



# NEWS MONTHLY BULLETIN- (WANEP-GHANA)

## (MARCH 2023)

### I- INTRODUCTION

WANEP's National Early Warning System (NEWS) recorded 180 human security incidents in March 2023<sup>1</sup>. An accumulated casualty of 412 from these incidents is further disaggregated into 98 fatalities (45 males, 14 females, 39 others of which the gender was unconfirmed in reports) and 314 injuries (25 males, 20 females and 269 others of which the gender was unconfirmed in reports) for the period.<sup>2</sup> Data collected on all incidents monitored in the country this month indicates the Ashanti as the region with the most frequency of 74 incidents.<sup>3</sup> The Greater Accra and Central regions followed with 23 and 18 incidents respectively. All other regions recorded less than 15 incidents.<sup>4</sup>

From table 1 below, the number of recorded casualties were highest for the Greater Accra region, followed by the Eastern and Central regions. The highest fatalities recorded within the period were as a result of the intensity and frequent number of road accidents recorded in the period. Again, the highest number of injuries recorded within the period came from assaults particularly in the Greater Accra region.

**Table 1: Reported Casualties for the Period of March 2023**

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	0	12	26	0	9	25	11	0	0	8	1	0	1	0	4	1	98
Injuries	0	16	26	1	31	20	194	0	0	0	4	3	0	0	18	1	314
Total Casualties	0	28	52	1	40	45	205	0	0	8	5	3	1	0	22	2	412

Source: WANEP NEWS

The *Monthly Bulletin* provides analysis of the incident data recorded in the reporting period based on the following four thematic areas: 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 are presented under the thematic areas highlighted below:

<sup>1</sup> WANEP National Early Warning System Data

<sup>2</sup> WANEP National Early Warning System Data

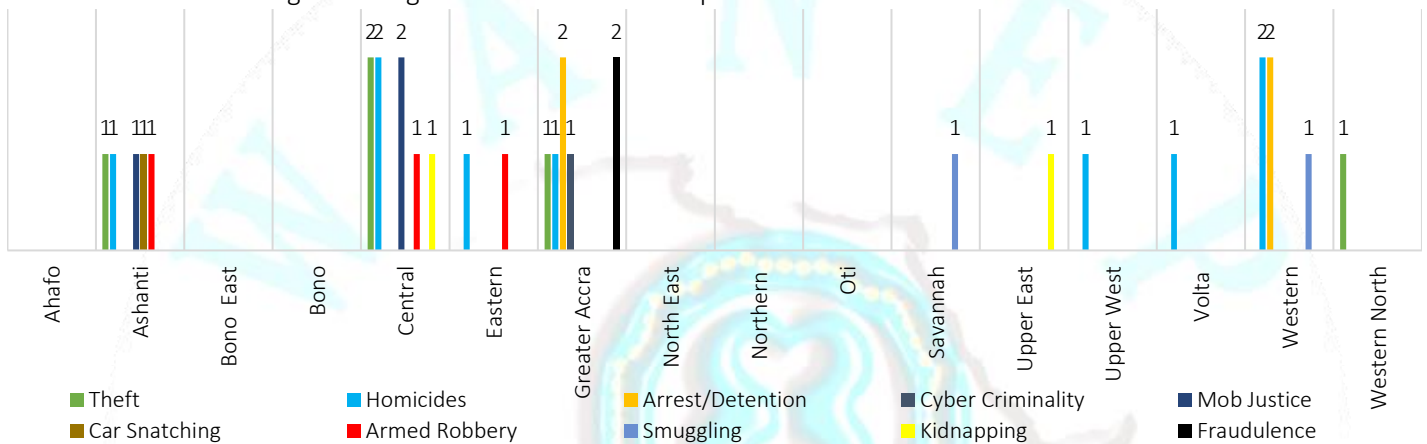
<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

