of the records of votes for the past two sittings. So, thank you very much. But nonetheless, on the questions, let them please screen/vet and refer questions that may not be fitting before they are presented in front of us.

I would come straight to Niamina West. Honourable Speaker, my Constituency and my people are very dear to me. Like one of my colleagues would always say, thank you to my people for electing me and for representing them here.

On the electricity in Niamina West, we felt the presence of the common announced electricity, but we have a little concern because as at now only from Choya to Sambang is electrified. When it comes to the northern side, from Dalaba to Jawlaba [commonly known as Baba Balla] is yet to have light, but everything is put in place.

I just want to notify the Minister that the transmitter in Dalaba is still not put on. I do not know the reason, but the light from Choya to Sambang

and other from Dalaba to Jawlaba should have come together at once. We do not know why the light from Dalaba to Jawlaba is still now not on.

And there is no pole yet on the right side of the constituency coming from Jarra Soma end or Basse. There is no electricity and no wire. So, we need to know when it will be on. I just called this morning to find out, but I was told that the poles have just reached Kerr Katim, where they are parked. I think very soon action will commence, but we want to be updated on this issue.

When it comes to education, 'Alhamdulillah', like one of the Members here praised the two Ministries. In fact, it is the reality; the Ministry is doing a lot in my constituency. Before I came to the National Assembly, we did not have any Senior Secondary School. But now Sambang Senior Secondary School has graduated a batch last year.

Also, Dalaba Lower Basic School is being upgraded last year to a Basic Cycle School with a big computer lab installed, and it was inaugurated and opened by His Excellency President Adama Barrow. In that case, Mr. Speaker, we are saying a big thank you to the Minister, the President and the sitting Government. We are very much proud and happy when it comes to the education sector in Niamina West.

I want to put to the Minister that Dalaba Basic Cycle School needs an ICT teacher that will take care of that lab. I also want to put to the Minister that Jawlaba School is also not yet taken care of as there is no fence, no water, and no staff quarters. I just spoke to the head teacher, and he told me that these are their concerns, if you could please help.

In the same vein, we would also want the school in Kerr Malima, officially known as Jamugen Lower Basic for your own understanding, to be fenced

since it is not yet fenced. There is water, but we need a better staff quarter. Yes, Jawlaba and Kerr Malima Schools are the two schools that are not yet fenced. However, for schools in Sofaniama, Mount Camel, Dalaba and the Upper Basic in Sambang are definitely well taken care of. They are upgraded with new structures and staff quarters. We said thank you.

When it comes to agriculture, Mr. Speaker, I think CRR Corridor is well known for rice production, especially CRR South. And this area that I am talking about, the Niaminas especially from Mali Kunda faros to Sambang and Dankungku, is well known for rice cultivation in the 80s to the 90s, except for those who did not know.

In fact, I could remember in those days many people would come from other areas like the Niumis, the Fonis and some guys from Futa to help harvest our rice. Then there were no harvesting machines. But now that the Ministry of Agriculture is having such machines, they should come to our aid. They should come and inspect.

Like my colleague Member for Upper Saloum said, let them come and inspect this area. Let them come and do mapping. Once they help us with this ground work on the faros, we will be able to produce a lot of grains that we can feed on, and we may not depend on importation of those grains.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing now will be the issue of littering. We have anti-littering regulations, but we are still not adhering to that. I would have loved my city, my town, my village, my home and every Gambian to practice it. I would want my city to be very clean.

So, I come across a lot of littering around, on the roads, on the riversides, any other side. I would recommend that the Minister try to come back with

this ‘set-setal’ issue that we have been embarking on. It is very important. I travel to other cities; I see how clean they are. I would have loved this to be emphasized.

I would also commend the Government for trying to mitigate irregular migration, which is very difficult. I commend the Marines for stopping some of the people around 51 at Pirang on 27th March 2026. I commend them for that. So, let the Ministry of Interior help the Marines and the Police to be going around and be vigilant about irregular migration.

And also, we, the parents, should be very vigilant at our houses, at our homes. We should monitor our kids and the youths. Once your child went out and after one hour, you did not see; you should find out. But some of us would not find out, and before you realize he crossed borders.

His Excellency said it in one of his outings that we are responsible and definitely stringent measures should be taken upon parents and friends who sponsor or whatsoever. If it is found that you sponsor a trip, you should be dealt with because this back-way issue is very bad no matter what, and I do not encourage it. Family called me to support, I said no to that. I am not a fan of back-way.

I would also commend the Government for coming with the Mansa Kunda programmes on TV and radio talks. It is very important to sensitize the public on Government policies and what the Government is doing.

And also, it is very, very important that the Ministers are engaged on that talk show. I applaud them for the ‘MyGov Platform’ where ID cards and many other things like the hospitals are discussed. Basically, digitalization is very important. Most of the revenues now we are having is because of this digitalization.

Finally, I would want to know when our Niamina West road will commence. That is my question to the Ministry and the Government at large. We did not enjoy any road for now. We are hoping, but we want know when we will see our foundation stone being laid.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Niamina West. The Member for Banjul Central, you have the floor. Member for Illiassa.

HON SANKUNG DAMPHA [ILLIASSA]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker, for giving me the floor.

Honourable Speaker, let me first recognize the presence of His Excellency, the Vice President and the Ministers presence here and their technicians as well.

Honourable Speaker, let me profoundly thank the high offices of the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker for your professionalism and dedication. So far, you had a lot of challenges, but you were able to tackle these challenges professionally. I thank you so much for that.

Honourable Speaker, let me thank His Excellency the President, Adama Barrow, for always advising his followers to be tolerant and God fearing. Honourable Speaker, he further advises his followers to be committed and also have love for their country. Honourable Speaker, there is an idiom: "A bird in hand is worth two in the bush". So, the bird in our hands today is His Excellency Adama Barrow. Adama Barrow is a person we know; he definitely has the interest of this country at heart. So, we dare not to change Adama Barrow with anybody in this country.

Honourable Speaker, let me thank the Government of The Gambia through the Ministry of Water Resources for providing clean and safe drinking water for the following villages in Illiassa Constituency, namely Ngerr Angaleh…

THE SPEAKER: There is a Point of Order by the Member for Wuli East. Can we hear the Point of Order, sir?

[Point of Order]

HON SUWAIBOU TOURAY [WULI EAST]: Honourable Speaker, I am rising on Order 29[6]: *"The name of the President of the Republic of The Gambia shall not be used to influence the Assembly."* So, it is not proper to be mentioning Adama Barrow, Adama Barrow. You are not in a campaign field. So, let us limit ourselves to the Assembly.

THE SPEAKER: Order! Honourable Members. Honourable Member for… can you put off your mic? 29[6], *"The name of the President of the Republic of The Gambia shall not be used to influence the Assembly."* And in this instance, we are on adjournment debate; Member's debate is within the earth and the heaven, no limit.

And this Order may be applicable when there is a matter before Assembly and Members are debating to influence votes and then use the name of the President to influence Members, to sway them. But in this case, it is wrong. The Honourable Member for Illiassa is appreciating the Government of President Adama Barrow. And it has nothing to influence Members of the National Assembly because we are not going to vote on anything. There is no piece of legislation or motion.

No, you are out of order. No, no, no. Member, continue.

HON SANKUNG DAMPHA [ILLIASSA]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker, for that wonderful ruling. Honourable Speaker, let me just continue.

Honourable Speaker, as I said, let me thank the Government of The Gambia through the Ministry of Water Resources for providing clean and safe drinking water for the following villages: Ngerr Angaleh, Jerry-kaw Misira, Jerry-kaw Fula and Jerry-kaw Wollof.

But still, Honourable Speaker, I want to make an appeal. In Illiassa Constituency, there are still two dug boreholes in Balingo and Die Mandinka Villages which are not yet fixed. I would definitely be very happy if the Ministry of Water Resources consider fixing these boreholes so that my people can also have clean and safe drinking water.

Honourable Speaker, I want to thank the Government through the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure for identifying three important roads to be constructed in Illiassa Constituency. These roads are Illiassa via Jumansarr to Kachang village. Also, Yalal Tankonjala via Mbanta, Youna Angaleh, Kerr Ndongo, Talia, Jerry-kaw to India at the main junction. Again, Makka Farafenni Junction via Makka Farafenni to Lansarr village. The people of Illiassa Constituency are definitely very much happy to have these roads. So, thank you very much, the President of the Republic of The Gambia.

Again, Honourable Speaker, double thanks to the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy for the tremendous job that the Ministry is currently embarking on; that is, to electrify the whole country, big and small villages. So, definitely this Ministry and the Government should be thanked for that effort.

Again, Honourable Speaker, I would say the Ministry of Agriculture is unique in terms of changing the life and livelihood of Gambian farmers. So,

I thank you the Ministry so much for definitely providing farmers with enough modern equipment so far.

To conclude, Honourable Speaker, let me say big thanks to His Excellency for providing Gambians what we need. I pray to the Almighty Allah to grant His Excellency long life, good health and prosperity. Honourable Speaker, I pray from the bottom of my heart. As we are approaching December Presidential Election, all I want is for the President to have a landslide victory in that election.

Honourable Speaker, I thank you very much for giving me the floor.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. The Member for Banjul Central, you can have the floor now. Thank you, Member for Illiassa. Member for Banjul Central, the floor is yours.

HON ABDOULIE NJAI [BANJUL CENTRAL]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. We would like to acknowledge the presence of His Excellency the Vice President and all Cabinet Ministers here present as well as the support staff here present as well. I would like to thank the Government of The Gambia.

Honourable Speaker, I would first and foremost like to start with a few constituency issues. I remember standing here in the National Assembly multiple times complaining the issue of our water quality.

Some two years ago, I and some other Members of the Committee conducted a water quality survey which was really a big issue within the Constituency because people would turn on their taps and be seeing certain particles, among other things. Sometimes, the water would change colour and stuff like that, so it was quite alarming. Most of the residents do

not have the means to frequently go to shops to buy sterilized mineral water. So, it was quite concerning and I would also like to thank the PEC Committee for according us that courtesy to conduct that survey.

Honourable Speaker, as representative, we have been echoing here in the hallowed Chambers as to what exactly the Ministry would do to make sure that at least these things are remedied. So, I wish the Honourable Minister of Petroleum were here as he promised that it was included in the Greater Banjul Water Quality Project, and that was actually done because currently we have seen that construction has been ongoing. So, it would be good to have an update as to exactly how far it is, and when we expect to have our water tank ready for use.

Honourable Speaker, I would also like to echo the issue of the National Museum in Banjul. Our national museum is dilapidated; it is obsolete as most of the areas within the confinement of the Museum cannot even be reached by visitors. Usually the museum guide or guides would just stand in certain areas and just explain exactly to visitors what historical artefacts are in a particular place without even being able to reach that particular place basically. So, there is a barrier due to some issues related to the obsolete or old confinements which prevent people from reaching certain areas basically. And as a national museum of this country, I think we deserve better.

The Honourable Minister of Tourism had mentioned here some time ago that he was trying to work with some counterparts to make sure that we are able to have a state-of-the-art museum that at least we will be proud of. So, I wish he were also here to give us an update on that. This is also

very important not only for Banjulians but for The Gambia at large because it will help both foreign tourism and domestic tourism.

Right now, we are trying to promote domestic tourism. So, sometimes you would see school-going children after coming from the National Assembly, they would also want to go to the Arch and then to the Museum. So, it is very important that it is also standardized to be able to help them in their, you know, historical issues as well.

Honourable Speaker, on the issue of the State-Owned Enterprises, this is something of interest to me as a member of the PEC Committee. The President has actually mentioned in recent the SoNA that State-Owned Enterprises, through the State-Owned Enterprise Commission set up, have done absolutely incredible job of reducing the consolidated net revenue from a ***D2.6 billion loss*** in 2024 to ***D2.5 billion***. I think that is that is definitely applaudable.

These are some of the things that we have been advocating for. You know, like we say, we try to at least pull the strings somewhere though the Ministers and the Ministries are doing their level best to set the right policies, the right frameworks to make sure that at least the country is set in the right direction. But it is sometimes good to also constructively criticize on areas we feel are ambiguous or should be looked into.

I think this shows that at least something must have been done to make these things right. So, something somewhere is working basically. So, it is just something that I wanted to add for us to at least keep pushing the barrier.

Part of what we saw also in the SoNA is that 5 State-Owned Enterprises are even yet to pay their dividends. Meaning that there is always room for improvement.

My only question would be when it comes to the issue of NAWEC, Honourable Speaker. NAWEC has been an issue for this country because we are subsidizing them from the taxpayers' money year in year out, and NAWEC subsidies are quite heavy. So, I would want to also ask the Vice President to help us out here. What exactly is the plan basically to see NAWEC being part of the SOEs and eventually paying dividends like other SOEs?

Honourable Speaker, I would also like to quickly touch on the issue of land scamming here. We have been having as representatives a lot of complaints of people scamming, you know, very innocent Gambians who have been in abroad. You know, they have been working in abroad for years and sending their hard-earned money here and then being scammed having to start afresh, which is very difficult for them.

And some other people being levied from their own salaries having 15, 20 years in the civil service and then just losing their prospective properties out of thin air to people who feel that they have influence or know people in power, you know. And they actually always put up on these TikToks and these social media handles and stuff like that with the complainants always saying that they have taken them to Immigration, to Police, to the courts and stuff like that. The culprits always say take us anywhere you want. You understand? So, meaning that there are certain people in this country who feel that they are powerful enough or know people in the hierarchy that they can get away with anything illegal they do in this country.

So, we really like His Excellency the Vice President, but these are issues of concern. I know the Government is doing its level best. Currently, there are regulations put through; even there is a real estate bill upcoming but as I speak, the bill is yet to get here. What exactly are the current remedies to be able to at least help the citizens because a lot of people are complaining about this issue, Honourable Speaker?

Honourable Speaker, on the issue of Health, the Minister of Health based on our oral National Assembly question gave us a data on current maternal mortality rates. So, from investigations, some people in the medical field are saying that the data given to National Assembly was not accurate. So, I do not think the Honourable Minister would come and mislead this august body, the National Assembly. So, I would just take it that it might be an oversight or a mistake. So, it would be prudent for him to come back here and clarify that particular issue, Honourable Speaker.

Honourable Speaker, when it comes to the issue of Education, I would like the Honourable Ministers of both Basic and Higher Education to help us out as there has been an issue with the street interviews. We have been seeing students on the streets and randomly interviewed, you know, and be caricatured and making fun of and stuff like that. I would want to know if the Minister is aware of this, and whether there are particular remedies or measures that can be taken to make sure that exploitation of the school girls be stopped because we always see it on the social media, Honourable Speaker.

Also, Honourable Speaker, still on Education, I would applaud the Ministers of both Basic and Higher Education for we have seen an increase in enrolment and also a lot of school facilities being built. We also applaud

you for propelling or increasing access to education but certain results are not very good, especially WASSE and others. How is learning quality in The Gambia as we speak? How does access erode with quality? That is something we would really like to know.

Also, quickly before my time elapses, we have seen also that most basic schools and even some higher education facilities are usually double shifting and always overcrowding. We would want to know what remedies are being taken to make sure that the…

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Banjul Central. Honourable Members, before giving the floor to the Member for Sanimentereng, I have early on ruled on 29[6]. You know, when you look at it, the drafter's intention is very clear. What it means is that if there is a motion or a bill or a matter before the National Assembly for voting and Members are debating and using the name of the President to influence Members' decision, but it is not when we are on an adjournment debate because there is nothing that… *[Interrupted]*

Order! Honourable Members, order.

There is nothing that we are debating today. So, we do not have to… *[Interrupted]*

Order! Honourable Members, Order! So, please, Members, take note.

Member for Sanimentereng, you have the floor.

HON FATOU CHAM [SANIMENTERENG]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. First, I would have to acknowledge the presence of His Excellency the Vice President of The Gambia and his Cabinet Ministers here in present since morning. I also have to thank the Office of the Clerk,

the Office of the Speaker and, of course, the Table Office and the Committee staffs through the Office of the Clerk.

Honourable Speaker, I also have to thank the Members of the National Assembly who have been constantly coming to address the issues of their various constituencies. This is what is expected on us as Members of National Assembly, who were elected with expectations. So, thank you very much for that constant coming.

Honourable Speaker, moving forward, today is the last day of our sittings for 2026 First Ordinary Session. Honourable Speaker, the Anti-Corruption Commission has been established, but yet the country has not had anything in action with regard to the implementation. So, we would like to know the reasons behind this.

Honourable Speaker, moving on to the issuance of ID cards to Gambians outside The Gambia, I have raised this issue or asked a question with regard to this issue to the Minister of Interior, and one of the responses I got was that this action has been ongoing in other countries. It means that we are also emulating other countries. I stand to be corrected, Honourable Speaker, but it is a concern to the Gambians. Remember, we are all elected to represent our people in our various constituencies, so this is a concern.

So, we need to raise the concerns of our people. It is a concern of Honourable Members in this National Assembly but equally a concern of our people. These are citizens of this country, and we need to look into this and give tangible reasons why the issuance of ID cards to Gambians outside The Gambia is still existing, yet there are Gambians not issued in other countries, the like of America, Germany and other countries with a

lot of Gambians. Why is that difference? Why is the issuance of ID cards in selective countries that we may not even have a lot of Gambians?

Honourable Speaker, you are not the Speaker. Keep quiet, please. Honourable Speaker, the current issue in my constituency as I speak now is the ongoing problem in Brufut.

THE SPEAKER: Say, Honourable Speaker. Go ahead.

HON FATOU CHAM [SANIMENTERENG]: Maybe, you are not attentive, Honourable Speaker. Yea. I said 'Honourable Speaker'. That is the norm.

I said, Honourable Speaker, that the current issue in my constituency is with regard to the ongoing chaos in Brufut.

Honourable Speaker, as I speak, there are paramilitaries having chaos with the people of Brufut with regard to the release of a citizen or a case that has been going to the court, but what I am talking about is after the court. There is already a release or a discharge of the individual from the court ruling, but the person has been rearrested.

[Point of Order]

HON KEBBA LANG FOFANA [NOMINATED]: Point of order.

THE SPEAKER: There is point of order from Nominated Member Kebba Lang Fofana.

HON KEBBA LANG FOFANA [NOMINATED]: Honourable Speaker, I am rising on 29[2] which states: *"Reference shall not be made to any matter in respect of which legal proceedings are active, in such a way as might, in the opinion of the Speaker or Chairperson, prejudice the interest of the parties thereto."*

The state made it clear that they are going to appeal the ruling. And as we are speaking, …

Honourable Speaker, you know that there are two types of people in this National Assembly; those to inform and those to inflame. I am informing you, so those who are out to inflame can be quiet for a bit.

Honourable Speaker, the state made its intention clear that they are going to appeal the verdict of the court. As we are talking, an expert motion has been filed.

So, Honourable Speaker, the matter that the Honourable Member is referring to is currently before the courts, and as such, I rule that you tell him to withdraw his submission. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, order! When there is a point… Minority Leader and Member for Latrikunda Sabiji, please put your tags down. Order! Honourable Members. Honourable Members, order. The Member for Sanimentereng, which case are you referring to?

HON FATOU CHAM [SANIMENTERENG]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker, for coming up with that question. Honourable Speaker, I am not talking about the ruling of the court.

THE SPEAKER: Order! Honourable Members, order. Order! Wait. Order! Member for Sanimentereng, you are not on your mic. Sanimentereng, I ask a question. Order, Honourable Members. Order, please. Honourable Member, Order! I am asking the Member for Sanimentereng. You are just saying a particular case; which case are you referring to?

HON FATOU CHAM [SANIMENTERENG]: Honourable Speaker, I am talking about the case or the chaos existing in my constituency currently, right now as I speak.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member for Sanimentereng.

HON FATOU CHAM [SANIMENTERENG]: Honourable Speaker, I know where they are pushing me.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member for Sanimentereng, take your seat. Order, Honourable Members. Order! Honourable Members, Order! Honourable Member for Sanimentereng you said it before and you are repeating it. Which case are you referring to.

HON FATOU CHAM [SANIMENTERENG]: Honourable Speaker, I am talking about the release of Ousainou Bojang.

THE SPEAKER: Okay, thank you. Take your seat, and let me do the ruling. All right. Thank you. Honourable Members, Order! Honourable Members, order, please. Honourable Members, you know we heard on State news and we have been informed by Nominated Member, Kebba Lang Fofana, that the State has appealed.

So, therefore, the matter… Order, Honourable Members. Order, Honourable Members. So, therefore,… Order! Honourable Members! Order, Honourable Members. I want Honourable Members…

Honourable Members, I want the Majority and Minority Leaders to help coach their Members to maintain decorum. There is a point of order, so allow me to rule. The point of order is that the Member is referring to the case of the State versus Ousainou Bojang, and because I have not heard

the Member mentioning that and I asked her. She then told me that the case she was referring to, so allow me to make my ruling.

Order, Honourable Members. Honourable Members, with the Honourable Member's point of order, it is our knowledge that the State has appealed through an ex parte motion. So, if that is the case, then the matter is before the court. And I also ruled that if the State has appealed through an ex parte motion, I so rule.

The Member for Sanimentereng continue.

HON FATOU CHAM [SANIMENTERENG]: Honourable Speaker, for your information in case you do not know, Ousainou Bojang has been released at the moment. So, meaning, the case is not before the court right now. If there will be any appeal, it is yet to be implemented.

THE SPEAKER: Order! Honourable Members, order. Honourable Members, we must be honest to ourselves. Minority and Majority Leaders, please do not do that.

[Point of Order]

THE SPEAKER: No, wait. I will allow you. Honourable Members, please! Order!

[Point of Order]

THE SPEAKER: Wait, please. Honourable Members, the Member for Sanimentereng further told us that Ousainou Bojang was released as such the matter is not before a court. Wait. Honourable Members, Order. That is what she said.

Honourable Members, a matter being before the court, does not mean an individual is incarcerated or not? You know. Order! Honourable Members, Order. Until to the contrary is proven, what we have received yesterday was that Government, through an ex parte motion, has appealed. Then, that means… Order! Immediately the first phase… Members, please. Minority Leader and Majority Leader, please order.

[Point of Order]

Wait! Honourable Members, you see, however palatable or unpalatable a matter might be, we must abide by our rules of procedures. The law states that if a matter is before a court of law, you cannot discuss it. And as we were told yesterday, the first phase at the High Court was concluded, and immediately Government, we were told about, put up an ex parte motion to another level.

Therefore, it is inconclusive. It is still before the court. Because as that, I rule that we must not talk about that until otherwise.

[Point of Order]

THE SPEAKER: Majority leader, take your seat. There is a point of order from the Member for Jimara. Jimara, please.

HON ESSA CONTEH [JIMARA]: Please, Members, let us maintain decorum. We have procedures to follow in this Chamber. Honourable Speaker, Order 8[3]: *"The Speaker's ruling shall be final on all questions of procedure and order."*

Honourable Speaker, you have already made a ruling on this matter. I do not understand why we are still arguing about it.

THE SPEAKER: Order sustained. Member for Sanimentereng, please continue your debate.

[Point of Order]

THE SPEAKER: There is a point of order by the Member for Central Baddibu.

HON FATOU CHAM [SANIMENTERENG]: Honourable Speaker, …

THE SPEAKER: Sanimentereng, there is a point of order from Central Baddibu.

HON ESSA CONTEH [JIMARA]: Honourable Speaker, you have not made ruling on my…

THE SPEAKER: I ruled; I said order sustained. There is a point of order from Central Baddibu.

HON SULAYMAN SAHO [CENTRAL BADDIBU]: Please, kindly lend me your ears. Order 29[2], *"Reference shall not be made to any matter in respect of which legal proceedings are active, …"* Underline the word active, this case is not active any longer. Just make a call. Make a call to the court. It is no more active.

THE SPEAKER: Order! Honourable Members. Order! Honourable Members, Order! Honourable Majority Leader and others, please give me your ears. Let us be honest to ourselves. Honourable Members, Order! I will not be in a position to deny anyone the right to debate. I am just doing it in accordance with the law.

Somebody raised an objection that this matter is before the court, and his argument is that it is not conclusive because the State immediately put up

an ex parte motion, which is to the knowledge of everybody. If there is an ex parte motion, that means it is before the court. They are appealing that decision. Meaning, that matter is not conclusive yet.

Following the judgment, if there was no move by any other party to appeal, then the matter would have been deemed to have been…

Majority Leader, please stop that. And Member for Central Baddibu, do not do that.

Following the judgment if no party had moved further to appeal, then it would have been deemed to have been conclusive until otherwise.

