



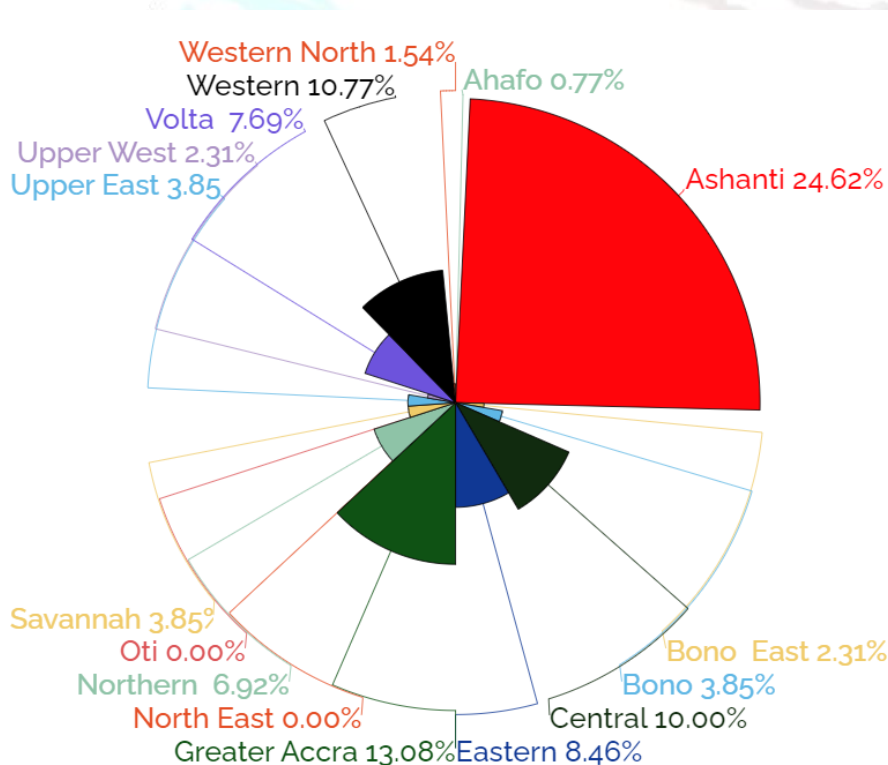
NEWS MONTHLY BULLETIN- (WANEP-GHANA)

(JANUARY 2022)

I- INTRODUCTION

In January 2022, the WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) recorded 130 human security incidents¹. The incidents resulted in 109 fatalities and 209 injuries.² The fatalities recorded involved 43 males and 25 females and 41 other deaths of which the gender was unclear from reports.³ Cases of injuries recorded also consisted of 8 males and 12 females, while 189 other reported injuries were not clear on gender specifics.⁴

Figure 1: Incident Concentration



The distribution of the incidents, as depicted in figure 1 indicates the Ashanti region as the location with the highest occurrence (32 representing 24.62%) rate within the reporting period.⁵ The Greater Accra region followed with 17 incidents, representing 13.08% of the 130 incidents.

From table 1 below, the Western, Northern, Western North, Central, Ashanti and the Eastern regions recorded the highest rate of casualties.⁶

Source: WANEP NEWS

¹ WANEP National Early Warning System Data
² WANEP National Early Warning System Data
³ Data gathered from the WANEP NEWS Monitoring
⁴ Ibid
⁵ Ibid
⁶ Ibid

Table 1: Reported Casualties for the Period of January 2022

Regions	Ahafo	Ashanti	Bono East	Bono	Central	Eastern	Greater Accra	North East	Northern	Oti	Savannah	Upper East	Upper West	Volta	Western	Western North	Totals
Fatalities	3	27	0	8	4	3	6	0	12	0	1	2	5	3	17	18	109
Injuries	0	11	0	14	34	33	5	0	28	0	0	0	0	0	64	20	209
Total Casualties	3	38	0	22	38	36	11	0	40	0	1	2	5	3	81	38	318

Source: WANEP NEWS

The *Monthly Bulletin* provides analysis of the incident data recorded in the reporting period based on the following four themes: Organized Crime and Violent Extremism (OCVE), Democracy and Governance (DG), Gender, Peace and Security (GPS) and Environmental Security (ES). The details of these incidents and casualties have been detailed under the thematic areas identified.

II- ORGANISED CRIME AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM (OCVE)

In January 2021, 61 incidents related to organised crime and violent extremism were recorded.⁷ By way of management of related criminal activities, the period recorded arrests as the highest with 23 reported instances. Fifteen homicides and 11 armed robberies were also recorded.⁸ Six of the homicides were reported for the Ashanti region, 2 each for the Central and Volta regions, 1 for each for Eastern, Northern, Savannah, Upper East and Western regions. For the 11 armed robberies reported, 3 cases were reported in the Western region, 2 each for the Greater and Ashantai regions, 1 each for the Bono East, Central, Northern and Savannah regions.

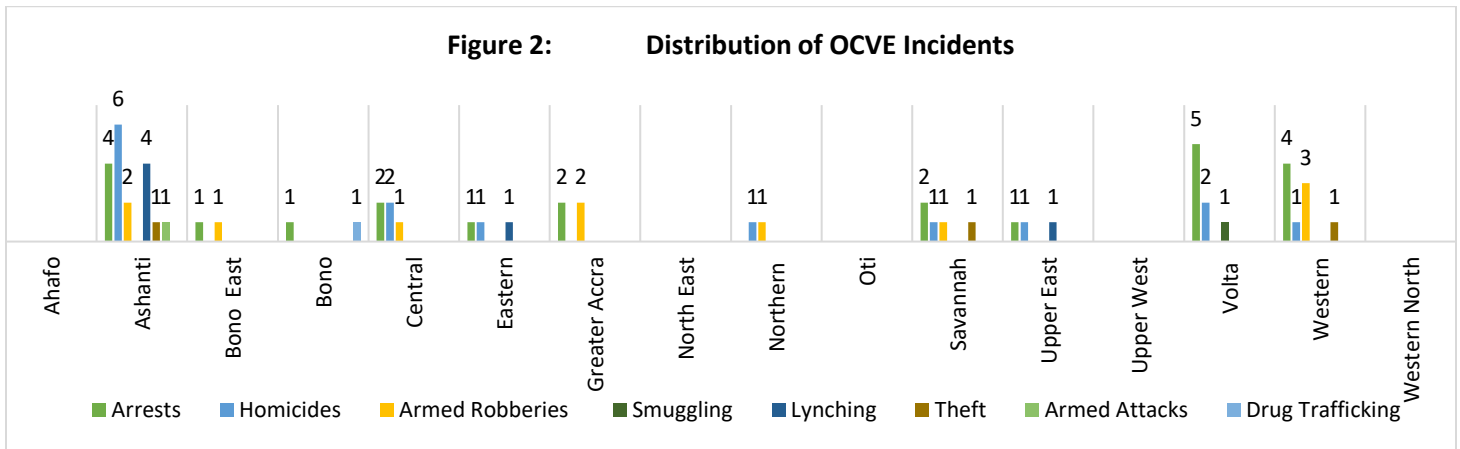
Lynching, which is criminalized by the Laws of Ghana also recorded 6 incidences, four of which were reported from the Ashanti region, and one each in the Eastern and Upper East regions.⁹

The graph below portrays the distribution of crime related issues reported for the various regions for the period under review.