Now that the State has filed in an ex parte motion, it is before the court. And so, I ruled, and Members must abide by the Standing orders.

The Member for Sanimentereng continue.

HON FATOU CHAM [SANIMENTERENG]: Honourable Speaker, I want you to listen and listen attentively.

THE SPEAKER: Yes. Member for Sanimentereng, please continue.

HON FATOU CHAM [SANIMENTERENG]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Member for Sanimentereng, please take your seat. Honourable Members, order! Honourable Members, my ruling is that the matter is before the court of law. And as per Standing Order 29[2], let us avoid discussing that. Member for Sanimentereng you have the floor.

HON FATOU CHAM [SANIMENTERENG]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. Honourable Speaker, I want you to listen and please listen attentively to my deliberations with regard to this issue.

With all due respect, Honourable Speaker, as I speak, there is an existing chaos in my constituency between the Paramilitaries and, of course, the citizens. This is what I was talking about. You asked me to mention a name and, of course, I will.

Honourable Speaker, the current chaos in my constituency is uncalled-for. I call it uncalled-for because as I speak to you, Honourable Speaker, women vendors in the market have already packed and went away. They could not sell. They could not run their normal businesses because of the tear gas and the distractions by the Paramilitaries. It is uncalled-for. This is not what we deserve as women and as citizens of this country. And this is not what we deserve to demonstrate our rightful things.

Honourable Speaker, after watching series of videos, some people were bleeding and others put in a pickup escorted by Paramilitaries to the hospital and who were seriously beaten by those very Paramilitaries. Is this what we deserve as a country and as women, Honourable Speaker?

Honourable Speaker, as I speak, no one around Brufut Gamtel Junction area is moving around for his or her normal businesses because of the tear gas and attacks by the Paramilitaries. Women in their various homes within that jurisdiction could not move from their houses to their kitchens to prepare food for their children and husbands because of tear gas and attacks by the Paramilitaries. Is this what we deserve as a country, Honourable Speaker?

[Point of Order]

THE SPEAKER: There is a point of order. By who? Oh, Sabach Sanjal.

HON ALHAGIE BABOU CEESAY [SABACH SANJAL]: I am rising under Order 17[f], which states: *"while a Member is speaking, all other Members shall be silent and shall not make any unseeingly interruption."* I believe that the Honourable Minority Leader is making interruption, so he should allow the Honourable Member for Sanimentereng to proceed.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, order please. Honourable Member for Sabach Sanjal, order sustained. The Minority Leader and others, please be quiet. The Members for Banjul North and Tallinding, be quiet. Member for Sanimentereng, please continue.

HON FATOU CHAM [SANIMENTERENG]: Again, thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. Honourable Speaker, counting series of distractions by the PIU officers to the people of my constituency, more especially the women, is uncalled-for and justice must prevail to stop this act.

Honourable Speaker, compensation for the OIC demolition that had already taken place in my constituency during the road construction is not completed. I am calling on the line ministry to make sure that the compensation be given to my people in my constituency. You cannot demolish my house, you leave me astray without compensating to build my house to live comfortably with my family. I urge the Ministry to that compensate the people affected.

Honourable Speaker, with regard to the family whose land has been taken from them for the Women Federation Market within Sukuta, they still are not compensated and that land is still not being utilized. The structure has been built there.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much. I now invite the Member for Tallinding Kunjang.

HON FATOU CHAM [SANIMENTERENG]: *… [Inaudible interruption] …*

THE SPEAKER: Tallinding Kunjang, you have the floor.

HON MUSA BADJIE [TALLINDING KUNJANG]: What he is claiming is right.

THE SPEAKER: Tallinding Kunjang, you have the floor, my friend.

HON MUSA BADJIE [TALLINDING KUNJANG]: Honourable Speaker, when there is a point of order, somebody is interrupted. You need to compensate them. That is what he said.

THE SPEAKER: Tallinding Kunjang, you have the floor.

HON MUSA BADJIE [TALLINDING KUNJANG]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. Honourable Speaker, let me start by acknowledging the presence of the Vice President, the Cabinet Ministers, the Permanent Secretaries, and other members of the Government here present.

I would begin by thanking two Ministers: the Minister of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology and the Minister of Basic and Secondary Education even though the Honourable Member for Nianija already thanked them. *… [Desk thumping] …* And the reasons are evident, most of the developments that this Government can boast of are happening in these two Ministries and other institutions. *… [Desk thumping] …*

With higher education, we are counting universities now. Just Monday, I attended the inaugural ceremony of the University of Civil Service, and no one can downplay the significance impact this University is going to make in the transformation of this country. I want to personally acknowledge that and thank the Minister and his Ministry.

I want to also thank the Minister of Basic and Secondary Education. I said it here, on the day we had the first debate, that I understood that she is going to deliver and she is on that trail, and the first thing that impress me about that is accessibility.

Honourable Speaker, Ministers have to be accessible by the representatives of the people. We do not need anything other than access. When I have something in my constituency which I want to relate to a minister, I should have unfettered access, but not to go to their offices and sit down. I do not need the air condition. Even if I access them through telephone communication, that is enough. If I reach them, they receive.

Even midnight you text the Minister of Basic and Secondary School, she will reply you confidently, and she will take charge of the things and give you feedback. *… [Desk thumping] …* I have tried to get her predecessor to Tallinding, but the first day I told this Minister here, she asked me to give her a date. I gave her date, and she came that day. *… [Desk thumping] …* And what is happening? The High School is ongoing, and the Secondary School also is good. She made personal intervention with regard to chairs through MRC Holland Foundation so that the high school can have Grade 12. The Tallinding people are grateful for this, and I want to acknowledge her efforts. I want to also add, the Vice President is here, that they should support her.

On the Gamtel, Honourable Jabbi went out, there is an old Gamtel in unused location. It has been a project, but it is a failed one since, before the advent of 2016, Gamtel is not using the place. It is a building next to the high school, so it is used as a store. I have gone there and taken pictures. I have engaged the Minister, and she asked me to go to him. He

is also a very accessible Minister. I have to definitely acknowledge that, Honourable Jabbi.

Now that Gamtel is relinquishing it, I want the Government to give that facility to Tallinding High School so that they can make best use of it. Even if Gamtel is revived or something, they can never use that place again. Yes, Gamtel built the structure, but the land was given by the community of Tallinding.

So, it will be good if that structure can be given to the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education so that they give it to Tallinding for a library sort of and even the school admin and other facilities can also be there. And that reminds me of the library service that I have talked about here. The Government should help the Ministry to make library service semi-autonomous; the act is there, but then it has to function.

Just this SoNA, the President mentioned some of the transformations going on in schools. But what is happening about library service, access to materials? How do we build reading culture in this country? That is something we should encourage.

The reason why I talked about accessibility is that I have been to a Minister's office, and we arrived at the same time; he saw me but close the door. Then I told the Secretary to tell the Minister that Honourable Badjie wants to see him. He asked; do you have an appointment? I said, "no, but tell him if he does not want to see me, then that will be fine." After I confirmed that he saw me while he was at the door, the Secretary went and told him. The Minister said that he was coming to have a meeting, not that he was having a meeting. He cannot say that he was having a meeting because the office was empty. I was there. He said that he was

coming to have a meeting because of that he would be busy to give me a minute.

I went to Higher Education when the Minister was about to have a meeting. I told the same thing to the orderly; "just tell him, if he is not ready to see me, I will go." I found people there but the moment he came out, he allowed me in. I did not even spend 2 or 3 minutes in that office because I would not go to a Minister's office to waste his time and waste my time.

So, this Minister said that he was busy. You know, I went there because I have called him and he refused to pick. I have sent him message on WhatsApp; he refused to respond. I have texted him direct; he refused to respond. If he had responded, I would not have the need to go there.

In my entire 4 years, I have been to only 3 ministries. I have to acknowledge Honourable Hamat Bah also for he is a very accessible Minister and Minister of Higher Education as well. For the Ministry of Basic Education, I have no reason to go there because she is accessible. Even at my home, I can communicate with her. I can tell her the needs, picture the school, picture the needs of people and send her. She would respond. And the next time I go to the place, I would see changes. That is what we need as representative of the people.

Now, the roads in my in my constituency, the OIC roads, some people talked about their constituencies saying we should thank the Government. They have reason to thank the Government, but if I do not have, I will not.

So, Member for Upper Saloum talked about 36 villages that have been electrified and Niani, the same thing, from 'ninsi buwoo' to 'godorong'. You understand? But for me, I also… You know, we have social justice. It is

injustice if you do not share national cake equitably. Electricity is not my challenge, yes, but I have other challenges. I talked about flooding and roads in Tallinding.

And I think the name of the National Disaster Management should even be prevention, not management. What are we managing in disaster? We should prevent. It should be named National Disaster Prevention and Management. What is management? We need a holistic Government project, and I am not impressed with the National Disaster Management. Sorry to say, Your Excellency, because it is under your Ministry. But then, we are not feeling you.

Every rainy season is chaos in Tallinding. People do not sleep; people have abandoned their houses because of flooding. What is the Government going to do for these people? And the way I see it, it is like you say, okay, that is an opposition area, so let us neglect them. No, that is what is happening. I said it, you are trading for votes. Yes. Look at this OIC roads, it comes up to Jeshwang and stop there because the person in Jeshwang is a government coalition MP. Everything stops at Jeshwang, even the streetlights are fixed there.

Go to Tallinding, nothing is happening. When President was coming on this tour, the following day I went there, I found the contractor. I see development being politicized. You know why? The Minister himself, Honourable Ebrima Sillah, said that he would not want to involve us because we would post on Facebook and pretend that we bring the development. Ebrima Sillah said it here on the floor of the Assembly Chamber here when responding to my query. And that is what is happening now in Tallinding. They are not completing the roads and even

the compensation package, Your Excellency the Vice President. People's houses have been demolished, and they have not been compensated. Only people who are compensated are seem to be NPP supporters.

I know it; it is my constituency. He hailed from Sabach Sanjal. I know what I am saying. I have been there. I have known a woman who is an NPP chairwoman. She was the first among all the people to receive compensation. Now, if I go to Sabach Sanjal, I would have seen some roads. No, they have done something in Sabach Sanjal. He has reason to clap for the Government.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, order! Thank you, Member for Tallinding. I am not sure whether you will tell your people to decamp to NPP, but no, do not answer today. The Member for Kiang West, you have the floor.

HON LAMIN CEESAY [KIANG WEST]: Honourable Members, it is worth putting on record that as representatives, there is a purpose of representation which is to serve the citizens with diligence, honesty and high sense of integrity. Completely, actions speak about so many people, but I insist that nobody on the face of the earth shall suppress, oppress me on my line of duty or make me keep quiet on issues affecting the people of this country. I will never do that.

Honourable Speaker, the Government's action of re-arresting Ousainou Bojang is not only illegal but criminal. This is a man*… [Interrupted]*

[Point of Order]

THE SPEAKER: There is a point of order. Before the point of order, Honourable Member for Kiang West and Honourable Members, I made a

ruling on that based on our law. I want Members to abide by that ruling. As the Member for Kiang West indicated, we must do our responsibilities without fear or favour and in accordance with law. When the Speaker ruled in accordance with the law, as a representative, you are expected to abide by it, so I want Members to abide by my ruling. I have made a ruling on that, and I have given a stern warning that Members must avoid that.

Member for Kantora and Majority Leader, can we have your point of order?

HON BILLAY G. TUNKARA [KANTORA & MAJORITY LEADRE]: Honourable Speaker, I am calling all and sundry in respect to Standing Order 8. We must respect the Chair. In as much as we are representatives, nobody would suppress anybody for speaking his/her mind. We are in democracy and this democracy is very healthy. Ten years down the line, we do not have the guts to say what we want to say in this Chamber. *… [Laughter] …*

Honourable Speaker, Standing Order 8[3]; *"The Speaker's ruling shall be final in all questions of procedure and order." … [Laughter] …*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Members, order sustained and as I ruled earlier on. Member for Kiang West, please continue.

HON LAMIN CEESAY [KIANG WEST]: Honourable Speaker, the chief custodian of the law in this country is the Executive. Honourable Speaker, we have separation of powers several times. Independent institutions in this country are not respected by the Executive. There are several interferences, no respect to the Legislature in terms of the implementation of the recommendation, no respect to the audit report which is from an independent institution. We had the Head of State saying that it is just a mere opinion.

Also, there is no respect to the Judiciary. We can remember the case of Omar Sarjo where there was a judgment for him to be reinstated by the State and that his dismissal was unlawful. The Minister of Justice advised the Government that that judgement was declaratory instead of executory. The Government refused to do that.

Again, today, we are all witnessing that. It can be anybody tomorrow. The High Court of this country made a ruling on the case, and nobody cares that an innocent brother and a sister can be tortured in that manner. But, Honourable Speaker, let me say this on record*... [Interrupted]*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member for Kiang West, my intervention or any point of order on any Member who persistently violates the Speaker's ruling, and as such, there are points of order on the same matter, those times consumed must be part of the Member's time. Honourable Member for Kiang West, I appealed to Members, please, let us respect the Speaker's ruling. Avoid the matter of Ousainou Bojang; that is my ruling, please.

HON LAMIN CEESAY [KIANG WEST]: Honourable Speaker, this Government has not only failed in respecting the laws of this country but also in all the reforms from 2016 to date. One of the firsts reforms that were sanctioned by this Government under the watch of His Excellency President Adama Barrow is the Constitutional Review Commission. He committed national resources to it, 100 plus million. It was the same President who engineered the failure of the passing of that Draft Constitution and wasted the resources of this country.

Honourable, it does not stop there.

[Point of Order]

THE SPEAKER: There is a point of order by the Member for Kantora and Majority Leader.

HON BILLAY G. TUNKARA [KANTORA & MAJORITY LEADER]: Honourable Speaker, the Member*… [Interruption]*. Content of Speech order 29[5]: *'No Member shall impute improper motives to any other Member'*.

Honourable Members, please. You cannot stand here to impute the failure of the Draft Constitution to Head of State. Please, please, Suwaibou you have to listen.

THE SPEAKER: Majority Leader

HON BILLAY G. TUNKARA [KANTORA & MAJORITY LEADER]: Please, Listen. He said that the President has engineered the failure of the Draft Constitution in this National Assembly. This Constitution was laid here; no National Assembly Member has been induced by the President to fail the Constitution. The Member must withdraw that.

THE SPEAKER: Order! Honourable Members, Order! Honourable Member for Kantora and Majority Leader, you know that you are out of order. No. The Member for Kiang West, please continue.

HON LAMIN CEESAY [KIANG WEST]: Honourable Speaker, *… [Desk thumping] …* again, His Excellency through his constitutionally donated powers sanctioned the establishment of the Janneh Commission to look into the assets and financial dealings of the former President. This Janneh Commission was done, and their recommendations were submitted. They recommended the banning of some people to hold public offices.

The same President, who sanctioned the establishment of that Commission, pardon so many people who has committed financial crimes

because he wants to be re-elected into office. He established that Commission and then engineered the failure of their recommendations. It does not stop there as far as their reforms are concerned.

Security Sector Reform, Honourable Members, from 2016-2017 to date, foreign military are present in this country. Our head of State is being protected by a foreign military. What reform have we done as far as security is concerned? Do we not still, as a country, have trust and confidence in our men and women in uniform? But I am not surprised by the recent happenings; it is Not their welfare, not their well-being.

Honourable Members, let us come to agriculture. The President in one of his speeches said that his government committed ***300 million*** to recapitalize GGC. I tried to make that point clear during the SoNA debate. When we received the budget for 2026 in this very Assembly, there was no allocation for recapitalization of the GGC. This very august Assembly cancelled the input subsidy and transported it to the recapitalization of GGC because after the Cabinet approved that that institution be recapitalized, the Government through its Finance Ministry refused to recapitalize that. So, that was not your effort. This National Assembly did that.

Honourable Speaker, in my constituency, Kiang West, there are currently some youths whose livelihood activity is farming, and they have taken their groundnuts to the Seccos, but their monies were not given to them and it was ahead of Ramadan. All these youths are family men and women. They have taken their groundnuts, but their monies have never been given to them. According to them, when they got to Seccos, the only thing they would be told is that they were also following them but no monies was given to them. These people depend on farming to feed their families.

Honourable Speaker, if Government is making a commitment to something, it is important that its application should not be haphazard. A commitment should be in full. Government have subsidized fertilizers for them, given them seeds and after struggling for 6 months, Government took their groundnuts and never gave them any money. They are suffering with their families.

Honourable Speaker, let us come to the tractors. The Government committed huge amount of money to purchase tractors in this country. 100 plus tractors. I want this august Assembly to be informed about the number of tractors bought as we speak and the number of tractors delivered to the farmers. We want to know that and subsequently, I will send in a Parliamentary question for them to submit the list of beneficiaries of those tractors. We will see the reveal of those beneficiaries here. It was all partisan.

Honourable Speaker, about the people of this country, particularly the youth, how many youths have died in the Mediterranean under the watch of the same President? ***77 plus children*** died in this country because we do not have a simple testing laboratory under the watch of this same President. What does he have to tell the Gambians to re-elect him as President?

Honourable Speaker, it is high time, and we are going to rise up to send him a clear message that this country no longer needs his government. We need a responsible and responsive government. Thank you so much. *… [Desk thumping]*

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Kiang West. I now invite Nominated Member Kebba Lang Fofana.

HON KEBBA LANG FOFANA [NOMINATED]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. Honourable Speaker, I would start my deliberations by holding this small booklet. *…[Distractions]*

Honourable Speaker, I am disturbed.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, order! Honourable Members, order, please. Honourable Members, order! Honourable Members, please, do not do that. The Member for King West told or reminded us our responsibilities that as representatives, we must serve to the best of our abilities and be responsible to our responsibilities. And Members would just speak and go.

Nominated Member, Kebba Lang Fofana, you have the floor.

HON KEBBA LANG FOFANA [NOMINATED]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. Honourable Speaker, I would start by recognizing the presence of His Excellency the Vice President and all other Cabinet Ministers who have been here with us since morning.

Equally, I would start my debate by thanking the President. And to do that, I want to boldly hold this leaflet and read the cover letter. It states: *"2026 State of the Nation Address delivered by His Excellency Mr. Adama Barrow, President of the Republic of The Gambia, at the National Assembly in Banjul on the 26th of March 2026."*

Honourable Speaker, this country owes a debt of gratitude to President Barrow for not only delivering a SoNA that was apt but a SoNA that progressively addressed or articulated all sectors of our economy. … *[Desk thumping] …*

Starting from the Ministry of Finance on our economy, last year, inflation was very high, and we witnessed so many adverse rhetoric on the floor of

this Assembly that the economy was mismanaged. But to my surprise, Honourable Speaker, when it was reported this year that inflation had reduced from over 10% to around 6.6, I did not hear any voice specifically from the far left congratulating the Government.

Honourable Speaker, I will repeat once again that this country owes a great debt of gratitude to the President for not only electrifying our country but also committing ***over D1 billion*** as subsidy. This is great. This shows that we do not only have a listening President but a pragmatic one who knows the needs of the people. He is not only telling the farmers that he is providing electricity for them but the Government is complementing every unit of electricity they are buying.

Honourable Speaker, to dwell away from the SoNA speech, I want to conclude with the quest of the President that we have a nation to build. And in building this nation, it requires concerted efforts. All of us, both the left side and the right side, must come together and know that the only thing that will remain at the end of the day is The Gambia.

And that would take me to the starting of the debate of the Honourable Member of Kiang West, who reminded the National Assembly Members of our responsibility. You see, our responsibility is to represent people and to inform them, but we should be careful as to what we and how we inform them. We must be sincere in our pronouncements.

Sometimes, I ask myself whether some of us sleep at night when we go back home. You see, we have immunity on this floor; we can say anything and at the end of the day, nobody will take us to court. We can call people, label them whether true or false. But we need to ask ourselves, whether what we are saying about those people is truthful. And many a times the

pronouncements on this floor are untruthful; that is why when we are challenged to bring evidences, we falter; that is why when we are asked to bring references, we never find one; that is why when we are asked to put down your papers, we sit down.

[Point Of Order]

THE SPEAKER: There is a point of order from the Member for Latrikunda.

HON YAHYA SANYANG [LATRIKUNDA SABIJI]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. Order 29[5] *"No Member shall impute improper motives to any other Member."* To say that all what Members say here many a times are false is imputing improper motives to us. What we say here are always truthful.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, order. The Honourable Member for Latrikunda Sabiji rose to a point of order on imputing improper motives to Members because the Member said that some Members normally say somethings that are untruthful. Is that imputing improper motives or otherwise? That is not the case. You are out of order.

Nominated Member, continue.

HON KEBBA LANG FOFANA [NOMINATED]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. As I was saying, we can say anything on this floor, but let us be mindful. The people we are talking about do not have the opportunity to come, stand here and defend themselves, and that is where true representation starts from. That is honesty, sincerity, truthfulness. That is what true representation means. Knowing that the Constitution has given us powers, we can say anything about innocent people out there in the streets and go to bed. One, they would not have the opportunity to

come stand here defend themselves. Two, they would not have the opportunity to take us before any court of law.

So, Honourable Members, I will remind you in his own words that as National Assembly Members, to be true leaders, we must be careful of what we say. And that is why, to start, I want to tell all the Ministers that we are proud of them.

The Honourable Member for Tallinding did very well, but in our own field, we do not single out people and leave the rest. Maybe, it depends on his level of interaction with the Ministers, but we can tell you that, all them here are accessible. Even the left side of this National Assembly can attest to that fact. Accessibility should not come with a privilege. We are the very people who would stand on this floor and say that we are servants of the people. So, as a servant of the people, if you called a Minister and he did not pick, should you be angry about that? If you are a true servant, should you be angry about that? We should believe in what we preach.

So again, what I am trying to say here is for us to be mindful of what we say. If he singled out two among the lot, what is he telling about the rest? What is he telling about them? He does not need to say it, we know.

So, what I am trying to say here is, if you have any issue with some of them, go and meet them in their private times. They will give you the audience you need. They will accord you the respect that you deserve.

And Honourable Speaker, when I rose on a point of order earlier on, I did say that we have two types of representation: those who inform and those who inflame.

Today, many of the people who will take this floor, for over five years or over one year, the only thing they have been debating on is the protest going on outside. Go to that protest right now, the people you will find there are political party leaders. Of course, we are all monitoring social media. If I am wrong, you can correct me, but we have political party leaders going out there because, Honourable Speaker, they know that this year, President Barrow has already won the election. So, the only thing they want to do is to create a sense of insecurity. I will tell you this, we have a President who is tolerant, peaceful, and a Democrat, so we will not allow anyone to make this country ungovernable.

On that note, Honourable Speaker, I beg to take my seat. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Nominated Member, Kebba Lang Fofana, for that deliberation.

And, Honourable Members, on that note, I would adjourn for prayer break and lunch. So, I would suspend the Assembly up to 15:45.

Assembly Sitting Suspended

Sitting Resumed

THE SPEAKER: The Assembly now resumes, and I hope you enjoyed the lunch. Honourable Members, we will begin from where we stopped, and I hope the Vice President, Honourable Ministers and Members of the National Assembly, you had a very good lunch. It was indeed very delicious and yummy today. The Member for Sami, you have the floor.

HON ALFUSAINEY CEESAY [SAMI]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker, for giving me the floor. Thank you very much, Vice President, Ministers and technicians here present.

Honourable Speaker, leaders have to be very careful. We are all leaders as to what to say and what to do. It is very important as a leader. Honourable Speaker, this has reminded me of when this Government was coming into power in 2016, they said that they also want to come up with a new constitution. Remember when all of us are looking for votes, we speak our own national languages. When you look at it, there was a constitution in 1970 and also in 1997, there was a constitution.

These people came in and said that they also want to come up with a new constitution. If what is in the Draft Constitution of 2020 is passed, Honourable Speaker, I will not be speaking this language. How many people can speak what I am speaking? Please, allow me.

Honourable Speaker, how many millions was spent on that Constitution? ***160 million***. But this very Assembly during the Fifth Legislature, … Please, Honourable Speaker, talk to them.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, please.

HON ALFUSAINEY CEESAY [SAMI]: They are distracting me.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, please, maintain decorum and Member for... *[Interrupted]*

HON ALFUSAINEY CEESAY [SAMI]: No. You have to put your house in order. They cannot be disturbing me when I am trying to put my things in order. No, you cannot do that. Okay. Honourable Speaker, that constitution... *[Interrupted]*

THE SPEAKER: Member for Sami, take your seat. Honourable Member for Sami, you asked me to protect you, and while I was doing that, you are abusing me.