⁷ WANEP NEWS Monitoring

⁸ WANEP NEWS Monitoring

⁹ WANEP NEWS Monitoring



Source: WANEP NEWS

Out of the 61 cases recorded, 18 occurred in the Ashanti region considering it is a region with currently the highest population¹⁰ and very high economic activities. The Western Region recorded 9 incidents and Volta region 8.¹¹

Perpetrators of criminal activities have been able to strengthen their operations with sophisticated weapons to confront the Police Service personnel in gun battles, leading to their arrest or death of suspects. For instance, in the Western North and Northern Regions, there were 6 arrests during a Police Anti- Robbery operation. However, the operations led to the death of 5 suspects who resisted arrest and engaged in a gun battle with the police.¹²

Insecurity is increased as these criminals become sophisticated in their modus operandi. Their actions have negative economic consequences in addition to the social and psychological cost to the affected individuals, and this lowers the growth of the business environment in the country.

A successful robbery or criminal incident involves the direct loss of property on an individual. Such property is transferred from the rightful owner to another person. Most violent crimes also lead to the loss of productivity through the incapacitation of the victims thereby denying the society of their contribution to the output of the nation. Resources that would have been used for development purposes may be channeled to physical and psychological treatment of victims and the countering of crime, thus a reduction in development in the affected areas. Furthermore, people would always be in a perpetual state of fear because of constant robbery attacks. Thus, many foreign investors would be afraid of committing their resources to operate in industries that would have given employment to many unemployed persons in the country.

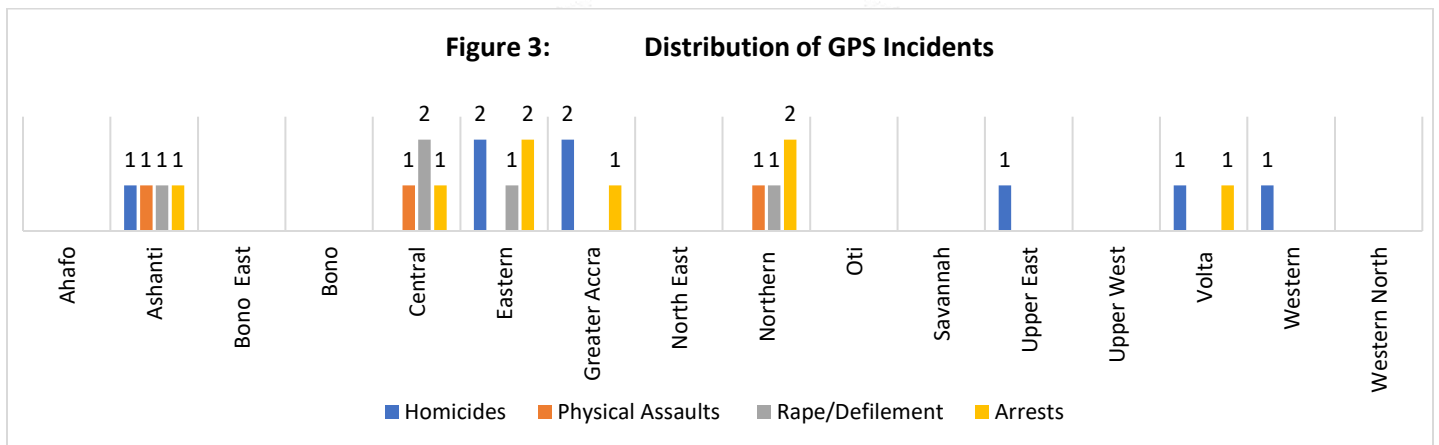
¹⁰ Ghana Population and Housing Census 2021 (<https://www.statsghana.gov.gh/>)

¹¹ WANEP Ghana NEWS

¹² <https://www.pulse.com.gh/news/local/police-kill-5-suspected-armed-robbers-during-gun-battle-6-others-arrested/dctetfnx>

III- GENDER, PEACE AND SECURITY (GPS):

Twenty-four human security incidents were recorded under the gender, peace and security theme by the WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS). These incidents resulted in fifteen (17) casualties involving 5 fatalities (1 male, 4 females) and 12 injuries (2 males and 10 females).¹³ The information obtained from the NEWS relating to incidents specifics were mainly rape, defilement, physical assaults, homicides, and associated arrests.¹⁴