HON ALFUSAINEY CEESAY [SAMI]: Yes. Thank you very much. Honourable Speaker, that Constitution is people's Constitution. It has so many important things in there…

[Point of Observation]

HON AMADOU CAMARA [NIANIJA]: Observation, please.

HON ALFUSAINEY CEESAY [SAMI]: Please, I am on my feet.

HON AMADOU CAMARA [NIANIJA]: I just want to observe you, please.

HON ALFUSAINEY CEESAY [SAMI]: No, I am on my feet. Please, understand that if I do not sit down, know that*... [Interrupted]*

[Point of Order]

THE SPEAKER: There is a Point of Order. I observe that the technicians are not here because this mic is faulty. Why are they not here? Why is The technical Department not here? Yes. There is Point of Order by the Member for Foni Bintang Karanai.

HON BAKARY K. BADJIE [FONI BINTANG KARANAI]: Thank you, Honourable Speaker. I rise on Order 17[f]. *"While a Member is speaking, all other Members shall be silent and shall not make unseeingly interruption."* As the Member for Sami is speaking, the Member for Niani is constantly making interruption, and this is not acceptable, Honourable Speaker. So, call him to order, Sir.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member for Foni Bintang Karanai, I do not think the Member for Niani is seated. His chair is empty.

HON BAKARY K. BADJIE [FONI BINTANG KARANAI]: Nianija.

THE SPEAKER: Order, there from Foni Jarrol. You cannot behave like that. Order sustained. Members, please maintain decorum. Allow him to continue but you have already spent 3 minutes.

HON ALFUSAINEY CEESAY [SAMI]: I do not spend 3 minutes. Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. I am still on my feet. I am talking about the importance of the Constitution that the Constitution is going to help the Gambian people, and they are still yearning. If you look at the President's Address, he does not, in fact, talk about the Constitution.

Honourable Speaker, when leaders overstay, there is always a problem. This is why we want term limit to be there. That is a good practice. We do not want somebody to be just there. Just look at, the former President spent 30 years, next one 22 years and this one 10 years. That is the end.

Honourable Speaker, we do not want problems in this country. We want somebody to be there. We want the current one to move out so that another person can come in. That is what we want.

Honourable Speaker, When we were passing the Election Bill, this very Assembly said no to Diaspora voting because they will not be registered. It was said here when we were passing the Election Bill and the President himself, in his speech, said Diaspora's contribution cannot be overemphasized, their contribution on what they are doing in this country and again in this very Assembly.

This is why we have to be very careful as National Assembly Members. Our role is to make good laws for our people. Our role is not to implement laws. Our role is to make laws that is the only thing. Implementation is left for the Government and how to do it? We should not shy away from our responsibility.

Honourable Speaker, supplementary registration also is coming. I want everybody to be very careful about the supplementary registration. Let us register people who are Gambians, and we have to be very careful, Honourable Speaker. Nobody is going to be there for the rest of his/her life. If you give power to those who are not Gambians, tomorrow you will see the problem. So, we have to be very careful. The Government, in fact, should make a press release to other countries that they should not come to The Gambia for registration. Let those not Gambians not come. We want peace because all these things can bring insecurity in this country.

[Point of Order]

HON ALFUSAINEY CEESAY [SAMI]: Because when we are… please… *[Interrupted]*

THE SPEAKER: There is a Point of Order by the Member for Lower Saloum.

HON SAINEY JAWARA [LOWER SALOUM]: Honourable Speaker, I rise on Order 18 of the Standing Orders, Point of Order: *"Any Member deviating from these Standing Orders may be immediately called to order by the Speaker or by any other Member rising on a point of order."*

Honourable Speaker, the issue of diaspora voting is not essential. We do not allow them to vote. No. There is a constitutional provision that is already in Section 39… *[Interrupted]*

THE SPEAKER: Order, Honourable Members. Honourable Member for Lower Saloum, please, take your seat. Honourable Members, order, please. Member for Lower Saloum, you know you are out of order. Please, continue.

HON ALFUSAINEY CEESAY [SAMI]: Honourable Speaker, thank you very much. He is just wasting my time. This is what he has done on Monday. He came with a point of order which is not relevant to what he is saying. Honourable Speaker, let him allow people to express their opinions.

Honourable Speaker, I was talking about the supplementary registration. We do not want to see those who are not Gambians in the Gambia for this supplementary registration.

Honourable Speaker, ID card is an issue still now, particularly for those in Gambia. When you apply for an ID card, it would go for 5 to 6 months you without laying your hand on your ID card. Why going outside to process or give ID cards to people when your own people here cannot access ID card? Try to solve problems here before going out.

Honourable Speaker, we said it here that our people in Foni are also Gambian. Schools are closed and people are moving from one community to another. So, I think the Government should try and take the responsibility of always being there on patrol. Let the security be there always so that the people will feel comfortable to stay there peacefully.

Honourable Speaker, as I said, anytime you are speaking, you have to talk about the achievements and also the challenges. But you do not just only start telling people, yes, Government did this; Government did that. Yes, it is good that Government has built roads and have electricity all over, even in my constituency. Yes, good number of the communities have electricity. That is good, but still there are villages that do not have electricity and roads.

Honourable Speaker, on education, yes, they have done a lot in terms of accessibility and providing staff quarters. Yes, Honourable Speaker, they

have done all those things, but still there are gaps, and we must talk about those gaps. Science equipment is a problem, Honourable Speaker. Look at the whole CRR North, Kaur is the only place with the equipment. If people want to do Science experiments, they have to go to Kaur. How many senior schools are there? Those gaps need to be closed.

I will not say anything here that I cannot substantiate. Go to those schools and see. That is why you have to say something which you know that when they put you in a corner, you can be able to say the truth. Science is a big problem in those areas.

Honourable Speaker, health is a problem. Yes, they are trying a lot, but still now referral from Bansang to Banjul is a challenge since colonial days. Honourable Speaker, those things should be stopped. They have to train more personnel so that those personnel can take care of these issues. Not that every time patients should come to Banjul here, and not everybody has a place to stay in Kombo here. Go to the hospitals, you will see people sleeping on the floor outside. Yes. You will see it.

There is an issue, Honourable Speaker, our health sector. They have provided ambulance, but still there are communities with ambulance taking charges for those ambulances. They are paying their drivers' salaries.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. The Member for Foni Bondali, you have the floor?

HON PA DEMBO SANNEH [FONI BONDALI]: Thank you so much, Honourable Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to also take part in this adjournment debate. I would like to acknowledge the presence of the Vice President and the Members of the Cabinet here.

Honourable Speaker, politics or politicians can be funny at times. When things are going very smoothly and nice, they praise the Government. They would say that the Government did this; the government did that. But if things are going all the way around, they would blame the previous Government. So, I think we have changed to correct the wrongs that were happening before. If we want to still compare ourselves with the previous Government, it is funny and it means that, we are not moving.

Honourable Speaker, I would also like to first thank the Ministry of Higher Education together with Basic and Secondary Education for the tremendous job they are doing. I can see the Members are praising them here, but they still need support, so let us add into their coffers so that they can continue the good job they are doing.

Honourable Speaker, I would now go to trade. There was a time we passed the labour agreement between Gambia, Spain as well as Saudi Arabia for our young people to go and work in those countries, which is a very fine idea to prevent irregular migration.

Honourable Speaker, we can say maybe this does not go as planned because a very good chunk of them has left their posts and then get into other areas of those countries.

Honourable Speaker, we have very passionate youths here in the country who have the skills and the determination to do their work here in the country but what they lack is support. So, I think these youths are the people that the Ministry of Trade should target in their various communities or constituencies. For instance, I have two trainees in my area from the Shanghai who are absolutely doing fine. They are in Chamen, but they

really lack support. So, if these people are supported, they can even add to the economy of the nation or even create employment around that end.

Honourable Speaker, I am going to youth and sport. I am sure many Gambians did watch our game with Senegal yesterday. we all see that our boys really did well there. I was not even thinking they will do what they did yesterday. It was an absolutely top-class performance from our boys.

Honourable Speaker, Senegal really invested in that area. So, our Government also needs to take that bold step to invest in that area very well; at the end of the day, we will see the benefit from it because majority of the Senegalese players are playing in major leagues in Europe.

So, helping our youths will also address this irregular migration because some of the youths are going there to see themselves playing in those top leagues. So, they will also risk their lives crossing just to go to Europe. If we have those infrastructures in the country here, maybe they will not even embark on that journey. They will see to it that there is a dream or hope in their country.

Honourable Speaker, maybe the Ministry together with GFA should also turn our leagues into professional leagues so that these players will see themselves as professional footballers and be paid very good monies.

Honourable Speaker, in the same Ministry, NEDI is absolutely doing well in trying to help these young people, both males and females, in their areas of expertise, entrepreneurship and other things. So, by supporting this, Ministry of Youth and Sport will really help us in trying to also cope with irregular migration.

Honourable Speaker, on agriculture, I put up a question to the Minister of Agriculture last time with regard to the gardens in our area, but I think the Minister did not understand me and maybe other Members also did try for me to deviate from what I wanted to say. But Honourable Speaker, the Minister asked those villages to apply, and they did apply but since then, we did not hear anything from them.

I am doing my follow up but still we did not realize this. If you help those villages to have a garden that will also reduce the dependency on our bushes or forests because most of the women and even men are also now involved in gardening. Previously, we believed that gardening is only for women, but now people realize that anyone can engage in gardening.

So, if you provide garden to these villages, it will reduce the pressure on the forest because at the end of the rainy season, these people will have no other activity whereby they will get income unless to go in the bush to cut firewood and/or embark on charcoal processing or production, which is also creating a very big risks in their life. I wish maybe most of us know how they produce this charcoal. The flames that come out of those areas is very different from any other flames you know. So, it can be a risk to their health.

Honourable Speaker, these villages are Jandine, Allakunda, Kayabor and the two Nyeffis. They are absolutely in need of these gardens.

Honourable Speaker, if the Honourable Minister of Agriculture can take note of this. And if he is not here, I am sure he might be represented by someone here to take note of this.

Honourable Speaker, on works and infrastructure, I would like to commend the Minister and his Ministry for the tremendous work they are doing in

terms of road connectivity. They are really connecting the roads; having new roads around the country. And Honourable Speaker, the other response I like about the Ministry is the Sukuta-Jabang Highway as it was a nightmare experiencing accident upon accident. But thank God, the Ministry or NRA had put up speed bumps across the road around that end.

Honourable Speaker, on the road safety still, we all understand the way the drivers are playing on our roads, especially the seven-passenger cars. We should take note of these seven-passenger cars as they are creating havocs in the society because the speed at which they drive is absolutely unacceptable. If you can remember or observe, they are causing a lot of accidents on our roads. So, you should take note of that.

Honourable Speaker, on energy, anyway, we have to thank the Government because it started from a long way. It is not like the child just born today and start working. It was like the child who was born, started crawling and then reach where it is now. So, we have it today.

But I would also want to remind the Energy Minister that there are few villages in my area, Foni Bondali, who lacks electricity. These villages are Fass Chamen, the two Nyeffis, Tayibayass, Kayabor Gifoi, Marato [Fass Jabai]. These villages are yet to be electrified. So, we would also be very much happy if these villages see the poles running through their villages, and then eventually see the light flowing.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker, I would like to…

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Foni Bondali. I will now invite the Member for Bundungka Kunda to take the floor.

HON SULAYMAN JAMMEH [BUNDUNGKA KUNDA]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker, for giving me the opportunity.

Honourable Speaker, I want to join my colleagues to welcome His Excellency the Vice President and other Cabinet Ministers who are here with us since morning. It is all geared towards collaboration, as we know. I believe in collaboration because it is collaboration that can give us success in anything that we do. But the collaboration could be in two folds. We need to collaborate when it comes to common interest whether we are together in the same caucus or in a different caucus. So, this is why I must thank the Cabinet Ministers for coming and equally taking part in the debate.

Honourable Speaker, on the side of my debate, I would use the opportunity to thank His Excellency the President for the support he has given to my community, Bundung. He has made Bundung to be a friendly community. And if you ask me, I can justify it because, whenever we request what we need as a community or talk about it, we always see positive results which is very important. The purpose of me coming here is not for any other thing but just to ensure that my people's wellbeing and welfare are taken care of and really happening.

This is why I was a Councillor under my own regime, but later my regime was out. I was under a Mayor as an opposition Councillor. I think there is no Gambian who will say Honourable Sulayman Jammeh was very arrogant, or he never supported the activities of the Mayor and the Municipality. In fact, it was during that time under the Mayor, I was able to perform more than my own regime because I was willing to collaborate with the Councillors and the Mayor for the general interest of our

Municipality. Up till today, I am collaborating because I am elected and you are elected to serve our citizens. So, why should we quarrel? Why should we be?

Sometimes, we may have differences based on our policies and programmes but when there is something positive in our communities, we have the right to talk about it. When there is negativity also, we can talk about it. It should not be when there is negativity in our communities, we talk about it, but when great things are happening in our communities and we do not want to talk about them. So, I think if we try to do that, it will at least hinder our collaboration as a government.

So, I must once again thank the Government of The Gambia for providing first class road in Bundung, and we are expecting another two. So, I am appealing to this august Assembly, all my colleagues, to bless that project because we need it. And when that road is done, not only people of Bundung will use it but everybody because it is going to be public a good.

Honourable Speaker, there was a time we had a challenge on the side of water, and the President personally took it upon himself to address the situation. At the community level, we also took our responsibility to complement his effort through potential collaboration with NAWEC. They were able to come up with a Borehole Project specifically for Bundung.

Right now, as I am speaking to you, they are putting an overhead tank at Nemasu. So, we are grateful of that. Because we cannot leave everything in the hands of the President and the Government, I reported last time that we, as a community, do not want anybody to walk 200 metres to fetch water, and this has been the situation. However, as I speak, through the support of the National Assembly Constituency Development Fund and my

own efforts and those of my collaborators, we are working towards providing community standpipe for every resident in Bundung.

'Insha'Allah', we will achieve this as work is already in progress. At present, NAWEC is carrying out service connection in Bundung. Therefore, I extend my thanks to the President and the Government. Equally, I must thank the Ministers of both Basic Education and Higher Education. We know there are so many Gambian students who are benefiting from the Government scholarship in Higher Education. We thank you for your proactiveness.

I must also thank Basic Education because last time we talked about Bundung School and they responded within a month. We are appreciative of that. As a community, we are not just leaving everything in their hands alone, both the students and the community I lead [Bundung] are also complementing their effort. This is how national development should look like. It should not just be like opposing each other but instead working together.

What is really disturbing The Gambia is that we take too much of energy in negative things instead of investing it in positive things happening. The public do not even commit themselves to involve getting into it. Like they said, there are people out there, … I do not know but I, Sulayman Jammeh, will never subject myself to any demonstration instead I will demonstrate for development.

For that being the case, Honourable Speaker, I want to thank the Minister of Youth and Sport. As a responsible Government, we also discussed about the Mboyo field, thank God with Honourable Member for Serekunda. Today, we have Mboyo field as one of the best football parks in the municipality of KM. These are things you can see and feel, especially in my

own community and that of Nianija area. The roads that I saw in Nianija when I went there impressed me. We wish the Government to strengthen that so that they can address road issues for all communities.

We can see electricity also for all communities. Right now, even the up-country electrical system is better than our urban areas because they have electricity with street light. For us, we do not have street light. Unless we make it a project, we normally have electricity in our homes. Therefore, we must thank and acknowledge the Government of the day for that.

So, on that note, Honourable Speaker, I want to thank the Government and equally to pray for us to have a very progressive country. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Bundungka Kunda. The Member for Wuli East, you have the floor.

HON SUWAIBOU TOURAY [WULI EAST]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. I want to also thank His Excellency the Vice President and Ministers here present. Member for Lower Saloum, please stop interrupting.

Honourable Speaker, I would start with the independence of the Judiciary. When the Judiciary do their work, we should accept the work. The Judiciary should not be influenced by the Executive, the Legislature, and the Judiciary itself. The courts must maintain their impartiality and decide cases based on law and facts. Therefore, let us see courts as a separate sector.

The separation of powers must be respected. We should not do anything that would seem disrespecting the courts. In fact, the courts should be so

independent that even their finance should be in their own hands. That is what we expected in a democracy, and that should be upheld.

Honourable Speaker, we have a very good friend, Cuba. The Honourable Member for Old Jeshwang spoke about the Middle East, but I would speak of Cuba. They are very good friend of this country. Before most of the people sitting in this Assembly were born, the Cubans were here treating the Gambian people.

Therefore, we need to support Cuba. Do not neglect your friends when they are in trouble. Cuba is in trouble, and they must not be neglected. We know it will be very difficult for Government to go around supporting other governments against other governments. But we, the legislature, are having the free will to speak in the interest of our friends, and Cuba is one of those very good friends. It is a small island nation that poses no threat to any country, and they are friendly to all countries. Cuba is even in the United States supporting their health sector.

Therefore, to violate their rights as well as the international law and norms is not something that we should support. I would call on everybody in this Assembly to lend their hands to the struggle that Cuba is going through. We know they are going through a traumatic period, but it will be over, and we will continue to strengthen our friendship with Cuba. As a member of the Friendship Group with Cuba, I stand to urge that we extend our support to ensure that Cuba recovers and progresses once again.

Honourable Speaker, turning to the issue of Foni, Foni is an integral part of the Gambia, and no one should underestimate the situation there. The region being a border area is affected with external crises, and that crisis is also impacting negatively on our own people. This is why we should take

multiple approach to ensure our people are not destabilized and to ensure our people are protected from all the harm from the other side.

Honourable Speaker, security is very paramount, and intelligence is equally paramount. So, let us not neglect security inside the country. We know that Government is doing a lot of effort, but let us double up. We need CCTV in all the crucial junctions where we have traffic lights or turn tables to ensure that anyone engage in criminal activity be easily detected and fine. If they know that, they will think 100 times before they actually involve in a crime. Therefore, let us take our security seriously and equally our intelligence.

Honourable Speaker, democracy is something we need to look at very seriously. If we want progress, we must also uphold democracy. Yellow flag, red flag, brown flag we should have an end to that now. Let us look at matters that will advance this country.

The way I hear people talk about economy is kind of funny. They talk about only roads which is very important. Mobility, trade, farming and everything will be improved if you have roads, so it is very good to have roads. But if we produce, we must do value addition. If we do not add value to our products, we are really producing for other countries. They just give us what is meant for our raw material, and they go and add value it, bring it back to us to buy at a cutthroat price. So, that is not going to advance the economy of this country.

Honourable Speaker, the tertiary section is doing very well. Universities are coming but with caution because when we take people to universities and graduate with Masters and PhDs without giving them the necessary jobs, that is a bombshell of its own. We must ensure that when those people

graduate from universities, the parallel Ministry, which is Ministry of Trade, Industry and Employment should also generate jobs for those people graduating from universities. If we train people in universities, like what was done in Sierra Leone, without giving them the necessary jobs, they would be dangerous people that can create serious havoc in the country.

So, we must produce jobs or align jobs to the training that we are doing in universities. Do not train people for the sake of training. Train them so that they will be useful to society. That is the only way we can continue producing the intelligence sector but at the same time intellectual sector development of the people. But at the same time, we should let them produce and add to society rather than become danger to society.

On that note, Honourable Speaker, I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Member for Wuli East for summarizing. The Member for Lower Baddibu, you have the floor.

HON KEMO GASSAMA [LOWER BADDIBU]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. I would also love to join my colleagues in thanking the His Excellency the Vice President, the Honourable Ministers here present and of course the representatives from the various departments here as well as the security and my fellow Honourable Members.

Honourable Speaker, I wish I can also join other Honourable Members to applaud the effort of Governments in their various areas, but in my own area, Lower Baddibu, the situation is contrary. Since the coming of this present Government into power, the only road has been constructed by them is the one that links Kerewan to Njawara. Other than that, there is no road in that part of the country that has been constructed by this Government.

That means, the development is not evenly distributed. It is not, and the people from that end are also taxpayers, especially the most disadvantaged area, Lower Baddibu North. And these people never go against sitting Government, yet still they are not enjoying anything from the national cake. It is unfair.

Honourable Speaker, coming to the salt intrusion in Lower Baddibu South, we are farmers cultivating both rice and groundnut, but the salt intrusion in our rice fields 'faros' this year has, of course, created serious havoc on our crops. So, we are please appealing to the Ministry responsible to come to our aid in order to arrest the salt intrusion into our faros.

Coming to the issue of our health, Honourable Speaker, it was only last week that I embarked on the distribution of health materials across my constituency and beyond. I visited various health centres. Of course, structures are nice, but the structures are not even in my area. I am not against the putting of structures, health structures, but they must be fair, and this is not happening.

Honourable speaker, I think my belief is why can we not fill the structures that we have? I will give you an example. I went for a medical check-up, and I was being recommended to go for MRI test. Honourable Speaker, could you imagine if you are not connected in this country to have access to that test will take you more than 3 weeks. How about those poor Gambians who do not have money in their hands? Where are they going to have access to MRI test and other tests recommended by the doctors.

Honourable Speaker, a Nominated Member mentioned that the President is a democrat. Yes, he should be a democrat because he came to the Presidency through democratic means. And the President in 2016, 17, 18

promised us that he is a big fan of term limit. He said in his own words, "nobody should be allowed to go beyond two terms in this country". But as I am speaking to you, we are seeing differences in that. If you are not clapping for me, clap for the truth as well.

Let me tell people are pushing the President to go in for third term that majority of Gambians, irrespective of political affiliation, are not in three terms in this country. And that does not mean that I am referring to the President. We are not in for it. If you are in for it, it is today because when the former President was here, you were never in for it. Let us be truthful.

[Point of Order]

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, Order. Honourable Members, there is a point of order from the Member for Sabach Sanjal. Can we hear that?

HON ALHAGIE BABOU CEESAY [SABACH SANJAL]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. I am rising on Order 17[f]: "*while a Member is speaking all other Members shall be silent and shall not make unseemly interruption."* The Member for Lower Baddibu is being interrupted by the Honourable Majority Leader, and it is not fair.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, order! Order sustained. The Member for Kantora and Majority Leader and other Members, Order! Honourable Members, he is in his democratic right to say what he is saying. Order.

[Point of Order]

THE SPEAKER: There is a point of order from Member for Foni Bintang Karanai

HON BAKARY K. BADJIE [FONI BINTANG KARANAI]: Honourable Speaker, I am rising on Order 8 'Speaker's ruling'. Order 8*[1] "In all cases where matters are not expressly provided for by these Standing orders, any questions on procedure or order shall be decided by the Speaker."* And the Speaker's decision shall be final and should not be subjected to any question. The Majority Leader is not respecting your decision as he is making an interruption by making noise.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Order, sustained. Majority Leader, you see, the Member for Latrikunda Sabiji is very happy today. Lower Baddibu, please continue. Your time is finished.

HON KEMO GASSAMA [LOWER BADDIBU]: It is finished? But how? Honourable Speaker, I believe to observe term limit will preserve peace in our country and it will, of course, make the leaders to be focused on their job because they would literally know that there will come a time I will leave. I am please appealing to the President; it is an appeal to him to, of course, respect term limit. I know it is not constitutional, but it is an appeal for him to abide by what he promised Gambians in 2016, 2017 and step aside for the good of this country.

Honourable Speaker, if you look around the sub-region, majority of the countries within the subregion are observing term limit. Those of us here who are sounding that term limit is not being enshrined in our Constitution; you are right, but we are human. This world is moving. Why should we be going backward? Let us try and move alongside the international community.

Honourable Speaker, coming to the issuance of ID cards beyond the source of this country, of course, I have set a parliamentary question on that, but

it is your table who of course dismissed my parliamentary question. But yet still I do not know the reason why Immigration Department are leaving the source of this country to countries not even within West Africa, for example, the issuance of ID cards to Gambian citizens in Gabon when those Gambians do not need ID cards in Gabon. All that they need is passport. Ask your father, he will tell you who tell me. They do not need it there. I see no reason why… *[Interrupted]*

[Point of Order]

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, there is a point of order by the Member for Sabach Sanjal.

HON ALHAGIE BABOU CEESAY [SABACH SANJAL]: I am rising on Order 29[4]. "*It shall be out of order to use offensive and insulting language about Members of the Assembly*." The Honourable Member for Lower Baddibu has to withdraw that statement, please.

THE SPEAKER: Order! Honourable Members, Order! The Member for Sabach Sanjal, can you please help us? What words do you want him to withdraw, please?

HON ALHAGIE BABOU CEESAY [SABACH SANJAL]: Honourable Speaker, it is so offensive that I cannot repeat it to you.

THE SPEAKER: You have my leave to say it.

HON ALHAGIE BABOU CEESAY [SABACH SANJAL]: Thank you, Honourable Speaker. For that being the case, it is involving somebody's parent in the Chamber that he should be asked of a particular question that is not correct.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member for Lower Baddibu, did you say that?

HON KEMO GASSAMA [LOWER BADDIBU]: Yes. Indeed, I said it, but he used to tell me the same thing.

THE SPEAKER: All right. Take your seat. Honourable Members, order! The Member for Lower Baddibu, can you withdraw that unconditionally?

HON KEMO GASSAMA [LOWER BADDIBU]: I withdraw since I am made to understand that it was not Honourable Member for Kantora. So, I withdraw.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, Order! Honourable Member for Lower Baddibu, withdraw unconditionally.

HON KEMO GASSAMA [LOWER BADDIBU]: Withdraw.

THE SPEAKER: All right. Honourable Member for Lower Baddibu, can you please continue?

HON KEMO GASSAMA [LOWER BADDIBU]: Still on the issue of the ID card, I have a question which I definitely need an answer. I want to ask the Minister of Interior and the Honourable Vice President: how many Gambians were issued with ID cards in Gabon, Togo, Mauritania, and Guinea-Bissau?

Honourable Speaker, on that note, I will take my seat.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Honourable Member for Lower Baddibu, for taking the floor. I now invite the Member for Banjul North.

HON MODOU LAMIN B. BAH [BANJUL NORTH]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker, for giving me the floor. I will start by joining my honourable colleagues in commending and thanking His Excellency the

Vice President as well as all the Ministers present along with their technicians, the Permanent Secretaries and Deputy Permanent Secretaries.

Honourable Speaker, I think I need to seize this opportunity also to congratulate this honourable Assembly for allowing Honourable Members to debate during this adjournment. Session has been worthwhile.

Honourable Speaker, like other Members have said, this is an adjournment debate. In that regard, I will begin with my own constituency and my people before I expand or widen the debate to other areas. So, I will start with some of the challenges we are still faced with as a constituency, as a city, and as a people. I will begin with the issue of low water pressure in the city of Banjul.

My honourable colleague from Banjul Central spoke about the colour of the water, which has now drastically improved. Nevertheless, we are still faced with low water pressure, and I think this is something I have been talking about in this National Assembly in so many occasions. But still, there is no solution to this problem. Your Excellency, I just want to inform you that this issue still exists.

The other issue has to do with the sewage problem. As we all know, we currently have the Banjul Road Rehabilitation Project, which is indeed doing a lot to improve the infrastructure of the city. As we understand, it is meant to address the road system, the sewage system, and the drainage system.

However, as a city dweller, I can say that the people of Banjul North are really suffering when it comes to the sewage system. Our sewage system is giving us a lot of problems, and this might lead to health hazards, which we really do not want to accelerate.

Looking at the situation in Banjul now, understanding that part of the project has a component meant to address the sanitary situation of the city, I also want to implore the Minister, Permanent Secretary or the Deputy Permanent Secretary to they do something in terms of procuring sewage trucks they are supposed to procure, so that they can help the people of Banjul in that regard.

Honourable Speaker, I also want to seize this opportunity to once again thank the Minister of Transport and Infrastructure. I will always say that he is one of the Ministers who listens, and listens carefully. I can remember raising a question about the highway lights all the way from Sarrow to the roundabout near Clarkston in the city of Banjul, noting that they were not functioning.

We have seen work going on, but I just want to inform him or his team that we still have issues when it comes to the highway lights. We still have lights that are not functioning. I think it is very important, as mentioned during his response that even the security personnel of State House raised those concerns in terms of state security because Banjul is the city, and we need to understand that development starts from the city. No matter what, we must make sure that Banjul is intact infrastructure-wise. That is when we can brag about other places in the country.

Honourable Speaker, going further, an issue happened here in the National Assembly; that is, the recently passed Election Bill which is now the Election Act. Part of that Election Act states that in terms of attestation, Alkalolu, Seyfolu, and others have the right to issue attestation.

However, in the situation of Banjul, we currently have a Mayor, and according to the law, … We even saw a court case that happened and a

ruling was made that the Mayor of Banjul does not have the right to attest for anybody. So, it is a concern, understanding that the supplementary voter registration is coming. What are we to do as city dwellers or as people living in Banjul in terms of…

No, Honourable Speaker, allow me to finish my submission. We just want to come up with a solution because I believe the people of Banjul are also part of this country, and they have the right to vote and be voted for. In terms of getting access to documents, it should be as easy as it is for other places in the country. So, I am bringing that to the attention of the National Assembly for us to take note.

Honourable Speaker, I cannot complete my submission without talking about the health issues which is the most passionate component that people know me for as far as my parliamentary duties and representation are concerned. I have very genuine and important reasons why we need to work towards enhancing quality health services in this country.

Honourable Speaker, you will all agree with me that after so many years, almost 4 decades of support from donor agencies, what have we achieved as far as health is concerned? In that regard, I think it is always very important for us to make sure that all we talk about regarding health, we must be part of the global effort to attain what we call Universal Health Coverage. We can only do that by joining our efforts to support each other.

I heard other Members commending the Ministers of Higher Education and Basic and Secondary Education, which is very important. I think they deserve support because if we see Ministers trying to do things right in the country, National Assembly, as the apex authority, must do the needful by

making sure that we support them and give them all what it takes to do their work appropriately.

But again, under health, Honourable Speaker, the issue of the Mental Health Bill is still a concern. I heard the Minister's response saying that the Mental Health Bill will be in the National Assembly during the next Ordinary Session, but I just want to say that we need to make sure we stick to that because there is a need in the sense that, during the President's State of the Nation Address, he mentioned laws that were changed or repealed in this National Assembly because they felt they were outdated, which is true.

But I can tell you regarding the Mental Health Bill, we currently have what we call the Lunatic and Detention Act, which dates back to 1917 and is already 109 years old this year. It is very important for us to put into consideration to see how best we can update that particular Bill.

Honourable Speaker, the world is moving as far as health is concern. In terms of budget allocation, I mentioned it during the State of the Nation Address the issue of Abuja Declaration that talks about the 15%. I think it is important that as we see other countries in Africa working towards that, we have seen countries achieving even 11% now in terms of their budgets allocated to health. I think The Gambia can do that. The Gambia can go even beyond that, but it depends on, as the Vice President said, creating or opening the base in terms of having more resources. I believe together we can do that.

In that regard, all I want to say now is, let us act now. Let us act boldly because it is very necessary. We do not have to blame each other; we must act together if we really want to make sure that The Gambia becomes one of the best countries in Africa.

On that note, I submit. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Banjul North. I will now invite the Member for Sabach Sanjal.

HON ALHAGIE BABOU CEESAY [SABACH SANJAL]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker, for giving me the floor. First, I want to thank the Vice President and all Cabinet Ministers and technicians present here.

Honourable Speaker, before I go any further, I would like to apologise to you because there was a push-and-pull that happened between us during this Session, and I really want to submit that apology. Thank you.

Honourable Speaker, I heard somebody mentioning the name of the President before he came. But, Honourable Speaker, look at my time. I think it has been taken by the point of order I was raising. It needs to begin before I start**.**

THE SPEAKER: Yes. I think I am not sure why, but yes, perhaps, the point of orders. He should be given ten minutes. The Member for Brikama South is asking me if I will accept the apology. I say, of course, apology accepted, and thank you very much for that. Can you check your mic again?

HON ALHAGIE BABOU CEESAY [SABACH SANJAL]: Thank you. Honourable Speaker, the Member for Lower Baddibu stated that the President said "three years," blah, blah, blah. But when the President took over, there was someone already in prison, and he wholeheartedly went to the prison and forgave that person so that he could come out and be a normal citizen like us.

That same person the President termed as his political godfather was given one of the highest positions. The President said to him, "Choose any position you want in government." That person took Foreign Affairs and decided to appoint his own people to all the Embassies. Later, the same person said, "I do not want to be at Foreign Affairs now; I want to be next to you, as Vice President."

He was given the highest position in government, and the same person stood and said, "Anybody who talks about three years here will be in trouble." Today, his people are here telling us what has changed over time. Honourable Speaker, Sometimes I think some people are chameleons; they can change over time. I cannot understand what is happening in this country.

Honourable Speaker, let me just first begin with Sabach Sanjal, and I will come back to that because the people of Sabach Sanjal are the ones speaking. They say that they are very happy with President Barrow and have already decided that come 5th December 2026, they will vote for him again. However, they said that they would need some changes again before the end of this year. They want the Minister of Basic and Secondary Education to remain because the lady is doing a tremendous work within this Ministry, but we really need your support as far as the teacher shortage is concerned.

Honourable Minister, we face some challenges. You have equipped the Science lab at the school; you have built many classrooms. To be honest, we must thank you for that. But definitely, the school at Ngayen Sanjal is lacking teachers, and as a result, students are even moving to other cities now.

Also, the school fence at the primary school is another problem, and we really want you to support us because we are very good citizens who always obey the law and always make sure we follow what the Government wants for the development of this country. Therefore, since we are good citizens, we need good developments in our area.

Honourable Speaker, moving to Agriculture, someone said, "What is the Government doing about Agriculture?" I said it here yesterday, but some of them cannot understand simple Mathematics. That is the problem. During the past Government, a kilo of groundnut used to cost us D16, a bag of groundnut weighing 60 kilos would be roughly D960. A bag of rice was also D900. Subtract 900 from 960, and you are left with only D60.

Today, if you go to Sabach Sanjal, one kilo of groundnut is D38. The records are there; you can go and check. D38 multiplied by the same 60 kilos gives you D2,280. Subtract D1,600 for a bag of rice, and you are left with D680. That is what the Government is putting into the pockets of farmers. What are you telling us? If you want to tell us that the Government is not doing anything in agriculture, we say 'no' to that.

Honourable Speaker, when it comes to security, we also want to bring this to the attention of the Vice President. Honourable Vice President, as good citizens and good people of this country from Sabach Sanjal, we have decided to allocate a piece of land to you so that the Government can build and equip a Police station in Ngayen Sanjal. The land is there; we have given it to you free of charge because we want to complement the developments you are doing in the country.

Honourable Speaker, when it comes to the Janneh Commission that was mentioned here, we need to thank this Government. During the previous

Government, the same people who are now criticising saying they have not done anything, had the majority in the National Assembly. Look at the number of bills they passed, and compare it to when the Majority Leader and his people became the Majority Leader. I am not NPP, but I have to thank them. These people are very good; they have done a lot for this country. They have approved many bills.

[Point of Order]

THE SPEAKER: There is a Point of Order from the Member for Latrikunda Sabiji. Can we hear that?

HON YAHYA SANYANG [LATRIKUNDA SABIJI]: Honourable Member is addressing Members as "these people", "these people". Let him call them, Honourable Members. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member for Latrikunda Sabiji, you are on a Point of Order. Can we hear that?

HON YAHYA SANYANG [LATRIKUNDA SABIJI]: It is okay. I will do so.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Member for Sabach Sanjal. Continue.

HON ALHAGIE BABOU CEESAY [SABACH SANJAL]: Thank you. Like I said, Honourable Speaker, I must thank the Majority Leader for he has been doing a very good job for the country. You see, it is not only the Executive; it is a collective responsibility, and the Majority Leader has been leading us well. He has been leading this National Assembly on the right path to ensure that we pass laws that will strengthen our democracy in the

country. We must begin to appreciate his effort, unlike others who are always on the other side. I am surprised; things are happening like this.

Honourable Speaker, if I may proceed, someone mentioned the Janneh Commission. I am very much aware that all those appointed there were appointed based on the recommendation of the political father during those days. Yes. So, if the Janneh Commission is corrupt, who was the one appointing them? Who advised the President to appoint them? Let us look at that because the President does not just appoint people from the moon, he must have been advised by the former political... this thing they call him.

So, you see, the ECOMIG forces are still here. As a parent, if I have a farmland and someone comes from anywhere and says, "Tell your people they can stay, I will help to make sure we have better farm input and output." If I am a good father, I should not say no to that. I should be happy enough. Unless you have ill intentions, you would not ask them to leave.

So, Honourable Speaker, let us start appreciating what we have as a country, on a more serious note, because I think The Gambia is at an incubative stage. The fact that Gambia is at a growing stage makes it very important that we look at what is happening globally. Everywhere in the world, there are economic crises and problems here and there, and we have a very peaceful President who is making sure we stabilise the country. He stabilises our country economically.

So, at this stage, I do not think we should gamble with our country. We will not gamble because gambling is what you call "let us try Mr. X." And we are not going to try Mr. X when we have Mr. A doing what we want.

We are not going to try anybody here. Mr. A is doing it the way we want; we will not try Mr. O. We will not, to be honest.

So, Honourable Speaker, the people of Sabach Sanjal are telling me that I should inform the Vice President that these are the main issues they want you to address: one, the lack of teachers at Ngayen Sanjal Upper and Senior Secondary School, and two, the lack of a fence at the Basic Cycle School. Definitely, these are things they really want you to take care of, and they have sent me to come and address them here.

We also want to thank the Ministers and all of you. I also want to advise the President that once he wins the election again, let him appoint all of you again because you are doing what we want. So, since you are doing what we want, we need your backing. I will advise him to bring you back. I wish to thank all the Honourable Members of the National Assembly who have been following the footpath of the Majority Leader to ensure that we pass the laws here. Yes, because they have been doing what is right, most definitely.

I also wish to thank the Member for Nianija for he has fought on our behalf to secure brand new ambulances in Sabach Sanjal through the Ministry of Health. That is a very great achievement, and we must thank you, Honourable Chair, for that tremendous effort on behalf of the people of Sabach Sanjal.

Honourable Speaker, last but not least, I also want to thank the Honourable Member for Central Baddibu. He is a very good friend of mine; we have worked together for a long time, to be honest. Despite the fact that we may have our personal differences when we come to this Chamber, he is

someone I like very much, and I wish that he would join me in supporting His Excellency, President Barrow. I submit.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, the Member for Sabach Sanjal, for that eloquent and brilliant contribution. I now invite the Member for Kombo East.

HON ABDOU SOWE [KOMBO EAST]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. Honourable Speaker, I must first acknowledge the presence of the Vice President, his Cabinet Ministers, the fleet of technicians, and the Permanent Secretaries.

Honourable Speaker, I must begin by commending the Government and the President for his just-delivered State of the Nation Address [SoNA], in which he stated that our country's GDP has grown from 5.7% to 5.9% this year. Given the volatile situations we face globally, if The Gambia is growing at this pace, we must commend the Government for its steadfastness and foresight.

Honourable Speaker, furthermore, we have also learned that the inflation rate has dropped from 10.2% to 6.6%. This is a very powerful message and something Gambians should be proud of, especially considering the state of our local currency relative to international currencies, upon which we depend for importation businesses.

Honourable Speaker, I must commend this Government for the efforts it has taken to bring us to this point. Honourable Speaker, financially, this achievement alone is enough to settle debates. We should focus and strive to work together to ensure The Gambia continues to grow. And, inshallah, I am confident that with this trend, The Gambia will prosper.

Furthermore, Honourable Speaker, I align myself with some of my fellow Honourable Members who have already spoken by commending two Ministers. This is not to say others are not doing well. All Ministers are performing admirably, but exceptionally the two Ministers of Education: the Minister of Higher Education and the Minister of Basic and Secondary Education. Regarding Basic Education, I am a living witness. I have tested her and found her to be the best and fastest Minister in responding to the concerns of the people. In my constituency, Kafuta Upper Basic School was facing numerous challenges.

I did not raise it at the committee stage, though, I am a member of the Education Committee but took it up with her privately. I sent her a message, and she responded politely, even though, it was late at night. She assured me of her genuine interest in resolving the issue, and she followed up within one week and got back to me with a solution. I must commend her for that. Honourable Minister, thank you very much and keep it up.

As for the Honourable Minister of Higher Education, I host the University in Kombo East, and he updates me on every activity taking place there. He volunteers the information; I do not need to follow up with him. Thank you very much.

Turning to infrastructure, energy, and other development activities being undertaken by the current Government, we must commend them for their infrastructural vision. In Kombo East, the Narang Road, long cried out for by the people I succeeded in Parliament, it is now almost nearing completion. Thanks to the Government, and on behalf of the people of my constituency, we are sincerely grateful for the Narang Road.

Honourable Speaker, regarding Energy, the Minister has done a great deal within my constituency, ensuring that almost 90% of my communities have benefited from the rural electrification extension program. This has instilled a great deal of confidence among the people in my constituency, knowing that those yet to be connected will be served. I look forward to seeing my constituency becoming one of those that have achieved universal electricity coverage by 2026, and I am confident it will happen.

Honourable Speaker, turning to health, we commend the Minister of Health for the efforts within my constituency, particularly in equipping the Kafuta District Health Post and that of Pirang. We have seen many positive activities there. However, Honourable Speaker, I would urge the Minister to look into the densely populated community of Kuloro. They are at a distance from the Pirang Post and have their own community health post that they wish to see upgraded to better serve the community. I urge the Minister to consider this and focus on Kuloro to determine what can best be done for that Community Health Post.

Honourable Speaker, on Youth and Sports, I have been engaging the Minister of Youth and Sport to review and revisit the already-built Kafuta Youth Football Field. The structures and infrastructure there are beginning to deteriorate; they have a collapsed fence. The Minister has promised to visit the site with me, and we look forward to seeing him in that community to ensure these issues are addressed.

Honourable Speaker, more generally, considering the general business environment today, we also commend the current Government for ensuring that no Gambian is lamenting price hikes. We thank the President and his Government for maintaining and controlling prices and even lowering them

during the month of Ramadan, ensuring that all families could access reasonable and moderate prices in the market.

People were able to observe their Ramadan fast in a very peaceful and calm manner, with no disturbance or hindrance. On behalf of the people of my constituency, we must commend the Government for stabilizing prices during the month of Ramadan. On that note, Honourable Speaker, I beg to take my seat. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Member for Kombo East, for that summary, going straight to your points, and saving time. Honourable Members, at this point, I see the Majority and Minority Chief Whips. I would like to propose that we allow the Majority Chief Whip to come and hold the fort for a few minutes while I step down as I do not want us to pause, if you are in agreement. Do you agree? Yes, Member for Nianija?

HON AMADOU CAMARA [NIANIJA]: It is almost 5:30 p.m.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, Nianija, put it on again.

HON AMADOU CAMARA [NIANIJA]: It is okay.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, you know, in the adjournment debate, you do not need to move a motion because you have already moved a motion to adjourn sine die from now until tomorrow; you do not need that. Yes, Majority Chief Whip, come here. Thank you. The Member for Serekunda.

HON MUSA CHAM [SEREKUNDA]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. Honourable Speaker, I will concur with the Member for Lower Baddibu in his view that the President should not vie for a third term. This tradition was set by George Washington in the United States of America,

who ruled from 1789 to 1797. He chose to leave power to promote democracy and avoid the risk of a president becoming a monarchy.

Honourable Speaker, I will also follow protocol to thank some of the Ministers who have been very helpful to our community, the community of Serekunda. We have raised our concerns about the situation at Serekunda Basic Cycle School and the need for security there. Thanks to the Minister of Digital Economy, I believe, Mr. Bouy, who helped us secure funds to build a police post at the school.

Equally, we commend the Government for the road infrastructure they have constructed in our community. I also thank the President for acknowledging during our meeting at the Minority Caucus that we are partners in development. He recognized that all these ongoing developments were supported by us, the National Assembly Members.

Honourable Speaker, I wanted to raise the issue of public funds that are not reported in the Appropriation Bill. I thank the Member for Upper Saloum for amplifying my voice on the matter of departmental self-raised revenues and extrabudgetary funds.

Honourable Speaker, if I may read: "Extrabudgetary funds, as per the Public Finance Act, means a fund created outside the operation of the Consolidated Fund by an Act of the National Assembly in accordance with the provisions of Section 150[2a] of the Constitution, for the payment of particular revenues or other monies for a specific purpose," such as the Fisheries Development Fund, the Forestry Development Funds, and other development funds.

As per the Public Finance Act, regarding the retention and spending of departmental self-raised revenues, the Minister may grant permission

under sub-section 1 of the Constitution that the revenues and associated expenditures be included in the Appropriation Bill. That is why, during the budget debate, I stated that the budget is not in compliance with the Public Finance Act. We must either amend these provisions or have the Minister include a special column that reports the revenues generated.

Furthermore, under the same Public Finance Act, these extrabudgetary funds should be laid before the National Assembly annually for approval which is not currently being done. So, we urge the Minister of Finance to do the needful and ensure that our budget is in compliance with the Public Finance Act.

I would like to thank the Member for Bundung for raising the issue of the Boyo Field. When we were councillors, there was no documentation, and we fought very hard to secure the documents for that football field.

Honourable Speaker, I would also amplify the voice of the Honourable Member for Wuli. My heart beats in unison with the heartbeat of every Cuban who is suffering the brunt of the blockade imposed by the United States of America. I was fortunate to be the first National Assembly Member from The Gambia to visit Havana, Cuba; that was during the José Martí Award. They are very friendly people. So, we thank them for that.

Honourable Speaker, with all these road infrastructures in our communities, there are still other infrastructures that have not been considered, which could be very useful for income generation for the Government in the City of Serekunda and other growing towns. In its surrounding areas, there is a need for car parks. The absence of car parks is making it very difficult to access health centres and educational institutions in our community.

So, we urge the Government to consider investing in this type of urban infrastructure. Equally, drainage issues leading to flooding during the rainy season are also a concern. Despite all the standard roads we have, including the OIC roads, we have seen on social media and in cyberspace people uploading photographs showing the level of flooding in their communities. So, we urge the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure to include drainage in their development infrastructure plans.

Honourable Speaker, I could not participate in the SoNA Debate. Yes, because I felt that it was not subjected to our approval as National Assembly Members, whatever we might have said here, may not be included in those policies and programmes. But those are the Government's policies and programmes, but the SoNA left key important areas as important as the WAKA project, nothing has been said about the WACA project and the WACA project they need some extra funds in order to implement that project, which is not allocated in the budget and nor is it, you know, was it embedded in the SONA speech? Honourable Speaker, that is a concern.

Honourable Speaker, regarding youth unemployment, my community, Serekunda is a home to many youths who are ambitious, energetic, and are ready to work, but they still remain unemployed. Honourable Speaker, is a concern that our community Serekunda cannot be the economic heartbeat of this country and still battling with these issues of youth unemployment and underemployment. So, we urge the Ministry of Trade to come up with some programmes that will facilitate the employment of those youths, Honourable Speaker.

Honourable Speaker, the issue of gambling, the last time I saw in the Members Affairs WhatsApp page, sent by someone regarding the betting and gaming act that, they do not include the type of gambling that we are fighting for in our communities that is causing social vices.

You will see some people with their canopies or tents stuffed with equipment's and trying to lure women going to the market to come and play those games, and when you confront them, they will tell you that they have obtained permits from the police or the municipal council. This needs to be addressed Honourable Speaker and like I said, there is a need for…

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, your time is up, thank you very much, Honourable Member for Serekunda for that submission. May I call on the Honourable Member for Tumana? If he is out, then I can call on Honourable Member for Lower Niumi.

HON TAMSIR CHAM [LOWER NIUMI]: 'Bismillahi rahmani rahim' Honourable Speaker, His Excellency, the Vice President, Honourable Ministers present, Permanent Secretaries, technicians, security services present, 'assalamu alaikum wa rahmatullah'.

Honourable Speaker couple of years ago, I stood here in this very podium and appealed for electricity for my constituency of Lower Niumi. Alhamdulillah the Government has come to our aid, with regard to the Rural Electrification Project, we were able to get 57 communities supplied with electricity out of 66 villages. Right now, 9 communities that are yet to be electrified, but In Sha Allah, I am hoping that before the end of 2026, all those communities will be electrified thanks to the Government.

Honourable Speaker, now in terms of electricity also, I cried for my people of Jinack Island considering the geographical location of Jinack, right now,

what Government has decided is to supply them with solar power energy. I spoke to the Minister just a couple of days ago, now a team is set to go and survey Jinack Island for them to be supplied with solar energy, thanks to the Government. But I am appealing to Government to consider Jinack because their geographical location is kind of critical. They should be helped with clean drinking water and good feeder roads. I really need help for the community of Jinack.