Source: WANEP NEWS

The highest occurrence amongst these incidences were homicides and arrest with 8 incidents each.¹⁵ Most of the incidents were reported in the Eastern, Ashanti, and Central regions.¹⁶

Affected victims to the mentioned incidents above are impacted both psychologically, emotionally, and physically. For women and girls especially, who suffer gender-based violence such as rape and defilement, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), including flashbacks, nightmares, and severe anxiety are some of the psychological effects experienced. Most victims who suffer these may likely descend into depression which may end up in suicidal thoughts and attempts. For the girl child particularly, detachment, including not being able to focus on schoolwork may negatively impact the education of such victims.¹⁷

IV- DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE (DG):

Twenty-six human security incidents related to democracy and governance were recorded within the reporting period. These incidents included road accidents (14), nationwide strikes, arrests (3), some youth clashes (5) and

¹³ WANEP's National Early Warning System

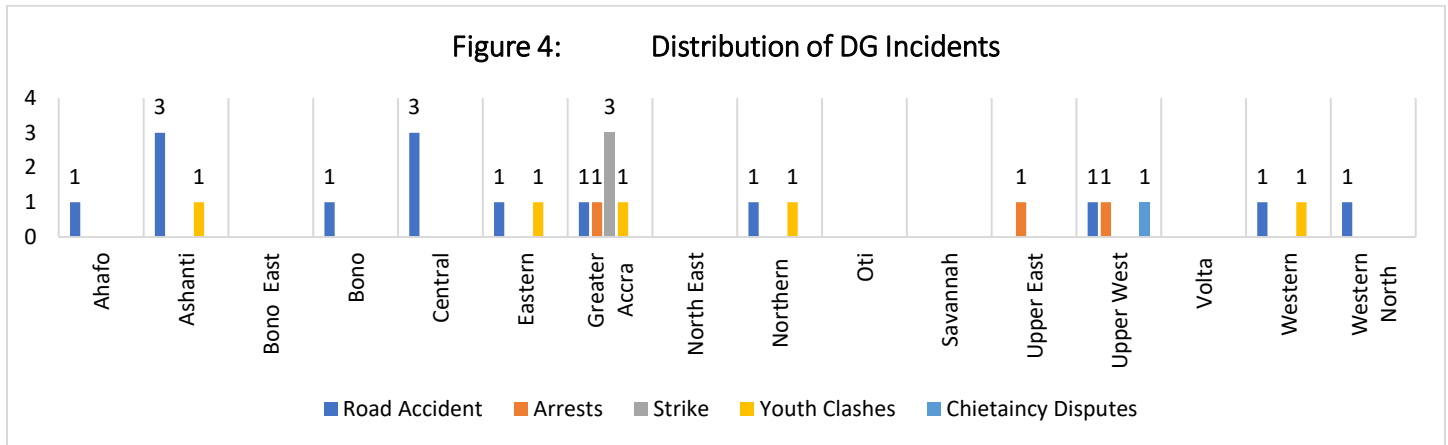
¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ <https://www.joyfulheartfoundation.org/learn/sexual-assault-rape/effects-sexual-assault-and-rape>

a chieftaincy dispute.¹⁸ The graph below show the distribution of incidents per region. For this period, road accidents were high in frequency above other reported incidents.



Source: WANEP NEWS

Road Accidents

The reported road accidents for this month have had devastating effects on the lives of passengers and properties. Reported incidences of road accidents in the month have accounted in total, for 33 fatalities and 88 injuries.¹⁹ One incident in the Western North region recorded the highest fatality rates in a single incident, which accounted for 13 out of the 33 total fatalities recorded for all road accidents this month, while 20 persons were reported to be injured in the same accident. The incident occurred between the Bibiani – Anhwiaso road on Monday January 10, 2022.²⁰ Again, in the Northern region, 10 mourners died, and 23 others also injured in an accident which occurred around Savelugu.²¹ In the Ashanti region, a family of 5 died after the vehicle they were travelling in, collided with a heavy-duty truck at Akrofuom.²²

The major cause of the road accidents recorded this month was largely due to the lack of adherence to road safety regulations. This is also a reminder of the lax in the enforcement of road traffic regulations on the part of drivers. Other factors include inadequate road infrastructure, alcohol, or drug abuse on the part of drivers and faulty vehicles.

¹⁸ WANEP NEWS Monitoring Information

¹⁹ WANEP NEWS Monitoring

²⁰ <https://www.myjoyonline.com/13-die-in-an-accident-on-bibiani-anhwiaso-road/>

²¹ <https://www.adomonline.com/10-mourners-die-in-savelugu-gory-accident/>

²² <https://www.myjoyonline.com/family-of-5-feared-dead-in-accident-while-returning-from-crossover-service/>

Nationwide Strikes

Every economy's growth is undeniably dependent on the strength and commitment of its workforce. As a result, where the labor unions become agitated against low wages and poor working conditions, strike actions are inevitable. Among other strikes that have been embarked on in January 2022, the prominent one is the University Teachers Association of Ghana (UTAG) which has caused the absence of lecturers in the lecture rooms. As of January 31, 2022, the UTAG strike action has entered its 4th week, which could mean the shutdown of public universities in the country, according to labor regulations.²³ If the Government and the association do not find a common ground to dialogue and reach agreement, the shutdown of public universities could affect the academic calendar as well as students in the various public universities. Although the Education Ministry has assured a resolution to this problem²⁴, the resolution of the concerns of the Teachers are yet to be achieved.

Electronic -Levy (E-Levy)

The reading of the budget on November 17, 2021, introduced a new revenue raising avenue for the Government. However, owing to the current economic conditions created by the continuing coronavirus pandemic and its adverse impact on almost all the sectors of the Ghanaian economy, the proposal to tax electronic transactions has generated intense debate between the Majority and Minority in Parliament and the public. The polemics of the debate have also generated tension between the two main political parties represented in the national parliament. This signals lack of consensus, negotiation, and dialogue among political actors in approving or disapproving the bill. While the ruling government has argued the benefits the e-levy would bring to national development, a section of the public and especially the Minority in parliament have raised several concerns against the E-levy. Among the arguments raised include youth unemployment, where a 1.75% tax on mobile money transactions could affect the businesses of several youths, Fintech companies, merchants, retailers, and aggregators working in the mobile money industry.²⁵ An anticipated reduction in volumes of transactions could also trigger business shutdowns, which would drive unemployment.²⁶

Again, there is the concern of a potential reduction in E-transactions if the E-Levy is implemented. Although the Government has made attempts to engage the public in townhall meetings, it is clear that more expert stakeholder engagements is needed to neutralize the uncertain parts of the e-levy policy.

V- ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY (ES)