Honourable Speaker Feeder roads couple of years ago, I stood here again and cried for feeder roads for my constituency of Lower Niumi. 'Alhamdulillah rabil alamin' just last week, Government has approved the GIRAV project and as a result, the foundation stones for the construction of two feeder roads have already been laid in my constituency of Lower Niumi with the hope that the job will start very soon. Thank you to the Government.

Honourable Speaker, regarding ambulances, I stood here a couple of years ago and cried for more ambulances in my constituency of Lower Niumi, but I am promised that 'insha'Allah' Government will order some new ambulances, and Fass Njaga Choi Health Centre in my community will be supplied with one and then one for Touba Angalleh and Ndungu Kebbeh as well. Definitely we need ambulances in those three communities.

Honourable Speaker, I cried for schools in my constituency of Lower Niumi, Government has answered my called and up to now definitely some schools are built and some additional classrooms are built in some schools. Up to now, there is no student that would work more than three kilometres to go to school, thanks to the present Government. Definitely, I appreciate that.

Honourable Speaker, I appeal here a mini stadium for my constituency of Lower Niumi. I engage the Ministry of Youth and Sport, though he has promised, yet still nothing is done but I am hoping that maybe before the end of 2026 or early 2027, they will come to my aid to help me with a mini stadium for my constituency of Lower Niumi.

Honourable Speaker, for four years now, I have been crying for speed bumps for some communities in Lower Niumi Constituency for four years now given that motor traffic accidents are rampant and so many lives are lost. Still now, I am yet to get those speed bumps from NRA. I am appealing to NRA through the Ministry of Works, to help me with those speed bumps so that we can minimize the rate of traffic accidents in my constituency.

Honourable Speaker, The Gambia Ferry Services, we have been suffering a lot at the crossing point of Banjul, Barra. I have been crying here for so long for Government to come to my aid to buy a new ferry. 'Alhamdulillah' Government has bought a brand-new green ferry that is to join the present fleet to ply between Banjul and Barra.

Right now, it has been commissioned and has started operating and then everybody is happy that my people of Lower Niumi, North Bank, are all happy now and thanks to the present Government. On that note, Honourable Speaker, without wasting much time, I pray that we witness all the adjournment debates in the near future. 'Wa kullu amin wa antum bi khair. Wassalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi.'

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Honourable Member for Lower Niumi, for those brilliant remarks. May I call on the Honourable Member for Brikama South to take the floor? Thank you.

HON LAMIN J. SANNEH [BRIKAMA SOUTH]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. First, I want to seize this opportunity to thank His Excellency and the Ministers here in person to attend this adjournment debate. Honourable Speaker, I want to deal with issues affecting Brikama, including both North and South.

Your Excellency, this is going to be a gentle reminder, I am a bit worried about the relationship of the Government and Brikama in particular, especially when it comes to development. It is very unfortunate sometimes since the advent of the new Government I was here since 2017, and we have been talking about issues confronting Brikama, but it is still a serious problem.

Some of my colleagues spoke, they requested last year, and this year they are in receipt of them and I do not think we have to be in a situation whereby if we need something, we go to Brikama, you will be surprised, Your Excellency, Brikama alone has almost 50% of the boreholes that support the greater Banjul area in terms of water production. You go to Tamala alone, we have 17 talk less of Foroya Forest Park, Kabafita Forest Park and Nyambai Forest Park.

They are all equipped with boreholes, yet there remain communities within our midst that still lack access to pipe-borne water. To be perfectly candid, these are pressing concerns. I recall, for instance, the ADB project that was expected to supply such amenities to parts of Madinah and Kitty, yet, to this day, those promises have not materialized.

I vividly remember an occasion in 2017, during the "Meet the People Tour," when I was chosen to speak on behalf of the community of Brikama. On that platform, we raised several critical issues. Chief among them was the

demand for the restoration or rather, the relocation of the military range, which has long been a source of severe noise pollution.

Beyond the disturbance, the use of sophisticated weapons in that area has had a contagious and harmful effect on residents. This is especially concerning given the proximity of several schools, including some of the finest in Brikama. To our dismay, despite the tentative suspension of training activities, the range remains in place, and we continue to push for its complete relocation.

Additionally, we reiterated the urgent need for a hospital in the area. Regrettably, even now, these requests remain unaddressed. The one we have in Brikama is that for the entire West Coast and even beyond, the neighbouring countries, use that facility. What is very surprising? You go to the maternal wing, you look at it, people want to deliver, they are waiting for one another. The President promised in that meeting that he has negotiated an out of state hospital that is coming up till today, to an extent that we have even allocated a land for the hospital to be built but up till today, we have not.

And the other issue is that, if you come up to Yundum, you look at the airport, Junction from there you will notice that if you pass that place, you are entering into a place where there is no street lighting and in Brikama, we have a street lighting that cover that trapezium, where it was removed by the former government, and I made that emphasis.

The President promised with emphasis that he will restore it, and not only that, he is going to install CCTV cameras and Wi-Fi. We are frustrated that; this is almost the 10th year since the promise was made. We have reconvened to discuss that and have now advised the President that we do

not need the CCTV camera and Wi-Fi, we need the street lighting. However, up to today it is outstanding.

And in fact, when you come to the road connectivity, Brikama is one of the most vulnerable within our connection because it is a bigger town. Nyambai alone you talk about Jeddah, these are very big communities. During the rainfall, there is usually a heavy downpour of 50 to 60mm which usually submerges the entire Brikama.

We talk about the drainage system up till today. Myself and the then Minister of Works went to certain areas to look at the drainage pattern and the road to inspect the level of implementation and to my dismay, the Kabafita-Bafoloto-Madinaring road which was already factored in the 2022 budget; they have only constructed up to Bafoloto and leave the rest. These are very serious issues given that the rainy season is coming. That particular year,

shortly before the Budget bilateral, we had what we call supplementary budget allocation that came when the British Petroleum removed their License when they were looking at the… So, they were charged with about 1.5 billion, that was brought in as a supplementary appropriation. D30 million was allocated for Basse Market and when we came to the budget proper, it has been increased to D100 million to overhaul the Basse market and build a new market for them.

And we use the opportunity to talk about the nature of Brikama market that burns which is one of the most vulnerable markets within the entire country. We talked about this issue but to our surprise, during 'Meet the People Tour', the president will be telling us that we want you to remove this your chairman and I will bring you a development.

You were here five years before the Chairman assumed office, and we are now almost at the tail end of nearly ten years. There is nothing we can directly point to as an area we are proud of that the Government has given us. You will be surprised, Your Excellency, that when the President was called to the international level to engage in presidential politics, the venue was created in Brikama for him to come and speak to the people. That was the first place where he was inaugurated. We played a critical role, but I do not know why we are being rejected, and why, as far as Brikama is concerned, this is the case going forward.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, the Speaker is speaking. If you are addressing the House, address the Speaker, not "Your Excellency," please.

HON LAMIN J. SANNEH [BRIKAMA SOUTH]: Thank you for the observation. Thank you so much, Honourable Speaker. Now, I will leave Brikama and move on to my famous topic, State-Owned Enterprises. If you look at the State of the Nation Address [SoNA], the President made it emphatically clear that in 2024, collectively, the State-Owned Enterprises lost about 2.6 billion dalasi. However, within one year, they were able to recover that and recorded a profit of 2.5 billion dalasi in 2025. In the next two weeks, there will be a dividend payment, and I have already been invited to attend.

So, what I want to inform the Honourable Speaker and His Excellency the Vice President is this: let us try to understand why these State-Owned Enterprises were established. All of them were created by an Act of Parliament to provide a service, not just an ordinary service, but a quality service that the citizenry can access at affordable prices. Some of them are enterprising companies that also pay dividends. The anticipated dividend

policy should be made public. Again, I want to look at how they maintain themselves, as they were undergoing serious problems. But now, with the advent of the SOE Act, we have the SOE Commission that is really conducting oversight, together with the parliamentary committee directly dealing with them. There has been significant improvement in governance and procurement, and that is extremely important.

We really want to discourage privatisation. To a certain level, yes, there is a free market policy, but we need to jealously guard our State-Owned Enterprises. You cannot be in a country where the Government must allocate a fuel budget to each MDA, while oil is sourced from the GNPC. When buying, you go to other oil marketing companies, I think that is not fair. So, we must protect these enterprises. They exist because the Government cannot go out and do that business directly; these entities are created for that purpose.

When it comes to GIA, look at how the Hajj package is distributed to all the suitcase NGOs that want to operate. How do we protect these institutions and help them regain their lost glory of contributing 50% of the country's GDP? That is very important, and I want us to pay maximum attention to it. On that note, I want to thank the Vice President and the team present. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you so much, Honourable Member for Brikama South. May I now call on the Honourable Member for Tumana to make a statement?

HON NFALLY M. KORA [TUMANA]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to contribute to the adjournment debate of this first session of the 2025 legislative year. Honourable Speaker,

first of all, I will thank the Office of the Speaker, our leadership, and of course the Executive, who have been with us since morning, along with their technicians. We thank them for being with us.

Honourable Speaker, I will start by speaking about Tumana because I am here on their behalf. The people of Tumana are very happy about some of the life-changing projects that the Government of The Gambia has brought to them. To start with, I will mention the road from Basse to Dampha Kunda, and from Chamoi to Tambasansang. Those are life-changing projects, they have transformed our lives. In those days, those places were nightmares, and those who know can attest to that. Honourable Speaker, today those roads are very motorable, and we thank the Government for giving us those opportunities.

Honourable Speaker, on the subject of roads, we continue to appeal to the Government for the route from Tinkinjo to Sanunding then to Dingerin and down to Diabuguba Sillah. This is a very important and critical corridor for the people of Tumana, serving about twenty communities along its stretch. Should the Government take steps to rehabilitate or construct this road, it would be deeply appreciated by our people. I have received information that a survey team has recently been dispatched to assess the road, and we are therefore hopeful that work will soon commence. If that happens, we will have nothing but gratitude for the Government of The Gambia for transforming our lives.

Additionally, the road from Badagry to Kolari, and onward to Pira Kunda and Sarja Kunda, is another vital link. I have also been informed that this road will be constructed by the Government. As you can see, the people of

Tumana are truly delighted with the Government's ongoing efforts on our behalf

Honourable Speaker, it does not stop there. We are also happy because our women are being supported. About three women's gardens have been distributed within Tumana, and I think that is very important, it will help our women. There is a sophisticated garden in Badari, Sarja Kunda, and Kulari. These people are farmers and depend heavily on gardening, so these projects are very important.

Honourable Speaker, we also thank the Government in the area of education. Previously, we did not have any Senior Secondary School, but recently we have three Senior Secondary Schools. Two Junior Secondary Schools have been upgraded to Senior Secondary Schools, and the other Senior Secondary School has been well equipped with the digital learning system. For that, we thank the Government.

Honourable Speaker, we still need some critical help from the Government, particularly with boreholes because we still have some communities that lack drinkable water. We appeal to the Government again to help us because these people are very vulnerable and poor, they cannot afford to do it themselves.

Honourable Speaker, I would now move on to areas of national concern. I think the Government is doing well because if you look across all sectors, you will see programmes and projects aimed at changing the lives and livelihoods of the youths of The Gambia. For example, the Tiger Centres have been established across the country, in Julakell, Ndemban, Kanilai, and others. These are meant to help the youths and prepare them so that they can become skilled, take care of themselves, and create job

opportunities for themselves and others. I think that is very important and should not be overlooked, Honourable Speaker.

Honourable Speaker, regarding bilateral agreements that the Government has entered into with countries like the Kingdom of Spain, the United Arab Emirates, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, what people need to understand is that the ultimate aim and objective of the Government is to help our youths, to provide them with ways and means to secure decent jobs. So, whatever unfortunate situations may occur, we should know that it is not the ultimate aim of the Government for these bilateral agreements.

Honourable Speaker, we also thank the Government for digital learning. According to the SoNA delivered by the President last week, we were informed that 122 schools were digitalised in 2022. I think this is very important because a country cannot progress without communication and digital knowledge. Our children need to start learning what it takes to excel in the digital age. If the Government is thriving in this area, I think it is very important.

Honourable Speaker, the University of The Gambia and the tertiary sector are also very important. As alluded to by some of my colleagues, the Ministry is doing great work. From the SoNA, we learned that 7.6 billion dalasi has been invested in the sector. I think this is very important. Now, all the faculties of the University, the School of Education, ITC, Agriculture, Public Administration, and the Chancery Building, are all housed at the Faraba Bantang mega campus. The University is becoming what a university is supposed to be, and the Government is doing this for the youths of The Gambia to prepare them so that they can go out, take care of themselves and their families, and create opportunities for others.

Honourable Speaker, there are other very important legislations that have been brought to Parliament by the Executive. We have passed the Student Revolving Loan Scheme, which is very important because it will help our youths access higher and tertiary education. The National Research and Innovation legislation is also very important it will help prepare our youths for tomorrow. The Tertiary and Higher Education Trust Fund is also commendable.

Now, I will move to health. The Government is striving, and in the 2026 budget, we have allocated ***D3.1 billion*** to the health sector. I think this is very important and cannot be overlooked. It is true that we are a Government and we have to criticise, but achievements should also be appreciated. That is not a small amount, it is a huge sum, and the Government should be thanked. The National Food and Drug Testing Laboratories are very important. We had a lot of problems in the past because we did not have labs or these facilities, so these are very significant. The Farato Emergency Treatment Centre is also a key development, and the Government has now provided 52 fully equipped ambulances.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, the Member for Tumana. I will now recognize the Member for Central Baddibu.

HON SULAYMAN SAHO [CENTRAL BADDBU]: Thank you, Honourable Speaker. Honourable Speaker, I also want to join my colleagues in thanking the Vice President and the team for witnessing the State of the Nation Address. Honourable Speaker, I will begin with my constituency, Central Baddibu, and then move on to national and international issues.

Honourable Speaker, give Caesar what belongs to Caesar. Yes, people have stood here to thank the Ministers for their commitment and support. We will give credit where it is due, and on that note, I want to thank our able men and women in the Executive for living up to expectation, though not without challenges.

Honourable Speaker, Njaba Kunda Lower and Salikenni Lower Basic schools have infrastructure issues. The community of Njaba Kunda, both at home and in the diaspora, mobilized resources to maintain a classroom block. I raised this with the Minister, but the Government did not intervene on time. In Salikenni, we have structures dating back to colonial days that urgently need a facelift. The teachers' quarters were built by a Good Samaritan, but they remain incomplete. If you see the condition in which the teachers are living, it is seriously unbearable.

Honourable Speaker, turning to roads, the Bani-Salikenni-Njaba Kunda road was welcomed by the community, and we celebrated when the foundation stone was laid. However, the progress is very slow, and the quality of the road is poor. This is not just my opinion; it comes from the National Road Authority [NRA] and the Minister himself, who went on a monitoring visit.

We want the Ministry to review this contract. If the contractor cannot live up to expectation, the contract should be reassigned to someone else before the rains come because a lot of money has already been invested in this project. We want to see a durable, roadworthy road. The NPP or the President cannot claim to have built the Salikenni road if it is not of quality. In two or three years, we will have another problem. We should not entertain that, Honourable Speaker.

Honourable Speaker, from Daru Rilwan via Kerr Pateh to Minteh Kunda, this is another crucial road in Central Baddibu; it is a belt. Over the weekend, we heard that the President laid a foundation stone at Njawara, which is welcome. I know it will extend to Minteh Kunda. But from Daru Rilwan on the highway to Kerr Pateh, which is a commercial centre, that road also needs to be fixed. I do not know whether it is part of the project or not. I would like the Vice President to clarify this for me.

Honourable Speaker, coming to fishing, Salikenni has been known for fishing since time immemorial, and considerable efforts have been made to ensure we produce enough catches to support neighbouring villages. The President, through the Ministry of Fisheries, supplied the community with fishing gear, but serious politics are at play. The equipment was given to a 70-year-old man, who is older than the Vice President. We do not expect that person to go fishing and bring catches to the community. We need to empower the youths, because these projects are meant for them, so they can earn a livelihood and avoid illegal migration.

We have communicated with the Governor, the Chief, and the Minister himself so that we can address this issue. As a government, we need to tackle issues in a manner that does not lead to resentment because if people leave, you will say Salikenni people are violent and that the Honourable Member is mobilising them.

This is our constitutional right. In the Constitution, Section 212 states: "All organs of the State shall strive towards the realization of national unity, peace, and stability." It also states, *"Every effort shall be made to integrate the people of The Gambia and foster loyalty to The Gambia without discrimination."*

Our people have been seriously discriminated against by that old man and his team, who claim to be NPP members. So, Deputy Speaker, you have a role to play. As part of the NPP, communicate with the people of Salikenni and ask your people where the boat is now. The boat is not, in fact, in Salikenni; it has been moved to another destination unknown to anyone.

Honourable Speaker, coming to youth and irregular migration which is an issue; it is not limited to The Gambia alone; it is a continental problem. Our young people leave the coast for Europe in search of greener pastures and a better livelihood. Honourable Speaker, this leads to loss of lives, particularly on Jinack Island. There is no family on Jinack that has not been affected. Parents are still mourning, and wives are mourning the loss of their husbands. There is no communication; two boats carrying nearly 300 people left Jinack Island, and nobody knows where they are now.

Honourable Speaker, in the past, the Government made efforts to strengthen surveillance around our sea areas to stop illegal migration. What is happening now? What is the Immigration Department doing? We need to intensify and strengthen our efforts to mitigate this crisis.

Honourable Speaker, coming to the country itself, Honourable Speaker, the Judiciary and the Executive are separate organs, but we believe they must respect each other, just as we should respect the Executive. The Judiciary should be independent; this is constitutional. If the Judiciary makes a decision, let us respect it.

Today, what is happening in Brufut is uncalled for, and we need a speedy justice delivery system in the country. These are the reforms we have been championing, and we are now entering the 10th year of our transition. If these issues are not addressed, they could lead to consequences that

affect you and me. An innocent old man sitting at his compound gate was left on the floor because of a protest. Why are people protesting? We must look at every reaction and its consequences. So, Honourable Speaker, we need to ensure that our institutions are respected.

Honourable Speaker, talking about the term limit, we will talk about it because term limits have led to violence in other countries, unconstitutional changes of government, and coup d'états, which we do not want in this country. I am not calling for a coup d'état, but I am saying we have to talk about it. Do you understand? It is part of ECOWAS protocols that there should be term limits.

So, whether it is in the Constitution or not, President Barrow should start with himself. He should leave a legacy in this country; this is his legacy, not Sulayman's. It is his legacy to say to the Gambian people, "Bye-bye, let them choose someone among them." So, we will talk about it, whether it is done or not. If we are not successful in getting him to respect our voice and understand us, then at the ballot box, we will kick you out.

Honourable Speaker, regarding the diaspora voting which is very key because according to statistics, remittances from the diaspora are crucial to our GDP. So, this Parliament should ensure that we give the diaspora the opportunity to vote. With supplementary registration coming, we should use it as a chance to give the diaspora a voice. Honourable Speaker, I want to thank each and every one of us for witnessing today's session.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Central Baddibu. I will now invite the Member for Upper Niumi.

HON OMAR DARBOE [UPPER NIUMI]: Thank you very much Honourable Speaker for giving me the opportunity. Honourable Speaker, let

me also join my colleagues in recognising the presence of the Vice President, other Cabinet Ministers, and their technicians.

Honourable Speaker, I will start with my constituency, Upper Niumi. We have been thanking the Government for giving us the Hakalang road, and we will continue to thank the Government for this important road. We also thank the Government for providing us with electricity for the first time in our lives. We had never had electricity until this new Government came to power.

Honourable Speaker, we thank the Government for the community ambulances provided to our three most strategic health facilities, Albreda, Kerr Cherno, and Nema Kunku. Honourable Chair for Health, we should continue to ask for more ambulances because more new health facilities are being built in Upper Niumi, especially at Kerr Mama. So, we need an ambulance there. However, we received a promise from the Honourable Minister that he will provide one, and we thank him for that.

Honourable Speaker, for us to recover from COVID-19 and the ongoing wars around the world, I believe agriculture is the solution. I have been saying it here. Regarding the 300 million dalasi allocated to GGC, I appeal to this Honourable House and to the Minister of Finance: it is better and important to bring a supplementary appropriation bill to give more funds to GGC in order to rescue this country. Today, the price of fuel has increased because of the Iran-America-Israel conflict. So, the Government needs to act fast to control it; otherwise, it may not end well.

Honourable Speaker, it is the responsibility of every government to provide food for every resident in this country and feed for all animals, and we cannot do that without promoting agriculture. There is a need for us to

invest in agriculture, and this Government is doing that. Today, more feeder roads have had foundation stones laid, and more farm machinery has been displayed in Brikama-Ba; we have seen it on TV.

I think the Government is on the right track. However, if you cannot meet national requirements, the Government needs to intervene by supplying inputs because you cannot produce from the land alone. To fill that gap, there should be an institution responsible, and GGC is the best player in that regard. That is why I said the 300 million dalasi allocated to them in the past budget is not enough. If we want to rescue the country, we need to bring a supplementary appropriation bill to give them more funds. Otherwise, we may be in trouble.

Honourable Speaker, the President going for a third term is a constitutional right. Our Constitution has no term limits. The Honourable Members calling for term limits and saying to start with the President, we were 31 in this Assembly in 2017, and we had all the powers including myself to change the Constitution. We had the numbers to change it, but we never did, Honourable Speaker. Instead, we brought a constitutional amendment for an age limit. You cannot make a law to suit an individual, and that is what we did here. What kind of talk is this in this Chamber?

Nobody can stop the President from going for a third term. And we, the Honourable Members of the majority camp, are 100% behind him. We are going to give him all our support. If you are in opposition, you are there to advise the President not to go for a third term. What of us? Why should we be afraid? We will not. So, rest assured, the two chief whips will start.

Honourable Speaker, this is the fact. The President has every right, morally and politically, under the Constitution to go for any number of terms he

wants, and the people of this country are going to vote for him because they owe him, and they will pay him back with more votes come December 2026.

The people of Upper Niumi are 100% behind the President, and the people of other constituencies are also 100% behind him. Even the constituencies where you are, they are now 100% behind the President, and this will become reality come December 2026. You will be very surprised in your own constituencies because people are not sleeping now; they are seeing what is going on. We are aware. In fact, if you are sure of winning the poll in 2026, why are you asking the President to step down? If you are 100% sure, then it means you are not sure of yourself. Yes, because you must be agitated. What I am saying, you do not like it.

Honourable Speaker, this is the reality. People, stop deceiving the Gambian people; you cannot take the law into your own hands. Your desire cannot override the law. You want the President to stop at two terms, yes. But is that what the law says? No. So, forget it, let us have peace in the country; otherwise, you may put yourself in a hot soup.

On that note, Honourable Speaker, thank you so much for giving me the opportunity.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Member for Upper Niumi, for that contribution. I now invite the Member for Kansala.

HON ALMAMEH GIBBA [FONI KANSALA]: Thank you, Honourable Speaker. I thank the Vice President and the various Ministers present, and also thank all Members of this National Assembly.

Honourable Speaker, I go straight to Basic and Secondary Education. Dr. Honourable Drammeh, we are very pleased with the immediate action you have taken in terms of directives on graduation ceremonies. I think we would not be fair if we did not thank and salute you for that. You are on the right track. Remember that you are not alone in this; we will join you to support this crusade.

Also, to parents who have children in school, let them adhere to the directives of the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education so that it will be a crime-free process. And again, regarding the wastage of financial resources where kindergartens, basic, and secondary schools wear gowns as if they are graduating, which is a norms and history will record you. We are very pleased with this effort. Thank you so very much.

Honourable Speaker, in my constituency, we have Fatima Senior Secondary School. Honourable Minister of Basic and Secondary Education, we have a challenge with Mathematics teachers, and Science is also a challenge. In most cases, the teacher from my Mayork Senior Secondary School does a lot of work; he organises extra classes in Mayork and then travels to Fatima to support the students.

So, we seek your indulgence as a Ministry to solve this. Fatima was once a great school, but today Fatima is not what it used to be. We are asking for your support in this crusade because Science, Chemistry, and Physics were historically strong, and history will write us properly. But today, it is a big challenge for Higher and Secondary Education.

Honourable Speaker, to Higher Education, we say salute and thumbs up. The Kanilai Science and Technology Skill Centre is up and running, and we have seen the Government's support through you and the enormous effort

you made in knocking on donors' doors, which has resulted in tremendous support. We thank you very much, Honourable Professor, for your stand and for the provision of equipment. No TVET centre will work well without equipment.