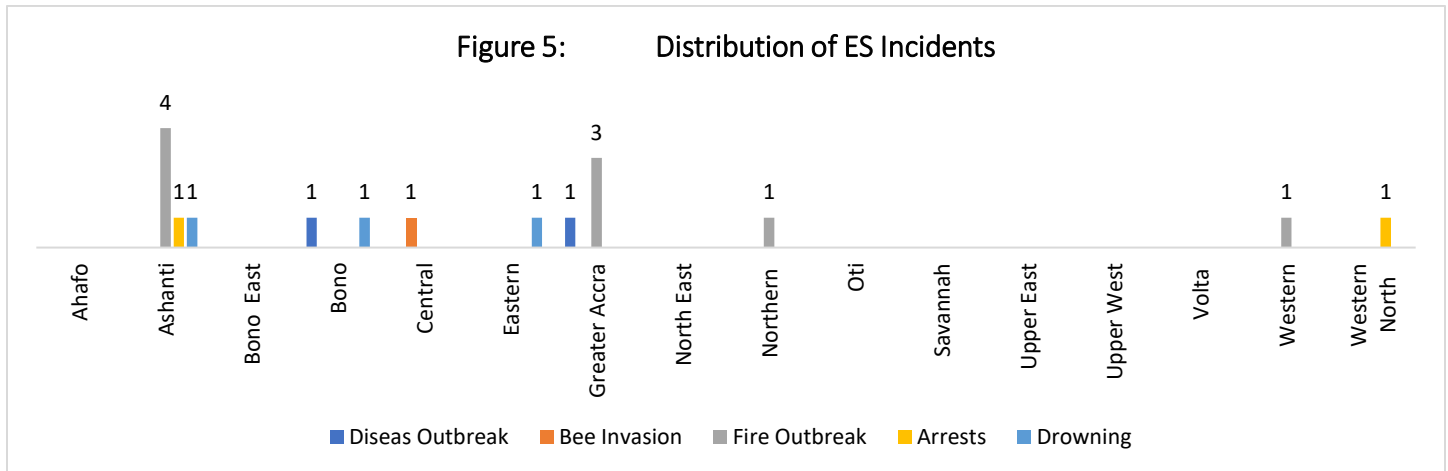
²³ <https://www.myjoyonline.com/shutdown-of-public-universities-imminent-as-utag-strike-continues/>

²⁴ <https://www.myjoyonline.com/well-continue-to-engage-utag-on-how-best-we-can-get-them-back-education-minister/>

²⁵ <https://www.myjoyonline.com/we-risk-increased-youth-unemployment-money-laundering-if-e-levy-is-passed-in-current-form-dr-ali-nakyea/>

²⁶ Ibid

Nineteen incidents related to environmental security were recorded in the reporting period. Twenty-eight fatalities and 66 injuries were associated with incidents occurred in the period.²⁷ The casualties recorded were because of fire outbreaks, drowning, disease outbreaks (bird flu), gas explosion, bee invasion, and explosion incidents. The distribution of the incidents is indicated in below.



Source: WANEP NEWS

Fire Outbreak

Nine fire outbreaks were recorded this month. Four of these were reported in the Ashanti region alone and three in the Greater Accra region, while one occurred in the Western and region. The causes of the fires were not immediately established. However, property destructions have impacted people’s lives, businesses as well as livelihoods, which has already been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Faulty electrical wiring, inappropriate use of open flames and smoking near combustible substances are all possible causes of fire breakouts in the recorded cases. Again, the harmattan weather which presents very dry conditions is a contributory factor to the high occurrence rates of fire outbreaks during this period.

Explosions in parts of the country have claimed 14 lives, injured 63 and destroyed properties.²⁸ However, the highest number (59) of injuries were recorded in the Western region, after a truck conveying mining explosives and a motor tricycle allegedly collided, and discharged explosives destroyed an entire community, leading to loss of lives and property with survivors being displaced at Apeatse.²⁹

Because of the destruction that was caused, there is cause for concern as this incident has affected the livelihoods of populations in the affected communities. In particular, the destruction of school buildings in the community

²⁷ WANEP NEWS Monitoring

²⁸ WANEP NEWS Monitoring

²⁹ <https://www.myjoyonline.com/ghana-must-learn-from-apeatse-disaster-gold-fields/>

has adverse impact on the education of children and the livelihoods of teachers and non-teaching staff. Also, the health security of populations in the communities is at risk of radiation and potential outbreak diseases given the unhygienic conditions created by the explosion. Additionally, economic activities, especially agriculture and mining, the mainstay of the economy, would stall. This has potential consequences on the livelihoods of traders and other commercial activities that have already been devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Measures taken to support the victims of the explosion have included support from the pharmaceutical company Tobinco which has donated food items and medical supplies worth GH¢150, 000 to victims.³⁰ Again, the government has indicated that it would bear the costs of medical bills of the affected persons, and work with the mining companies to rebuild the affected community.³¹ While the government is responding in these areas, the minority in parliament has also asked for an impartial enquiry into the events that led to the explosion. An outcome which would help prevent future incidents like this one.³²