Honourable Speaker, through the Vice President, the Government should take a holistic approach to ensure it becomes mandatory for the Government to provide this equipment, not only depending on donors. If donors do not come, those TVET centres will become history. So, I think the Vice President should take note of that so that the Government can inclusively include in the budget tools and materials for TVET centres.

Regarding Higher Education, I will say this and I think I am on record: the President has mentioned the 300 million dalasi for the National Food Security Processing and Marketing Corporation for recapitalisation. It is our making, and I am informing the President and the Cabinet Ministers that it is our making. It was not done through the Minister of Finance. When we started this, he had to leave. We even told him that we would put it there and we would cut it. It is Parliament's making.

So, we are putting this to the Vice President to inform the President that we made this, and history will record us. Honourable Speaker, we are also putting it to the Minister of Finance that we want these funds to be available. We will not put this forward only for him to give excuses about the recapitalisation of GGC. We are warning him about that; that resource must be available.

Again, regarding electricity, 200 million dalasi was also crafted by us parliamentarians. So, if the Government is taking credit, I wonder how? It is our making; we cut from various sectors, and Higher Education suffered

because of that. We wanted to say that for scholarships for Higher Education, Members rushed and said, let us work on electricity. So, parliamentarians, I say to you, thank you very much for also improving rural electrification in this Parliament by cutting from other sectors.

Honourable Speaker, in the area of health, I thank the Minister of Health through a World Bank project. Today, Bwiam is Bwiam. One thing I will tell them is that they keep renaming hospitals. The Sulayman Junkung Jammeh Hospital, formerly known as Bwiam General Hospital, has been renamed. I know the hospital in Mankamang Kunda will also be renamed when the next government comes. So, that one is not an issue.

So, for Bwiam General Hospital, it is up and running, and I think the work is at an advanced stage, about 90 to 95% is already done. The hospital is making enormous progress, and we thank the CEO for partnering with the Paul Foundation, which has supported the maternal and neonatal unit. Last week, they donated equipment, so we also thank him for his support and for private sector collaboration in the health sector.

I want to put this to the Vice President, the Minister, and even the President that health is not just only about infrastructure as can be seen at Ndemban where the condition is unbearable. I want you to take the chance and visit Ndemban for yourself. We are not just speaking for the sake of it; we are here to ensure proper oversight. It is indeed a concern that, a hospital like Ndemban in such an unbearable condition.

Honourable Member for Banjul, we went together when this issue of boat carrying illegal migrants capsizes arose. People were lying on bare floors at RVTH. They have been on drips in this 21st century because of the problems the health sector is facing. Before you talked about improving

Edward Francis Small Teaching Hospital or Ndemban, work on Bansang, Farafenni, Bwiam, and Brikama. Work on all these health centres; it will reduce pressure and ensure functionality as expected.

So, I think these are all issues I want to raise. No, please, do not stop me. So, the health sector is a concern, and we are following them. For me, in Bwiam, every day or every week, I will go there to observe and see how the World Bank project is progressing, and I am proud of the hospital. Thank you very much to the Government and through the Minister of Health.

Down to security, Honourable Vice President or Minister of Digital Economy, I do not know who will represent. I will inform him that digitisation is very difficult, and you need to take the bull by the horn to digitise this country. That is the solution to reach our final designation in terms of resource mobilisation.

The other part I also want to put across to the Vice President, Honourable Speaker, is about the redundancy or payoff social plan for Gamtel and Gamcel. Out of 642 people, they said they had to pay them. If you serve 17 years, you are not paid for 17 months; each year, we all know it is 12 months. Each year, you are paid only two months.

I do not know who initiated or sat over this to come up with this social plan. The vulnerability, I was talking about yesterday is that if, for example, a person is paid these severance packages and has a loan with Gamtel, the bank, or the credit union, all those monies will be remitted, and they end up going home with nothing. So, the social plan has no provisions to address that. I think we have to think outside the box; it is unfair and vulnerable, and we all know the condition of this country.

Honourable Speaker, finally to Defence, Honourable Speaker, this is to the Vice President. You see, the National Security Council and the immigration bill or the various six security bills, as I said, I want you to take a stand to those ministries and departments. They are in their cobwebs, especially Immigration. They created a unit to police the border. Last week, I was told they intercepted a boat around Tanji, but the people came with guns while they were bare-handed.

The training commensurate with the bill is in line; they will also be armed, but they cannot be armed because the bill is nowhere to be seen. We put this question to the Minister of Interior and the Minister of Justice. The Minister of Justice will say heaven and earth, and the Minister of Interior will also say heaven and earth. I do not know where this bill is. If Immigration is supported, it will yield dividends. They collected D508 million in 2025. If they are supported, it will be a game changer for the resource mobilisation we are talking about.

Honourable Speaker, I think these are the areas I wanted to talk about. I am also finally saying that regarding Foni, if the Government does not decide, we will decide, and the decision will be made by us soon. We will not be left vulnerable in our own country, where cells will come from Senegal and the Government says nothing. We will act, and we will act soon if the Government does not act. 'Assalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu.'

THE SPEAKER: I will now invite the Member for Foni Jarrol.

HON KEBBA T. SANNEH [FONI JARROL]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker for giving me time and space to also participate in this adjournment debate.

Honourable Speaker, I must thank the Vice President and the Honourable ministers who are here. Definitely, these are people who mean business because they always choose their national responsibility before politics. Anytime we have business with them, the business is always considered.

Honourable Speaker, whatever is going on in the country, it is all about economic challenges. All of us agree the Government is constructing roads everywhere. All of us agree that the Government is building health post everywhere and also providing ambulances. We again agree that the Ministry of Higher Education is performing very well together with the Ministry of…

THE SPEAKER: Minority Leader, yes, it is 6:30 now and you know, we are on motion for adjournment. Please, Foni Jarrol, continue. I hope you are not increasing his time.

HON KEBBA T. SANNEH [FONI JARROL]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. All what I want to highlight today is about the economic challenges and I want to ask the Vice President; there were certain good things happening that were stopped. People are talking everywhere, not because you are not doing any development projects, but it is all about economic challenges that cannot match with the high cost of living in the country.

Your Excellency, Vice president, before, orderlies used to travel with the Ministers when they visit other countries, you people put a stop to it. Your Excellency, in the past, any time you got admission into the college, you are paid stipend and granted a job. In fact, when you are sent to Taiwan for studies in those days and return after finishing your studies from university, there is a job waiting for you.

Your Excellency, do we sometimes stand up for our people? Another economic challenge is our drivers and the transport union. Senegalese will drive into the country anytime any day…

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member for Foni Jarrol, address me.

HON KEBBA T. SANNEH [FONI JARROL]: Just say, let me look at you.

THE SPEAKER: Foni Jarrol, I said address me, please.

HON KEBBA T. SANNEH [FONI JARROL]: Thank you, Honourable Speaker. The Government needs to be standing for its people. Few weeks ago, our drivers were complaining. Senegalese Government or Senegalese drivers will drive to the country any time of the day without being harassed or without being stopped.

In case of our drivers, they are not even allowed to get into Senegal. They have a stopping point where they will ask them to stop and blamed it on the Transport Union for being responsible. Are we standing for the economic prosperity of our people? All the developments being talked about are surrounding on infrastructure.

You often hear people saying the Government is constructing this or that. You stopped a lot of good things and I once said it here that being an opposition is not a crime. But for you people when you are in the opposition, it was a crime because when you came, you stopped a lot of good things like what I am talking about.

Today, it is your people fighting together left, right and centre. It is not us. You did not find us to be the problem because when you came in 2017 or 2018, Putting on the screen was a crime. In fact, if they were able to arrest you or take you to ICC, they will do it. It was the biggest crime.

Today, you are shaking hands together. We sit, observe, watch and enjoy you. We need to stand up for our Foni people, what we need there is economic prosperity. People need jobs, people need salaries that would mitigate the high cost of living in the country.

Your Excellency, the Vice President again, the Speaker, I still want to find out why, up to date, you still have some security forces whose house rent allowances is D250. I just want to verify as to what we approve here was more than D250 or not. But I have evidence that I can still show that D250 as house rent. Why does this continue to exist? This is why the noise is all over the country.

When we say security, we are not only talking about the police securing us. In my Foni Jarrol Constituency, we need a vehicle because where we are, some of the compounds are in Casamance and we know what is happening there. How would the police reach Kampasa on time? Sometimes they have to hire motorbikes to go there.

And again, my people live at the borders and with regard to the money that was given to the women from the Women Enterprise Fund, they could only be invested in firewood business. Now, it is even dangerous to get to the border villages to fetch firewood and sell which is another trouble for them.

Again, with the ongoing rebellion crisis and the situation at the border gardens, women are forced to flee and abandon those gardens. When those gardens go without water for two weeks, it becomes a serious problem. Remember, the college is also not free, and families are under severe economic pressure. How are they expected to pay school fees when

there are people who have completed college or university and are still sitting at home with no jobs?

I have said before that the noise we are hearing is not about the construction of these roads. The Government will talk; they will start counting roads from Basse to Barra. But I do not think we have met the length and breadth; or the number of roads that the former Government constructed.

Today, the Coastal Road is where all of us want to live because we have transformed it into what it is now. But for places like Dasilami, Marakissa, and for some of you coming from Gunjur, you never used to drive there before. I do not know why you speak as though nothing happened before. It is very sad, and look at today. It is you people who came together in 2017 to fight us; now you are fighting each other, and you continue fighting each other. We do not sympathize with you because your team was built on falsehood, and now the truth is going to destroy you. That is what will happen.

Our people need economic prosperity; the country must stand for its people. I was surprised when I saw that what is happening in Foni received no public statement from the Government, yet when something happened in the Middle East, a statement was issued. Who did you blame? You blamed the oppressed, not the oppressor. I have had enough; you even fear to speak the truth and say who is to blame. Blame the right person. That is where my Babili Mansa stands, he goes straight to the point; he does not beat about the bush. So, all that I am saying here is not that you people are not making progress in development.

Today, for example, we are proud of the university. Just a week ago, about 54 medical doctors graduated on our own soil; something that never happened during colonial times. But in this graduation, Babili's name will never be mentioned, and yet you say you want us to unite. I think you are special people who need special treatment.

Sometimes, I wonder when you come here and say, "We are speaking the truth." What is this truth? Our people need economic prosperity, both in offices and at workplaces. We approve things here, but when we look especially at security, it seems totally ignored. There were good things; even the 'Set Setal' initiative was stopped, and that was a good program. I want to find out why we cannot continue with Set Setal. I told you before when we were doing it, you called it forced labour. Today, we want to bring it back, but it is not possible. Why? Because if you bring it today, you will still call it forced labour.

So, you see, we must be genuine opposition members. Being in opposition does not mean being a criminal. I know today, for you people, if you get the opportunity, you will knock us down or even get us out of the Assembly because you think we are enemies of progress. But you are your own enemies. When you came to power, you stopped all the good things; that is what you did. Even the allowances we used to give to security personnel before, the security forces did not lack meat. I feel for them when I see them sometimes. I say, "They are sending you to stop protests, while some of you are going hungry." How are you going to stop them when they are not eating adequately?

During our time, there was free meat sent to the camps, even here in Kanifing, the PIU was always supplied with meat. When you came to

power, you formed the Janneh Commission and shared out all our cattle, and the security forces got nothing. You shared almost everything. You came to destroy the country, but now you are blaming each other. You are sitting there watching.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, Order! Honourable Members, you know that while Members have the privilege of saying whatever they want within heaven and earth, you are guided by the law to say things that you can substantiate. I am not sure which allowances have been stopped, but maybe when the Vice President comes and the motion is moved, we will be able to substantiate that. Order, Honourable Members. You cannot say that is false.

The Member for Foni Bintang Karanai, you have the floor.

HON BAKARY K. BADJIE [FONI BINTANG KARANAI]: Honourable Speaker, my time is being eaten into… Okay. Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

To start with, as I always say, we are here to stay for your information, and 'Alhamdulillah', for 9 months there was no adjournment debate in the National Assembly. 'Alhamdulillah', this time you have allowed us to debate on matters and issues affecting Gambians. It has never happened in the history of The Gambia that National Assembly Members would come here deliberately adjourn without debate for nine months. It has never happened in the history of The Gambia, except under the NPP Government, except under the Majority Caucus, where they always deny us the chance to debate here in the National Assembly.

Honourable Speaker, going further, we are here to raise the concerns of our people, and our people's concerns matter to us. So, the NPP Members cannot continually deny us the right to participate in the debate of our country and our affairs.

[Point of Order]

THE SPEAKER: There is a point of order from the Member for Nianija.

HON AMADOU CAMARA [NIANIJA]: Honourable Speaker, I think he is imputing improper motives to other Members. Order 29[5] states: *"No Member shall impute improper motives to any other Member."* I have it here, but everybody knows. It is common knowledge for all of us. You are imputing improper motives to Members. Any decision made here is made by the Plenary, not by individual Members. Please, stop that.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, Order! Yes, the point of order from the Member for Nianija is sustained. Members, please, you know this is the highest democratic institution, and whatever happens here is by the voice of the majority which is the voice of God. So, please Members, whatever motion or voting that took place here, do not blame it on a section of Members and present them in a manner that imputes improper motives to them.

The Member for Foni Bintang Karanai, please avoid that and continue.

HON BAKARY K. BADJIE [FONI BINTANG KARANAI]: Thank you, Honourable Speaker. To continue, Honourable Speaker, the Majority Caucus has constantly denied us from debating.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member for Foni Bintang Karanai, you must respect my ruling. If you want to continue your debate, you must avoid that. If not, I will send you out of these Chamber.

[Point of Order]

THE SPEAKER: Yes, the Member for Lower Saloum, you have the floor.

HON SAINEY JAWARA [LOWER SALOUM]: Honourable Speaker, Order 8[3]: *"The Speaker's ruling shall be final on all questions of procedure and order."*

Honourable Speaker, you see, the Member for Foni Bintang Karanai rose on a point of order and you said that your ruling is final, yet he himself is now going against that ruling. I think he should obey and practise what he preached because he has already denied the Speaker's ruling, and he stands there trying to do so again.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. Order, Members from Brikama North, Central Baddibu, and others. Please, let us maintain decorum. Lower Saloum, Order! Honourable Members, the Member for Foni Bintang Karanai rose on a point of order in this very sitting today, and when I made a ruling, he believed it was in his favour. Someone tried to disobey it. He reminded the Member that the Speaker's ruling is final and should be obeyed.

Yet in the same sitting, he is disregarding that. Honourable Member for Foni Bintang Karanai, I want us to live by what we say. I want us to abide by the Standing Orders of this Assembly. I do not want people to disregard my rulings. If you want to continue debating, you must abide by that. If you want to debate, you have the floor.

HON BAKARY K. BADJIE [FONI BINTANG KARANAI]: Thank you, Honourable Speaker. The President must go. The President must go. Honourable Speaker, some of us remember where we came from and we are not easily intimidated by anything.

Honourable Speaker, we have a nation to build and in the process of building our nation, we know it will be hard and challenging, but we are ready to overcome the challenges we faced. Nothing, I say nothing, can stop us from conquering this battle. I tell you that for free, and 'the President must go' is a slogan in 2026 that we must sing, and we stand by it.

Honourable Speaker, I want to remind the Gambian people, especially the Government, that the Alkalos are not servants of the Government. The Alkalos are not your agents to be imposed upon. Be very careful of these realities. Most of you would say that Alkalos are under the Government; Alkalos are our government because we have paid them a little money, and you want them to always stand by you.

However, the Alkalos are there for all opposition parties of this country, and the Alkalos are there for all Gambian people. The Alkalos are not only there to be used by the Government. That is not realistic. It is not sustainable, and we must desist from that. I am warning you from now on.

Going further, Honourable Speaker, you see, when I looked at the State of the Nation Address by the President on Paragraph 43, he said that 90% of Gambians have access to electricity. But in my constituency, for instance, we have 43 villages and 17 villages out of that have no electricity. Those are Jakoi Sibrik, Bitta, Oupat, Jelembere, Janack, Nyangit, Taima, Sikone, Sita, Jako Badillo, Kaira Manjanfa, Fass Njie Denayno, Jakoi Bintang,

Jakine, Kamosor, and Toubakuta. All these villages are without electricity. Where is the 90% that he claimed?

As much as we are talking, let us speak about the realities that exist. I challenge you to come up with the plain truth. And if things are difficult for us, let us say as they are. Let us say, "It is difficult". We must all stand together and find solutions to the challenges we face.

Honourable Speaker, going further, the rearrest of Ousainou Bojang after being discharged by the court is unconstitutional. It is unrealistic…

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, technician, this interjection is about a minute; you must minus it from his time. Yes, when he continues, he will speak less than a minute of his time. I told Members that my ruling must be abide by. He was here when I made that ruling. If you talk about Ousainou Bojang here, I will send you out of this Chamber. No, of course, I will do that. If you do that, I will send you out of the Chamber.

Order, Honourable Members. Honourable Members, we must not joke with the business of the Assembly. The Speaker cannot make rulings that Members blatantly disregard. I will not tolerate that.

Proceed and the time has been reduced from his allocation.

HON BAKARY K. BADJIE [FONI BINTANG KARANAI]: Honourable Speaker, to remind you that the new Barra ferry is a scam; a real scam for that matter. Honourable Speaker, we must ascertain whether this ferry is even new or old. We must ascertain whether it is second hand, third hand or fourth hand.

Honourable Speaker, going further to tell you about the reality, this ferry… Honourable Speaker, I am only given one minute when I should be given…

THE SPEAKER: Yea, because you are disrupting this proceeding.

HON BAKARY K. BADJIE [FONI BINTANG KARANAI]: Honourable Speaker, I am left with 4 minutes or more.

THE SPEAKER: Okay, you have 4 minutes. So, you will speak for 3 minutes as 1 minute will be subtracted from the 4 minutes. Go ahead.

HON BAKARY K. BADJIE [FONI BINTANG KARANAI]: Honourable Speaker, going further, the ferry as they told us is very fast, but it takes almost 1 hour between Banjul and Barra, sometimes 1 hour 30 minutes. Just yesterday, we were there when it was crossing. I am not told; this is what I experienced. So, this is why I am saying it is a scam. So, we must be realistic to ourselves.

In as much as we are looking at issues and things, Honourable Speaker, salaries for civil servants should be improved. How do we improve when we say the economy is growing, but the salaries for civil servant is less than $200? It is, in fact, less than $150. Honourable Speaker, we must be ready to improve the salaries of the civil servants so much so that people can have decent living conditions in the country.

Honourable Speaker, I want to thank the Ministers, especially the Minister of Basic and Secondary Education and the Vice President who are seated here. I know some of the Ministers, like the Minister of Agriculture, are busy bullying and insulting politicians in the political arena. This is why he is not here.

Honourable Speaker, going further, when it comes to agriculture, we have a commitment to fulfil. Honourable Speaker, you cannot go and give horse cart to people and allow them to be singing and praising you. It is not

realistic. You are only bringing billboards but real agricultural mechanization should give us the attainment of food self-sufficiency. However, you are not thinking in that line, and that you can continue to fool Gambians. I am telling you, 2026 will not be good for you.

Honourable Speaker, to go further, you see, when we talk about issues, we talk about the realities which we are putting forward. Today, as we stand in the country, we have a lot to work on, and some of those issues that we are neglecting are very sensitive and important, especially inflation. The President, with all what is happening, wants to maintain ECOWAS here for a third term. That will never be possible.

Guess what and you will talk about this after 2026 election, you will remind me of my words, "Ala safeh, aliya landi; ali ba fola moliye leh." These are important terms. I am telling you that the ECOWAS no third term policy stands, including The Gambia which cannot be an exception. So, we cannot allow the President to go for a third term because we cannot allow the ECOMIG forces to continue to stay in the country. If the country loves him, why do we need ECOMIG forces here? So, the President must go 2026 'insha'Allah' and nothing can stop that.

Honourable Speaker, going further, ***600 million*** on travels, what are those travels giving us? Imagine if we had to put that 600 million in agricultural mechanization, improving the seeds, invest in technical know-how and subsidise farmers, that will boost our economy and take us to another level. But I know some of you are allergic to the truth, and you do not want the truth. What can we do? This is the situation.

In terms of sport in Foni, Honourable Speaker, to the Sports Minister, … I know some of you are in a haste for my time to elapse. Be rest assured.

Honourable Speaker, there is a mini stadium in Foni Bintang Karanai, and we want to task my namesake, the Honourable Minister of Youth and Sports, to take up the responsibility. We do not want him to be giving jerseys and allow people to be singing or clapping for them. We want it to be realistic, and let them construct multi-purpose centre in that mini stadium for the youth of Foni Bintang Karanai as they are part and parcel of the country.

So, on that note, I kindly and humbly take my seat with pride. Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Member for Foni Bintang Karanai. I now give the floor to Nominated Member Maimuna Ceesay.

HON MAIMUNA CEESAY [NOMINATED]: Thank you, Honourable Speaker, for giving me the floor. I would also join my colleagues to thank the Vice President and the Cabinet Ministers here present since in morning. I would also like to thank the Office of the Speaker and the Office of the Clerk, the technicians who make this Session to be so successful.

Honourable Speaker, I will start my intervention by thanking the Minister of Agriculture with the GIRAV project, which is giving the Gambians the feeder roads they deserve. The Gambia does not belong to the Banjulians or the Kombonkas, the rural areas also should be enjoying the benefit of the State as we all deserve it.

I can see that whoever stands here would complement their own areas, but the rural areas also deserve better. I would like to thank the President for giving the Njawara-Minteh Kunda Road a serious consideration and the far-right Member's area which is Central Baddibu as the Salikenni-Njaba Kunda Road is also under construction even though we all understand that

the slow pace of the construction is kind of a concern. We commend the Government for the construction of the ***207-kilometer feeder roads***.

Honourable Speaker, this country belongs to all of us. Unfortunately, last week I was not here when the SoNA took place. But we live in a digital world where I have the privilege to watch the entire SoNA, and what I have watched observed that day is pathetic. We are National Assembly Members, and we are supposed to be responsible people. Our own Standing Orders guide us in our actions, movements and everything in the National Assembly.

Honourable Speaker, Order 17[a]: *'All Members shall enter and leave the Chambers with decorum'*. Honourable Speaker, what happened during the day of the SoNA is unacceptable and uncalled for.

Honourable Speaker, being an opposition does not give a license to anybody to be disordered. We have to respect this Chamber and respect the people we are representing. I will dwell on that one instead of the other. Most of my colleagues have already dwelt on it. I do not want to repeat, but it seems like everybody wants to ignore that particular thing. It is not going to be past and gone.

We have to be responsible and act as responsible Members when representing our people. Democracy can be strengthened by debate, not by chaos. Discipline is not a threat. Members cannot stand in the Chamber here trying to belittle the President by a so-called point of order. Who are you ordering? Is it the President you are ordering because some people in the gallery were clapping because of the comments they were using here? Do our Standing Orders have any legality on those people? I do not believe.

Had it been that is the case, the Speaker should address the gallery before the SoNA begins. But if that does not happen, when people are chanting or clapping, it should not lead to chaos. It is natural in the world. Clapping in the National Assembly should be accepted when such an event is happening. We are not talking to ourselves; we are talking to those people. If they are happy to hear what they want to hear, definitely when they clap, that should not be a chaos in the Assembly.

But I thank my President, His Excellency, for he is somebody who is a democrat. He is somebody who is humble. When they were acting very low, he acted very high of them. By seeing the posture with that beautiful smile in his face that he posted, that will make him lead this country to the best of his ability. The democracy we fought for in 2016 is going to be preserved in the country.

Honourable Speaker, I think some of these oppositions are politically bankrupt. They do not have any information; they do not have any political agenda to give to the Gambian people other than fighting, caricaturing and criticizing the President. They cannot work on any tangible ideas that will bring the nation to a perspective way. They are politically bankrupt with no agenda.

Honourable Speaker, I would like to thank the Minister of Energy. The Lower Baddibu North have been experiencing non-electricity since The Gambia got independence. About 17 communities were left without electricity. But thanks to the Minister of Energy, I think only 3 are left out of 7 of the last phase in Lower Baddibu North. I want to thank the Minister for that, and still now we want them to help us with those 3 communities because it would be odd for those communities to be surrounded by

satellite villages with electricity when they are without. So, we are yearning for that; let the Minister consider us on that.

Honourable Speaker, I would now turn attention on the famous term limit from the far left. Why the time limit now because we have never had it since independence in 1965? It is the same Gambia, we were all here. Sir Dawda was here till his term was ended; we never had such a term limit. Yahya Jammeh was here for 22 good years; we never had such a drama. But why always term limit for President Barrow?

That is why I said that they are politically bankrupt. If they have the political idea, they can also manoeuvre to get this country the way we manoeuvred in 2016, but they have not. What they are yearning for today could easily happen in this country had it been they approved the Draft Constitution. But they were the first people who denied the Gambians that right.

When President Barrow was coming to this new dispensation, everybody thought that The Gambia was on the right direction with the coalition. But when they put their political coup d'état, they weaponized the entire episode. The entire coalition collapsed because of them because they were not genuine to what they were preaching in their political podiums. There was a civilized coup which was averted by the citizens of this country.

In 2021, we denied them and still now those are the bitter people in the society who want to continue trying to inject insanity in this country. It is not going to happen. The instability they are trying to inject, we will deny them as we did in 2021. And this 2026 is going to be worse than that because Gambians have already tested their power, ability and credibility, and it has put them into question.

President Barrow has nothing to worry about in this 2026. If they have any agenda, let us go meet the electorate. We are heading to the election, and we want a peaceful election in this country. We are heading to the voter registration, let them put their people there if they believe. We have known non-Gambians registered in this country. If we have to go through the history, we know the party's history. The party those people if they are even lack of the thumbprint, they can do their feet to thumbprint. We know them, and we know their capability. We know whatever they are crying for. They are the ones who are good at that. I was part of them, and I know what was happening there.

So, therefore, they cannot accuse us something which they were doing. I know certain individuals within the rank of that political party who are doing the dubious in term of political registration. So, we know; we do not have to be talking. But let us get there, the system will correct every one of us.

On that note, Honourable Speaker, I take my seat.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, Order! You know, she is the only female within our midst. Order! Honourable Members. She is the only female within our midst today, and her contribution is excellent. Thank you very much, Nominated Member.

I now invite the Member for Latrikunda Sabiji.

HON YAHYA SANYANG [LATRIKUNDA SABIJI]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. By the time you call my name, I was looking at the photos uploaded on the National Assembly website. Of all the Members, I realize I am the most handsome here.

Honourable Vice President, I thank you and your entire Cabinet for your patience to listen to all what the Honourable Members are saying regarding your various sectors.

Honourable Speaker, I want to ask the Honourable Vice President as to how the Government feel when we do things like the former dictator, Yahya Jammeh, was doing. I remember, in 2016, we went round the country far and wide telling people that President Yahya Jammeh was a dictator, by way of that he arrested arbitrarily, detained and teargassed people. Now, we are doing the same thing. That is why I want to know how your Government feel when we do the same thing that former President Yahya Jammeh was doing. How do we feel?

Honourable Speaker, when people talk about term limit, to be honest with you, my easiest candidate to defeat in 2026 Presidential election will be President Barrow. But let us be very honest here, Honourable Members, President Barrow is caught between constitutional obligation and moral conscience.

In 2016, what Coalition Government or coalition partners told Gambians was that they were going to bring term limit, and also President Barrow himself said that he is a fan of term limit. So, personally, if I am conflicted between a constitutional obligation and moral conscience, I am going to honour the moral conscience.

So, people should tell President barrow that it is not about legal obligation and not about what the Constitution says; it is about what he told the Gambian people when he wanted their votes. This is the reality. It is not about what the Constitution said, it is not what the National Assembly

denied 2 million people access to their Constitution; it is about what he told people when he was campaigning in 2016.

So, President barrow is caught between moral obligations and constitutional obligation. And in my opinion, he should actually take the moral obligation. This is what he owes Gambians, Honourable Speaker.

Honourable Speaker, if you look at the hardship in this country, it is as though this Government is intent on forcing Gambian citizens to change their eating habits and lifestyles considering the price of a bag of rice. In years past, it was around ***D1,500*** or just a little above that when this Government came into office some years ago. Now, we are speaking of ***D2,700***, and very soon, rice will cost over ***D3,000***. That is why I say this Government is compelling Gambians to adapt to new realities, given the soaring prices of basic commodities.

Honourable Speaker, this is an election year, and we are going to validate this Government. We are going to give it a scorecard. What I am about to say here are not my own words; they are the words of the 53 constituencies across this country.

Since this morning, I have listened attentively to all the National Assembly Members. They spoke and raised their concerns. What the people in my constituency have told me is exactly what other Members have elaborated upon. This tells me that the report, the scorecard, that Gambians have given me about this Government is true.

Honourable Speaker, let me present the scorecard.

1. Electricity supply – Failed. Across the country, the Government's achievement in electricity supply is a failure.
2. Economic growth and stability – Failed.

3. Stability of prices and basic commodities – Failed.

4. Security sector reform – Failed.

5. Corruption and embezzlement – Excellent.

6. Agriculture – Failed.

7. Youth and sports development – Failed. The Gambia still cannot host a single match in our own Independent Stadium, and this project has been ongoing for several years. So, in terms of youth development and sports, the Government's scorecard is a failure.

8. Health access and quality – Failed.

9. Unnecessary spending and cost of governance – Excellent.

10. Giving false information to the public through the Ministry of Information – Excellent.

Honourable Speaker, my advice to the Honourable Ministers is that when they go on television and radio to conduct interviews on behalf of their Ministries, let them remember that they are speaking to Gambians because those who feel it, know it better.

It is better, therefore, that when we appear on these platforms, we speak candidly about the status quo. We are talking to people who already experience these realities first-hand. There is no need to be bombastic with words. If you choose to be evasive about the truth, we will reserve our opinion because we know what is happening.

I think Honourable Ministers, especially, the Minister of Information should know that Gambians are listening. We are better at processing information than we are often given credit for. So, when he goes on Peter Gomez's show, let him simply say what is happening. Nobody is perfect, and nobody expects President Barrow's Government to be flawless. That is not the

case. But at the very least, when we go on radio and television, let us speak honestly about what is happening because we pay attention to every detail and every explanation.

Honourable Speaker, regarding my constituency, Latrikunda Sabiji, I wish to thank the Minister of Works and Infrastructure, for I fought very hard for the Kang Kurang Road which is now under construction. However, the road from Kaw Junction up to Faji Kunda Dumos is still pending. Many sections are already damaged.

As for the Darussalam Road, it is very disappointing. The road was procured; a contractor was identified and work was about to start, but now the NRA and the Ministry say there is no money. I can only hope that before December, this road will be constructed because after December, you will already be in opposition.

Honourable Speaker, the State House withdrew the case against Ousainou Bojang. They did withdraw; I have already seen the notice in The Gambia legal*... [Interrupted]*

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, wait. You know, he has 2 minutes, so minus 1 minute will give him only 1 more minute or less than 2 minutes. So, minus 1 minute gives you 11 seconds. Yes, you have 11 seconds to finish.

HON YAHYA SANYANG [LATRIKUNDA SABIJI]: Yes. Another major challenge for this Government is contract management, procurement, and administration. Most projects are failing because of the type of contractors we assign our works to. I have told institutions several times that it is not an excuse because you own your bidding documents. You choose the kind of contractor you want. You cannot come to the National Assembly and tell

us that the contractor failed, or that the contractor lacks capacity, equipment, or personnel. No!

In your bidding documents, you are explicitly clear about the kind of contractor you require, whether big or small, you specify that. So why come back to the National Assembly and offer these unacceptable excuses? The biggest problem for this Government is contract procurement, management, and administration.

Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Latrikunda Sabiji. I now invite the Member for Lower Saloum.

HON SAINEY JAWARA [LOWER SALOUM]: Thank you, Honourable Speaker, for giving me the floor. May I also join my colleagues in thanking the Honourable Vice President, the Cabinet Ministers present here, and the technocrats taking notes of the issues raised during the adjournment debate.

Honourable Speaker, before I go further, I wish to raise an issue concerning my constituency, and I would address it to the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education. Last year, the people of Jimbala, Kerr Malick, and the surrounding villages experienced great difficulty regarding the location of the school in Jimbala. Children faced dangerous conditions going to school during heavy rains because of the waterway. I reported the matter to the NRA and the Ministry, but unfortunately they failed to bridge the area as promised. I urge the Minister to fast-track the work on the bridge as we are fast approaching the rainy season so that those kids can go to school during that time.

Honourable Speaker, again, Honourable Vice President, the Minister of Works is not here, but you are representing the Cabinet. In the crossing point between Kaur and Kung, it is a difficult moment for the people of Niamina to cross to Kaur to access the basic needs from Lumos at the right time. Access to the ferries is difficult because there is always flood in the South Bank, whereby we want the Ministry to fast track and help those people to be able to access the market in Kaur.

Honourable Speaker, today I do not want to talk much, but then what comes to the debate makes me to talk about these issues. And I have to talk to Gambian people about this, Honourable Speaker, you see, being a Member of the National Assembly is not just a mere say. We are elected in by thousands of people, they trust us to serve as their mouthpieces and to represent them in the National Assembly. It should not only a matter of occupying the seats but then we have to represent their interests in the National Assembly as well.

Honourable Speaker, you see, this country needs to dialogue. Let us not see the President, let us see the office because each of us may be President tomorrow. Therefore, you should not criticize or insult a leader if you do not want such things to happen to you.

You see, today, President Barrow is occupying the office. We have to put all our hands-on deck to support the development of the country. If there is time for politics, we all go for politics. Most of African countries cannot go far given the political system in their countries. If I am doing my work, you being the opposition, I think you supposed to encourage me. If I made a mistake, you come out and criticize me constructively with evidence and facts which I will use to advance development of the country.

Honourable Speaker, you see, I have to talk to the youths for them to know that protest cannot develop a country. Let the young ones not allow the politicians to use them because none of these politicians' kids would be outside protesting. We as a country, need to put our hands together and develop the country. Do not be used by politicians. In fact, do not be used by me either. If the young ones are out on the streets today, it is because the Constitution guarantees them that right.

Yes, but you are a National Assembly Member, you have a place to occupy in the national bantaba. Why are you going out to protest as a National Assembly Member? Those powerless people who take to the streets give you the authority to come here and condemn their actions but not to join them. What sense does that make, Honourable Speaker? What logic is that?

You should sit down today. Whatever is happening in the country, you, as a National Assembly Member, should address it with facts. But by joining them, what difference is there between you and them? Honourable Speaker, there is no difference. I believe Members of the National Assembly have every right to be here, and we have the power to correct what is not right,.

Honourable Speaker, as Members of the National Assembly, our sole duty is to represent the people correctly. You cannot go outside and harass people using your political influence, thinking that people will vote for you because you are seen with them. No. The people are not sleeping.

After all of this, let me give my final advice to the Government. We are in a political season, and nothing should distract this country. Nothing should distract the President and the Cabinet. In every decision we take, let us

carefully calculate the repercussions behind it. There are those who want to destabilize the country, and we must not allow that.

Everyone is here. I cannot go anywhere. You and I are here, and if this country is destabilized, where will we be? I think we should put our hands together and develop the nation. We must not allow the politicians to divide us. I have seen politicians out there, but some of them know what they are doing. What will their going there change? Nothing.

Honourable Speaker, on that note, I will take my seat. My advice to Members of the National Assembly is that we are Honourable Members as people trust us; that is why we are here. If we cannot solve these problems, my brother, we should voluntarily resign and say that we cannot occupy that seats. Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, the Member for Lower Saloum. I will now invite the Member for Brikama North and Minority Leader.

HON ALHAGIE S. DARBO [BRIKAMA NORTH & MINORITY LEADER]: Honourable Speaker, as Minority Leader, I believe having exhausted my issues, I should also be allowed to respond to matters raised from the left wing.

Honourable Speaker, regarding Brikama North, the road construction on Jaliba Road is in progress. However, I fear that the completion of the contract may not meet the timeframe stated by the Honourable Minister. I hope there will be no further delays.

The Farato Bojang Kunda-Bafuloto Road is completed, and Bafuloto-Mandinaring Road is in progress. However, nothing has been said about the road from Bafuloto to Brikama.

In Brikama, Kasa Kunda, Nyofeleh and Gunjur, the foundation stone has been laid and site clearing is in progress. The Jambanjelly, Taibato, and Kunkujang-Gunjur roads are also in progress. I am interested to know the contract duration for these projects. The Brikama-Welingara Road was mentioned by the Works Minister, but up to now we have not seen any sign of its commencement.

As for the major streets in Brikama, concerns were raised that the Minister promised action, but we have not seen anything happening yet. I will mention them specifically: Kaba Bajo Road, New Town-Misira-Daruhairu Mosque Road, Kembujeh Medina Mosque Road, Brikama-Daruhairu Borehole Road, Sabo Kunda-Tuti Faal Road, Kembujeh Mosque Road to London, Nyambai Babagalleh Mosque Road, Nyambai Jambar Sanneh Main Road, Jamisa Ice Plant Road, Jamisa Nilakoto Road, Jalanbang Health Centre Road, Jalanbang White House Road, Jalanbang Primary School Road, Jalanbang Mansa Colley Bojang Senior and Upper Basic School Road, and Brikama Gidda Road. These are some of the major roads in Brikama that need immediate attention.

We are here and willing to sign a social contract with the Government. If the Government fails to sign it, we will give the opportunity to the next Government to do so 'insha'Allah'.

Regarding the issuance of ID cards to Gambians abroad, specifically in Mauritania, Gabon, and Togo, I do not know what justified the issuance of ID cards instead of passports. Gambians outside The Gambia need passports. I would like to know why the Immigration Department decided to issue ID cards instead of passports. I also request that the Ministry of Interior and Immigration provide august Assembly a comprehensive list of

Gambians who were issued ID cards in those countries, including their contacts or addresses in The Gambia. Honourable Speaker, I have made that specific submission.

Honourable Speaker, on the security concern in Foni, I heard the press release from the Early Warning System regarding the displacement of communities from Casamance into The Gambia. I do not know how a Gambian institution can fail to recognize its own communities. The communities said to be in Casamance, Jagil, Kamosor, Batendeng, Ajapineh, Kanya, and Jifanga are in fact communities in The Gambia.

The Honourable Members from Foni have mentioned the insecurities their people are currently facing to the extent that some school children find it difficult to attend school. I believe these issues should be given immediate attention by the security services.

Honourable Speaker, on the Anti-Corruption Commission, I raised this during the adjournment debate that the bill was passed and enacted in 2023, but the Commissioners were only appointed in December 2025. It is now nearly 4 months later, and the Commission is still not operational. What is the Government's level of commitment to fighting corruption when 4 months after their appointment, the Anti-Corruption Commission members are not yet operational? This is a concern.

Honourable Members, regarding the third-term bid, I find it interesting to link President Barrow's tenure to ECOMIG. Some have said that the President has the moral authority to continue his bid for a third term, but with the presence of ECOMIG, morally, the President should not pursue a third term. The longer he stays, the longer ECOMIG stays in The Gambia, and we want to do away with ECOMIG.

ECOMIG has been in The Gambia since 2017 as it was initially deployed for stabilization during the impasse. It was extended for 3 months in 2017. In June 2017, it was extended for 1 year due to the fragile security situation and incomplete domestic security reforms. Again, in December 2022, it was extended for another year for the purpose of security sector reform. In December 2023, there was another one-year extension to support the implementation of the TRRC.

In June 2024, it was extended for 2 more years. This means President Barrow's tenure is tied to ECOMIG, and ECOMIG must end. That is why President Barrow's third term should also end. If it does not, there will be no end to the ECOMIG mission in the country. Morally, this alone is enough for him to reconsider his position on contesting for a third term. We want to do away with both him and ECOMIG.

Honourable Speaker, the next issue is acquittal and immediate rearrest. Under the Second Republic or the last regime, this was a troubling issue in the country. As Gambians, we do not want to see a resurfacing of such practices. I respect judicial procedures but dispute anything that makes the lives of Gambians uncomfortable.

Honourable Speaker, under this new dispensation, we expect the Government to abide by the expectations of the Gambian people. That is why I say we must close the chapter on acquittal and rearrest.

Honourable Speaker, regarding the state of implementation of the recommendations of the FPAC and PEC Joint Committee inquiry on petroleum, I want the Vice President to inform us on the status of those recommendations. The Government has accepted almost 95% of them, but nearly 4 months later, what is the state of their implementation?

HON ALHAGIE S. DARBO [BRIKAMA NORTH & MINORITY LEADER]: Can you point of order me? Then I can extend my time … *[Laughter]*

THE SPEAKER: There is a point of order from the Member for Central Baddibu.

HON SULAYMAN SAHO [CENTRAL BADDIBU]: Honourable Speaker…

THE SPEAKER: Central Baddibu, yes. Go ahead. No, no, do not go there.

HON SULAYMAN SAHO [CENTRAL BADDIBU]: Yes, this mic is not working.

THE SPEAKER: Well, if you want, you can use his time. If you use his time… use your mic.

HON SULAYMAN SAHO [CENTRAL BADDIBU]: Honourable Speaker, under Order 17[f], the Majority Leader is a very important person in this Assembly. When a colleague is speaking, we expect…

HON ALHAGIE BABOU CEESAY [SABACH SANJAL]: Move your… Tell us your point of order.

HON SULAYMAN SAHO [CENTRAL BADDIBU]: I have stated the order, Order 17[f].

HON ALHAGIE BABOU CEESAY [SABACH SANJAL]: No, you are not meant to be debating. Just go straight to the point.

HON SULAYMAN SAHO [CENTRAL BADDIBU]: No, I said Order 17[f].

HON ALHAGIE BABOU CEESAY [SABACH SANJAL]: No, 'wo teh kela jang' [that will not happen here]. You are not meant to be debating; you are not meant to be debating.

HON SULAYMAN SAHO [CENTRAL BADDIBU]: Honourable Speaker, Order 17[f] states*: "While a Member is speaking, all other Members shall be silent and shall not make unseemly interruptions."* While the Minority Leader was speaking, the Majority Leader was making unseemly interruptions together with the Honourable Member for Sabach Sanjal.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, order! Order! The Honourable Members for Central Baddibu, Kantora, Sabach Sanjal, Lower Saloum, Brikama North, and every other Member stop interrupting when Members are speaking. Order sustained. The Member for Brikama North and Minority Leader, continue.

HON ALHAGIE S. DARBO [BRIKAMA NORTH & MINORITY LEADER]: Okay. Honourable Speaker, my official time is finished. Now, as Minority Leader, I have bonus time to respond to issues raised by the left wing. If you want justice, Honourable Speaker, just give me 5 minutes.

CHORUS: No, 2 minutes…

HON ALHAGIE S. DARBO [BRIKAMA NORTH & MINORITY LEADER]: Mr. Speaker, I request 5 minutes to respond as the Honourable Member for Jimara has alluded to issues I raised earlier. I believe I should be afforded the opportunity to reply accordingly.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Member for Brikama North and Minority Leader.

Honourable Members, that concludes the names on my list. However, I have noticed that the Members for Jimara and Niani have signalled their interest. Before I proceed, I wish to ascertain whether you still intend to contribute or prefer to allow your Leader to respond. Given that we have Ministers present. I will grant a few minutes. Very well. Member for Jimara, you have the floor.

HON ESSA CONTEH [JIMARA]: Hey, 'ka withdraw purr mung'? *[To withdraw for what?]* Am I here to withdraw? Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to speak.

I wish to join my colleagues in thanking the Honourable Vice President, the Cabinet Ministers and their technical staff for their presence here today. I also extend my appreciation to all Members who have remained up to this hour.

Mr. Speaker, I am particularly pleased to speak after the Minority Leader. Honestly, I do not understand why he has reservations about the presence of ECOMIG in The Gambia. The ECOMIG troops are not being fed or accommodated at his expense nor is he bearing any cost for them. I begin to suspect that there may be an ulterior motive he is not disclosing. *… [Laughter]*

Mr. Speaker, these people are aware that they cannot win through the ballot box, so now they are resorting to other means. Honourable Speaker… *[Interrupted]*

[Point of Order]

THE SPEAKER: A point of order is raised by the Member for Brikama North and Minority Leader.

HON ALHAGIE S. DARBO [BRIKAMA NORTH & MINORITY LEADER]: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Jimara is making a grave allegation against me, suggesting that…

HON BILLAY G. TUNKARA [KANTORA & MAJORITY LEADER]: What is the point of order?

HON ALHAGIE S. DARBO [BRIKAMA NORTH & MINORITY LEADER]: I refer to Standing Order 29[5].

HON BILLAY G. TUNKARA [KANTORA & MAJORITY LEADER]: Read it.

HON ALHAGIE S. DARBO [BRIKAMA NORTH & MINORITY LEADER]: I will quote it shortly. I have expressed my concern regarding the prolonged and repeated extension of the ECOMIG mission in this country; whether ECOMIG or ECOWAS, that is the force driving…

THE SPEAKER: No, no.

HON ALHAGIE BABOU CEESAY [SABACH SANJAL]: Mr. Speaker, he cannot debate. We will not allow any debate on this!

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member for Brikama North and Minority Leader, kindly refrain from debating. Proceed directly to your point of order and state your basis.

HON ALHAGIE S. DARBO [BRIKAMA NORTH & MINORITY LEADER]: Well, when the Majority Leader was laying his foundation to build his…

THE SPEAKER: No, no.

HON ALHAGIE S. DARBO [BRIKAMA NORTH & MINORITY LEADER]: You accepted it, fine.

THE SPEAKER: No, remember last week…

HON ALHAGIE S. DARBO [BRIKAMA NORTH & MINORITY LEADER]: Yes, I will…

THE SPEAKER: Minority Leader, recall that during the Ramadan session, I reminded a Member that we are not constructing buildings here; no foundations are to be laid.

HON ALHAGIE S. DARBO [BRIKAMA NORTH & MINORITY LEADER]: Mr. Speaker, I have clearly stated my position on ECOMIG, yet the Honourable Member for Jimara claims that I contribute nothing to ECOMIG; that I do not feed them or provide for them. I am a citizen of the ECOWAS community, and ECOWAS is responsible for ECOMIG.

THE SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

HON ALHAGIE S. DARBO [BRIKAMA NORTH & MINORITY LEADER]: No, wait.

THE SPEAKER: No, no.

HON ALHAGIE S. DARBO [BRIKAMA NORTH & MINORITY LEADER]: Wait, wait.

THE SPEAKER: Order! Member for Upper Niumi, he is on a point of order. Minority Leader, thank you.

Honourable Members, we have heard the point of order raised by the Minority Leader. He contends that the Member for Jimara is imputing improper motives upon him by responding to his position that ECOMIG

should depart and that, due to their continued presence, the current administration ought to end by December 2026.

The Member for Jimara posed a rhetorical question that whether the Minority Leader or The Gambia bears the cost of ECOMIG's upkeep, implying that the expenses are borne by The Gambia Government. The Minority Leader argues that this imputes improper motives upon him. I disagree.

Member for Jimara, please continue.

HON ESSA CONTEH [JIMARA]: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not wish to believe that English is his problem as he is a senior Member. When I said "you," I was referring to The Gambia, not to him personally.

Mr. Speaker, to continue, I have heard some Members speaking about the country's economic stability, claiming the economy is not performing well. Mr. Speaker, I think some Members have not read the State of the Nation Address [SoNA] delivered by the President a few days ago.

If you go through the SoNA, you will see that economic growth and stability have performed remarkably well under the leadership of His Excellency President Adama Barrow and his capable Ministers, boosting the economy beyond our expectations.

According to the SoNA, the real GDP was estimated at 5.9% in 2025 up from 5.7%. This is not merely a figure; it is truly significant. Inflation too has declined from 10.2% to 6.6%, Mr. Speaker. These are not just numbers; they reflect visionary leadership and a serious government committed to improving the lives and livelihoods of the people they serve.

Mr. Speaker, under the leadership of His Excellency the President of the Republic of The Gambia, … I believe there is an issue with my time, Mr. Speaker, right? No, no.

Regarding infrastructure, tremendous work has been done since 2017 to date. Approximately ***1,200 kilometres*** of roads constructed and delivered to the Gambian people, including the ***84-kilometre Hakalang Road***.

Let us also consider the energy sector. Universal access to energy was once a wild dream for most Gambians. Mr. Speaker, I think I may have 5 minutes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Just to conclude, I thank the Government for all these developments. Despite this progress, my constituency, Jimara, continues to face challenges, particularly with feeder roads. These bad roads cause immense hardship, especially for pregnant women trying to reach health facilities.

Additionally, there is a school in Sare Samba Tacko built by the Government. We are grateful because during the rainy season, students had difficulty reaching Gambisara. However, the solar system there is no longer functional. I appeal to the Minister of Basic and Secondary Education to assist us.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Jimara. Finally, the Member for Niani.