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Government, through relevant agencies including the Police and the National Road Safety Commission, should intensify collaboration with driver unions and the public to embark on an education campaign on road accidents and road safety. This should also encourage the Government to invest in the improvement of road infrastructure in the country, and the enforcement of road traffic laws effectively.
- The Ghana National Fire Service needs to strengthen collaboration with the Metropolitan, Municipal and Districts Chief Executives (MMDCE), National Commission for Civic Education, the Police Service, Civil Society Organizations and other relevant stakeholders to intensify public education on fire safety measures and enforce regulations on fire safety.
- The Government should continue to sustain efforts to strengthen the capacity of security agencies, especially the Police and the Military to be effective in dealing with the rising incidence of crime in the country. Again, because of the rising threats of violent extremism as well as the linkages that could be nurtured in line with these crimes that may be transborder, the Government needs to ensure a robust collaboration with neighbouring states to foster the sharing of intelligence information.

³⁰ <https://www.myjoyonline.com/apeatse-explosion-tobinco-donates-%E2%82%B5150k-worth-of-items-to-victims/>

³¹ <https://www.myjoyonline.com/apeatse-explosion-government-to-foot-medical-bills-of-injured-persons/>

³² <https://www.myjoyonline.com/minority-calls-for-independent-probe-into-circumstances-that-led-to-bogoso-apeatse-explosion/>

- The Government well as the National Labour Commission urgently need to negotiate with the University Teachers Association (UTAG), to come up with favorable and improved conditions of service that would allow the striking teachers to resume their roles as university teachers.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite ongoing challenges faced, and deliberate measures to curb organized crime, gender-based violence and road accidents have continued to impact peace and security in the country. Again, the impasse between the minority and majority in parliament, as well as the government and university teachers, present challenges for the nation if a common ground is not reached soon. It is imperative for stakeholders to continue to strengthen collaboration to effectively respond to the varied human security threats as well as governance issues recorded within the reporting period. This is vital to enhance the human security resilience of populations in communities across the country.

CENSUS OF INCIDENTS FROM THE WANEP NEWS

THEMATIC AREA	NO OF INCIDENTS	CASUALTIES	
		DEATHS	INJURIES
ORGANIZED CRIME & VIOLENT EXTREMISM:	61	23	6
Arrests	23	-	-
Homicides	15	10	0
Armed Robberies	11	7	3
Smuggling	1	-	-
Lynching	6	6	2
Theft	3	-	-
Armed Attacks	1	0	1
Drug Trafficking	1	-	-
WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY:	24	5	12
Homicides	8	5	2
Physical Assaults	3	0	3
Rape/Defilement	5	0	7
Arrests	8	-	-
DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE:	26	53	125
Road Accident	14	47	113
Arrests	3	-	-
Strike	3	-	-

Youth Clashes	5	2	12
Chieftaincy Disputes	1	4	0
ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY	19	28	66
Disease Outbreak	2	-	-
Bee Invasion	1	0	1
Fire Outbreak	9	5	2
Arrests	2	-	-
Drowning	3	9	0
Explosions	2	14	63
Total	130	109	209

Source: WANEP NEWS

Through its National Early Warning System (NEWS), the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP- Ghana) develops and disseminates a monthly bulletin on Human Security at the end of each month to inform the different actors and / or partners and formulates recommendations to different decision-makers for targeted responses to the given alerts. This monthly monitoring is based on information gathered from the field by the WANEP-GHANA field monitors, and information also gathered from the various national and international media.

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