HON OMAR JOBE [NIANI]: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for granting me the floor. I take this opportunity to thank the people of Niani and, on their behalf, acknowledge the presence of His Excellency the Vice President, the Cabinet Ministers, and their technical staff.

Mr. Speaker, we have a President who listens and is action-oriented. In this very National Assembly, I once spoke about a woman who was rushed to hospital on a donkey cart, but did not survive, unfortunately. 'Alhamdulillah', with this Government, yesterday 2 brand-new ambulances were handed over to the people of Niani.

Regarding electricity, when I previously raised the issue, only 9% of Niani was connected. With the intervention of the current Government, coverage has risen to 34% although some villages remain unconnected.

On education, key achievements include significant enrolment growth with 80% for boys and 90% for girls in 2023. The Gambia Madrasa Integration Strategy launched in June 2025, to integrate traditional madrasa education into the national development agenda, is another milestone. Also, in health, the expansion of the National Health Insurance Scheme has been launched.

On infrastructure, new hospital construction is ongoing or nearing completion, including the National Emergency Health Centre in Farato and a new hospital in Njaw while many others are under renovation. Regarding the 2022 incident involving 77 children, the Government, with WHO support, overhauled the Medicine Control Agency, which now conducts rigorous scrutiny of every medical product entering the country. This is another significant achievement.

Many have spoken about term limits and the President leaving a legacy. I submit that if we are to advise the President to step down, we should begin with the man who has been contesting since 1996 to date. Advise him to step down and allow the younger generation to lead.

Mr. Speaker, there is a Member from Foni Kansala who spoke about the 2026 competition seeing him in that race is like a chameleon among rabbits.

On that note, I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I thank every one of you for your contributions. I will now invite Cabinet Ministers to participate in the debate. Honourable Members, if I were the Ministers, I would not respond to questions raised by those Members who spoke and then left because you cannot play to the gallery and depart without listening to your colleagues and the Ministers. Order!

Now, I invite the Honourable Minister of Basic and Secondary Education, Hon. Dr. Habibatou Drammeh.

HON DR. HABIBATOU DRAMMEH [MINISTER OF BASIC & SECONDARY EDUCATION]: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your Excellency the Vice President, honourable Cabinet colleagues and Members, and Government technical staff, we appreciate the concerns raised by various Honourable Members.

On education, the concerns noted relate largely to school facilities. I reassure Honourable Members that many reforms and works are ongoing to strengthen school infrastructure, teaching, and learning generally as well as staff capacity to enhance quality.

The concern regarding Jamagen Lower Basic School is noted. We will revisit it and address the current challenge. The need for ICT teachers at Dalaba Basic Cycle School is also noted. I remind Honourable Members

that efforts are ongoing to appoint teachers to fill existing gaps in the sector.

Regarding street interviews involving students, this is the first time I am hearing of it. I know much is happening in terms of youth engagement. I urge every Honourable Member, parent, and the Gambian public to advise young people appropriately, especially if they may be harassed. This is not solely the Ministry's responsibility. We must all guide our children to avoid engaging in activities that may not serve their best interest.

Concerning about access, access and quality are at the heart of our reforms. We are strengthening foundational learning, including through the introduction of national languages, a policy recently passed by Cabinet. We have assessed school performance and will engage underperforming schools, both public and private, to understand their challenges and provide support.

On overcrowded classrooms raised by the Member for Banjul Central, statistics show that on average we maintain a student-to-teacher ratio of 1 is to 32 to 33 compared to the standard of 45. Overcrowding is limited mainly in the Greater Banjul area. We are increasing classroom capacity there. For example, ***42 new classrooms*** were recently launched in Serekunda.

Library services were also raised. We aim to make teaching and learning materials accessible through both physical and virtual libraries. The ***I Learn Gambia*** platform is a step in that direction.

The concern about Ngayen Sanjal and teacher shortages is noted. Recruitment processes are advanced; new teachers will receive appointment letters soon. We are stabilising the teaching workforce, having

addressed the past problem of teachers abandoning posts for unauthorised study leave.

The matter of Salikenni and Njaba Kunda Lower Basic School is noted. While viability is important, we will review the situation. We intend to ensure school services are available across the country.

The concern about Fatima Senior Secondary School and the shortage of Mathematics and Science teachers is acknowledged. We are exploring the use of AI tutors in these critical areas. UNESCO has agreed for The Gambia to undertake a study tour to Finland to learn how AI is effectively integrated into teaching; not to replace teachers, but to support them.

Concerning the school in Lower Saloum with access challenges during the rains, I will obtain its name and coordinate with relevant stakeholders to address it.

On the solar electrification of Samba Sakurai, we have already provided solar facilities to ***over 800 schools***. We will assess and ensure electricity is available. All concerns raised are noted. We are all working together for the betterment and prosperity of The Gambia. With your support, we will continue on this trajectory.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Minister of Basic and Secondary Education, Dr. Habibatou Drammeh. I now invite the Honourable Minister of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology, Professor Pierre Gomez.

HON PROF. PIERRE GOMEZ [MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, RESEARCH, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY]: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I

wish to thank the Honourable Members of this August Assembly for their support and encouragement. We will continue to work with you to address challenges, particularly funding gaps, in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and development partners.

MoHERST firmly believes that sustainable development must be anchored on human capital development. To address irregular migration commonly known as the *Backway*, we must tackle root causes, not consequences. Over 60% of our population are youths, many lacking the skills required for opportunities abroad. I have often said I am yet to see a qualified medical doctor being deported because they lacked papers; it is about skills.

The Government is already establishing regional TVET centres. A food truck is currently heading to CRR North because the centre is ready and awaiting equipment. By year-end, that centre will be operational. Other TVET centres will focus on agri-business and aquaculture, such as the one in Tujereng for fisheries. The policy is 70% practical and 30% theory training.

Work continues at the University of The Gambia, Faraba Bantang Campus, our new academic Jerusalem. The School of Medicine and Allied Health Sciences will have 16 laboratories. In the coming months, the foundation will be laid for student dormitories.

Plans for Phase II of USET will introduce two new engineering programmes next year. The University of Education [Gambia College] will undergo renovation and new structures.

For the Civil Service University, the faculty of Law and School of Journalism have moved to Faraba. Once the Peace-Building structures are vacated and renovated, they will become the Chancery for the Civil Service University.

Mr. Speaker, the Government is also implementing the SIE Fund, with approximately ***D400 million*** across three windows:

1. Support for recognised public and private TVET centres to upgrade facilities and equipment;
2. Scholarships and stipends for students in qualifying TVET centres;
3. Start-up support for graduates and youths with viable projects. This is our five-year plan. We will continue working with you and development partners to advance human capital development in this country.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Minister of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology, Professor Pierre Gomez. I will now invite the Minister of Public Service, Honourable Baboucarr Bouy.

HON BABOUCARR BOUY [MINISTER OF PUBLIC SERVICE]: Thank you, Honourable Speaker. I do not think I have many issues raised that concern my Ministry, but I will just jot it down for you.

I just want to begin by appreciating the Honourable National Assembly Member for Serekunda West who actually appreciated my involvement in Serekunda. I am sure some of you will be wondering what has Honourable Baboucarr Bouy got to do with Serekunda. That is my alma mater where I attended primary school. The situation, as he rightly said, was getting very serious.

One of the issues that I captured was to do with the salaries of civil servants, which the Honourable National Assembly Member for Foni Bintang Karanai raised. I guess he is aware that last year salary increase

took place, and it is an issue that we are very much particular about. The strategy that we are actually employing is to make sure that it is dealt with in an ad hoc manner. As we speak, we have a mission from the IMF. Okay.

The strategy we are using is to have a wage modelling system, but we will be using to determine when salaries need to be adjusted based on inflation, cost of living. So, you do not have to wait until after two years and then you claiming for salary increase. It will be adjusted automatically based on this indicator. So, we are currently working with the IMF to do that modelling. That is what is happening in many countries instead of having to wait for every two or three years to increase the salaries.

For the issue of the D250 allowance that Honourable Member for Foni Kansala raised, I have been informed that these 250 appearing in the payslips of some staff is in addition to the new allowance that has been introduced to replace the 250. It is basically affecting the Police and the security. They were getting D250 as House Rent, but that allowance has been replaced by another allowance, but we decided to maintain this because of the peculiarity of the accommodation issues. So, it is not that the 250 is just there. It is an addition to another new allowance that has been created, okay.

So, in effect, they have benefited more. We should have withdrawn it, but when the Army and the Police put up the case, we decided that since the 250 is not significant enough, we can leave it there in addition to the allowances that they have been receiving as part of the salary increase. Honourable Speaker, these were the issues.

Under, digitalization mentioned, it is an issue that actually cuts across our two Ministries; that is, the Ministry of Public Service and the Ministry of

Digital Economy. The reforms are ongoing as was mentioned in the SoNA. We are planning to digitalize some of the services Government is providing, and we have identified 5 to be launched with ***the MyGov Platform***. So, these are things that we are actually working on together with the Ministry of Digital Economy.

Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Honourable Minister of Public Service. Honourable Members, I shall now invite His Excellency the Vice President of the Republic, Mr. Muhammad B.S. Jallow, to participate in the debate. Your Excellency, the Vice President.

HON MUHAMMAD B.S. JALLOW [VICE PRESIDENT]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker. I also take this opportunity to thank all Honourable Members for their contributions.

To begin, we wish to state that we have taken note of all the issues raised. We may not be able to provide answers to all of them at this moment, but be rest assured our technical staff are here and have recorded everything that has been said. However, we shall attempt to offer some responses to a few points.

Honourable Speaker, I think that some Members raised the issue of affording Gambian companies the opportunity to compete during the debate on the State of the Nation Address and again today.

Honourable Speaker, the honest truth is that our main challenge lies with Gambian companies themselves whether in construction, ICT or procurement. They are not ready to come together as a consortium. This is one of the reasons we are losing out. Government has always encouraged

them to unite because by joining forces, they stand a better chance of winning contracts. I believe this is truly our biggest hurdle. His Excellency the President has consistently urged us to find ways to give Gambian companies an advantage. And indeed, this remains the core problem because without that collective strength, they lack the financial muscle to compete.

Honourable Speaker, I take note of the concerns raised regarding the National Museum. We have heard those issues. Now, the question was, what is the plan for NAWEC? Perhaps, I can link that to some of the comments on State-Owned Enterprises. I am glad the Honourable Member for Brikama South is so passionate about the Government shares. But as you are aware, for a long time, Government has been supporting some of these SOEs instead of receiving dividends from them. Indeed, Government has been providing funds to pay their salaries, quite a number of them.

Sometimes we come to Cabinet and say, if Government does not disburse these funds, they will not be able to pay salaries for that particular month. However, with the advent of the Commission, there has been improvement, and as I said earlier, some have now started paying dividends, and we expect at least five of them to do so. But the bottom line is that Government is not in the business per se.

Government intervenes only to prevent market failure. Where there is competition, Government will eventually pull out. That is the reality. But when it comes to NAWEC, this is national infrastructure that must remain in Government hands; we can invite partners to work with us.

At present, with all the improvements in access to electricity, Government intends to bring in private partners for the production and generation

aspect. Transmission and distribution remain a challenge, but we are also working with partners.

As I said, in terms of generation, I am sure the Honourable Minister of Energy has mentioned the solar park in Soma. They have the ***50 megawatts***, and they are looking at that plus ***an additional 100 megawatts***, not kilowatts. Even during my recent visit to Yaoundé, I had the opportunity to discuss with the President of the African Export-Import Bank, who is interested in assisting us in that area.

On transmission and distribution, NAWEC is striving to improve the network to reduce transmission losses. Currently, transmission loss stands at about 25 to 26%, and that must be reduced as it is very expensive. That is the plan. Some may question the figures, but we have achieved 90% access, and our plan is to reach 100% access by the end of this year.

Honourable Speaker, on the issue of ID cards, I have personally visited Mauritania, and most Gambians there are those in madrassas. They left this country very young, some at the age of 5 or 6, to study Arabic and Islamic education. When I was there, I encountered people in countries like Mauritania where internal security forces routinely check documentation. If you do not have your ID card, you are arrested and deported to the nearest border. That is the problem.

As I said, there were people in their final year of exams who were deported and could not sit to their papers. One would expect them to have passports, but because they travel by road and the ID card is accepted, that is where the challenge lies.

On my recent visit to Yaoundé, I was also approached by Gambians there, crying about documentation. In many French-speaking countries,

authorities routinely check documentation and if they find you selling in the market without papers, you are in trouble. That is what they are crying about.

So, Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members, I beg your indulgence to support Government in this endeavour. Our Gambians abroad are truly suffering because of lack of documentation. In Yaoundé, the Embassy based in Abuja issued them Consular Cards, but those cards last only 2 years and have now expired. They are still crying out.

I agree with the Honourable Member for Brikama North that we need to know the numbers. I am sure the Minister of Interior and the Department of Immigration can provide those figures. But these are real needs of our Gambians in those areas.

Honourable Speaker, I thought the Honourable Minister of Public Service, Administrative Reforms, Policy Coordination, and Delivery would speak about the Sukuta women's market since he chairs that committee. The Member who asked the Supplementary Question has left, but it is important to inform this august Assembly that Government is doing a great deal engaging the community and has almost finalised arrangements for that market.

Honourable Speaker, the question of Jinack has been raised repeatedly, but let me inform this august Body that His Excellency the President has directed the establishment of a committee to visit Jinack and assess all their requirements. I am sure they have already begun work. Yes, what they were involved in was illegal, but because they have been doing it for many years, it has become their livelihood. Government is, however, serious about addressing all their social needs and finding solutions.

Honourable Speaker, the Member for Brikama South raised the issue of Brikama Hospital. It is still in progress and has not been abandoned. We take note of the water and drainage issues raised, which remain part of our plans. But Honourable Speaker, you would realise that drainage systems are actually very expensive. This is not just about Brikama; our plan covers all major centres and towns across the country to ensure proper drainage.

However, we have already begun discussions with potential partners. As you may be aware, for high-cost, capital-intensive projects, loans are necessary. Currently, securing loans is difficult, especially given our discussions with the IMF that unless there is a 35% grant element, it will be challenging.

Sorry, I thought the Member for Nianija had left, but we take note of the street lights, and the market is still on our plans. We also note the issues raised by the Member for Nianija concerning the 'Banta Faros'.

We also take note of the security bills raised by the Honourable Member for Foni Kansala. I think our staff here will follow up with the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Justice. But as I said during the SoNA debate, many of these have already passed through Cabinet, so I am not sure what is holding them up. We will ensure these matters move forward, especially the Immigration Bill, which we know is a game-changer and will generate significant resources for Government.

Again, perhaps, the Minister of Public Service had stepped out when the Member for Foni Jarrol raised the issue of the aides that accompany Ministers. I stand to be corrected, but I am not sure if the policy has changed. We will crosscheck. I think the policy might still be in place, but we will confirm.

The Public Service Minister has also addressed Transport and House Rent Allowances but just to confirm, the TACOS is being implemented in phases, and hopefully full implementation will be achieved by the 2027 fiscal year. On that note, I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Your Excellency the Vice President, I thank you sincerely for staying and for always heeding the call of the National Assembly as well as participating in the debate.

Honourable Members, may I now call upon the Majority Leader and mover of the motion to respond to issues raised and conclude the debate.

HON BILLAY G. TUNKARA [KANTORA & MAJORITY LEADER]: Thank you very much, Honourable Speaker, for granting me the floor. Honourable Speaker, going by my list, I have about 34 Members…

THE SPEAKER: You have to summarise.

HON BILLAY G. TUNKARA [KANTORA & MAJORITY LEADER]: Thirty-four Members took the floor and debated on the adjournment debate. However, in the interest of time, I will not respond to everyone as issues are cross-cutting, and the Ministers' responses and of course, that of His Excellency the Vice President have indeed been helpful.

Before I respond, permit me to appreciate His Excellency the Vice President and the entire Cabinet Ministers seated here this morning even though some Members took the floor and left which was not really appropriate.

Honourable Speaker, the Member for Nianija’s recommendations are noted. Member For Jokadu’s your concerns are noted as well. Member for Upper Saloum's concern has been addressed by the Minister.

Also, the Member for Jeshwang, we know there are many roads that need to be constructed, but I am glad you reported that some are under construction, and I agree that the Kanifing South Road and others in Jeshwang need attention. I can assure the Member for Niamina that Government is ever committed and ready, so very soon we shall lay the foundation stone in Niamina.

Honourable Speaker, that brings me to Banjul Central. I would say nothing as it has been adequately addressed by the Vice President.

For Sanimentereng, I do not think I should waste time on that. But let me make it clear that Government is ever ready to implement the Anti-Corruption Commission. That is why they brought the bill, enacted it, and presented the Commission members here.

And Kiang West, I think it is important for us to understand the rules governing independent institutions. This Government, from its inception, has given total freedom and respect to independent institutions. Perhaps, he does not fully understand the history of this country.

Under His Excellency President Adama Barrow, we achieved legislative autonomy. Indeed, the National Assembly Autonomy Bill came from the Executive. Globally, Legislatures and Executives usually push for their own freedoms. But because this President believes in democracy and the rule of law, he introduced that bill which we now enjoy. Any facility we enjoy today was brought by this Government. It is really unfair to allege that the failure of the Draft Constitution was the making of His Excellency the President. That is unfortunate.

I repeat, having been given the rare privilege to represent the people does not grant you unchecked rights to come here and make serious allegations,

pack your things, and leave. You should be ashamed of yourselves. You were sent here for a purpose, and that purpose is representation. If Ministers and the Vice President can sit through all this time to listen to your concerns, how can you simply make a submission and leave?

And of course, I concur with the submission of the Member for Lower Saloum that you were elected, so you have a platform to address your constituents' concerns. You did not do that; instead, you took to the streets without the necessary documentation. We are not anti-demonstration, but you must also know that there are laws governing this country. The Public Order Act is clear. You must obtain a permit to demonstrate.

As a Member of the National Assembly, it is appalling and shameful to join the streets with those who have no voice. Rather than amplifying their concerns in this Assembly, you went to the streets, thinking that that would earn you votes. You are misleading and mistaken.

So, Honourable Speaker, the Member for Sami is not here. However, how he says that he appreciates the construction of roads in his constituency is a clear manifestation that this Government delivers development to every corner or every constituency of this country irrespective of political affiliation. It is not an era of cherry-picking; that is, those who support us get development and those who refuse do not.

It is also misleading to say that patients are sleeping on the floor in hospitals. I keep saying that Members of the National Assembly should go beyond such rhetoric. You cannot stand here and make reckless, unchecked remarks and when challenged, you cannot provide proof. How can you stand in these hallowed Chamber and say that patients are lying on the floor in Edward Francis Small Teaching Hospital? That is sad.

I agree with Member for Foni Bondali on the need to address reckless driving. The licensing regime needs to be reviewed, and authorities must ensure every driver undergoes proper testing, not just vehicle roadworthiness but the ability to drive safely. That is a concern.

For Lower Baddibu, the term limit issue has been addressed by many Members, but I will conclude on that.

For Banjul North, the Minister has spoken; it is a court ruling that the Mayoress cannot issue attestation, and we stand by that verdict.

Let me appreciate my brother from the North Bank, the Right Honourable Member for Sabach Sanjal, for acknowledging the efforts we have made since we were entrusted with leadership in this Assembly. We appreciate your recognition. It is not just the Majority Leader but those I lead as well, who make my job easy through cooperation and understanding. I thank all of you for your continuous and unflinching support during my tenure.

Honourable Speaker, let me conclude quickly as time has run long. I will end by noting that the Member for Latrikunda Sabiji, now an independent candidate, no longer sits where he used to because of betraying the trust of his party over a mayor or a local council, and because he no longer believes in party principles, he mentioned that a bag of rice costs D2000. Perhaps, he is not fully aware of the market because rice prices have dropped significantly, and that deserves commendation. I do not know where he got his scorecard that road construction has failed.

Anyway, he makes rhetoric and jokes, but those are falsehoods and negate current realities. They do not hold water. I do not rely on statistics, but he is in a canal with no destination. He left an established party for a movement, so I expect him to say such things.

So, Honourable Member for Banjul Central, I agree with you that land issues are arising, but very soon the Ministry of Lands and Regional Government will bring a land policy and estate regulations to regulate agencies.

I also want to reassure the Member for Brikama North and the Minority Leader that there is extensive road construction in your area, particularly, Jaliba Road which is under construction, Bafuloto, Jambanjelly, Toubakuta, and others. This is a clear manifestation that Government is prioritising road construction. Infrastructure is the backbone of development, and this Government understands and prioritises it. We deserve a pat on the back for those roads in your constituency, regardless of your political affiliation. As I said, we will be at every doorstep to deliver development.

And lastly, ECOMIG is here to stay. I repeat, Member for Wuli East, can you behave? ECOMIG is here to stay if you recall how many years ECOMOG soldiers spent in Sierra Leone and in Liberia. We must appreciate the intervention by ECOMIG and ECOWAS. This country was at a crossroads, very close to civil war. They came to rescue us, and now that we enjoy uninterrupted peace, we ask them to leave. They are here to consolidate these security gains. If you drive safely from Banjul to your home, it is someone's brother, mother, and father on the streets protecting your life and property. That is the fundamental social contract between the State and the governed. If you elect us, we must guarantee your security. The social contract between His Excellency the President and the Gambian people is to ensure protection of life and property, and that is what we are doing. So, there is no issue of caricaturing or rigmarole. ECOMIG is here to stay.

On the issues of term limit, Members of the National Assembly should be guardians of the Constitution. We must at all times defend it; that is what we swore to do. When the "Three-Year Jotna" came about, we were part of this Assembly, including Honourable Halifa Sallah of Serekunda who defended that the Constitution must prevail.

So, the issue of term limit does not exist in the first place. We should not dwell on debating it; instead, let us join hands. I said it during the SoNA debate that it is in the best interest of the opposition that President Barrow remains. We should all stand for his continuity so that the development he initiated is not interrupted.

If you look at Rwanda, it has developed because of uninterrupted political leadership leading to steady growth, it is not rocket science. The Gambia should follow that trajectory, standing with His Excellency President Adama Barrow, to ensure continued development and the renewed hope Gambians yearn for. That is very important. I, therefore, call on all and sundry from both sides of the Assembly to stand resolute behind the NPP-led Government and support His Excellency President Adama Barrow come December 2026, back to State House.

Honourable Speaker, we stand with the people of Foni. What is happening there is unfortunate, but we must understand that if Government issues a statement on the war in Gaza or elsewhere, that is a war but there is no war in Foni. We must differentiate the two. There is an interruption due to the Casamance rebel movement. We stand with you or support you, and the Office of the Vice President along with NDMA will provide the necessary assistance to the people of Fonis, the displaced and the schools.

Honourable Speaker, to conclude, if anyone here is clamouring for term limit in any capacity, we must start with political parties. Every party is a government-in-waiting and must show example. There must be internal democracy in your party first, before you have the latitude and guts to question someone else.

So, Honourable Speaker, I will not take too long. I appreciate both sides of the Assembly. I thank you for your support and your commitment to the service entrusted to you by your electorate.

Honourable Speaker, lastly, I thank the good people of Kantora Constituency for their trust and confidence in me, and equally His Excellency the President for the trust reposed in me to lead his business in this Assembly.

Honourable Speaker, on that note, thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you, Majority Leader and Member for Kantora, for responding to issues and broadening the debate. The Member for Wuli East, please stop that.

Honourable Members, I thank all of you for your interventions, and this brings us to the end of this Ordinary Session though Committee Oversight work continues.

Before putting the question for this Assembly to adjourn sine die, I wish, on behalf of both sides of the Assembly and indeed on my own behalf, to register our appreciation to His Excellency the Vice President, Mr. Muhammad B.S. Jallow, and the Honourable Ministers for their cooperation during the Session. The presence of the Executive to witness the adjournment debate affirms the relationship between the organs of State.

I also wish to reiterate our thanks and appreciation to the media fraternity as the medium through which the work of this Assembly and its committees reaches the people. Their cooperation and partnership are always cherished, and we hope it will continue.

To our electorate and the Gambian people, we say thank you very much. And once again, we remain indebted and grateful to the Clerk of the National Assembly and staff, particularly that of the Table Office and the Legal Department for their continued and invaluable services.

I thank you all.

6. **Adjournment**

THE SPEAKER: On that note, Honourable Members, I wish you a very good rest of the night.

[Question Proposed, Put, and Agreed to]

[That this honourable Assembly do stand adjourned sine die.]

[The Speaker slammed the Gavel against the Sound Block signalling the adjournment of the proceedings of the First Ordinary Session sine die.]

THE END