## II- ORGANIZED CRIME AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM (OCVE)

For the period under review, 32 incidents were identified to have occurred under the thematic area of organized crime.<sup>5</sup> Among the issues identified, homicides were the highest this period with 9 occurrences. Theft and armed robberies followed with a frequency of 8 incidents. These occurred in the Ashanti, Central, Eastern, Greater Accra, Western and Western North regions. Three mob action/lynching incidents were also recorded in the Ashanti and Central regions.<sup>6</sup> Other incidents identified as threat to security within the period included fraud, kidnapping,

Figure 1: Organized Criminal and Response Incidents recorded in March 2023



Source: WANEP Ghana NEWS Monitoring

criminally.<sup>7</sup>

From figure 1 above, the incidents were particularly concentrated in the Central, Greater Accra, Western and Ashanti regions. Associated casualties totaled eight, six of which were end results of homicide cases in the Ashanti, Central, Eastern, Upper West and Western regions.<sup>8</sup>

Mob actions/lynching, however, has been reported consistently in previous months, and in this month. Three instances were observed this month, and these occurred in the Ashanti and Central regions. The act was mostly perpetrated against persons believed to have committed certain crimes. For instance, a suspected thief was killed and dumped by a roadside by the mob that killed him in the Winneba Municipality.<sup>9</sup> Another man also met the same fate in Kumasi after he attempted to steal a Grand Bird bus at Asafo.<sup>10</sup>

Mob action arises as a response to perceived injustice, such as police brutality, and corruption surrounding criminal cases. The act is illegal and has led to serious consequences for both individuals and society. It has led to

<sup>5</sup> WANEP National Early Warning System Data

<sup>6</sup> WANEP National Early Warning System Data

<sup>7</sup> WANEP National Early Warning System Data

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/regional/Suspected-thief-lynched-dumped-by-roadside-in-Winneba-1732628>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/regional/Man-beaten-to-death-for-attempting-to-steal-VIP-bus-at-Kumasi-1727447>

violence, property damage, and loss of life, as well as undermined the rule of law and democratic principles. Therefore, there is the need to strengthen law enforcement agencies and justice administration in the country to curtail citizens' acts of taking the law into their own hands through mob action.

Within the month, some 16 persons aged between 12 and 20 years were discovered allegedly kidnapped and placed in a room at Ankaful Zongo in the Cape Coast Metropolitan Assembly in the Central Region. The victims were examined and determined not to be of Ghanaian origin. They were suspected to be nationals of countries such as Burkina Faso, Togo, Mali, and Niger. The victims were believed to have been kept for about a month as they had grown very lean due to lack of food and water.<sup>11</sup> The fact that the victims are suspected to be nationals of neighboring countries highlights the need for international cooperation and coordinated efforts to prevent and address cross-border crimes such as human trafficking and smuggling.

### **III- GENDER, PEACE AND SECURITY (GPS):**

The issues identified under the gender, peace, and security theme in the reporting period include four (4) gender-related assaults cases in the Bono, Central and Greater Accra regions, three (3) arrests, a baby dumping incident in the Greater Accra region, as well as 2 gender-related homicide cases in the Central and Eastern regions.<sup>12</sup>

As part of efforts to champion the agenda for gender-related issues, Ghana hosted the Regional Meeting for Gender Experts & Ministers responsible for Gender and Women Affairs of ECOWAS Member States from Monday 27th to Thursday 30th March 2023.<sup>13</sup> The main objective of the meeting was to discuss, review and finalize the draft ECOWAS–CEDEAO Gender Development Centre (EGDC) Strategic Plan 2023-2027, prior to its validation by the meeting of ministers responsible for Gender and Women Affairs and subsequent adoption by other statutory bodies of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).<sup>14</sup> The strategic plan is expected to build on the progress and achievements that have been made over the years and contribute to sustainable development and economic and social justice in the ECOWAS region, through the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

### **IV- DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE (DG):**

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/regional/16-alleged-kidnapped-persons-found-in-a-single-room-at-Ankaful-1737797>

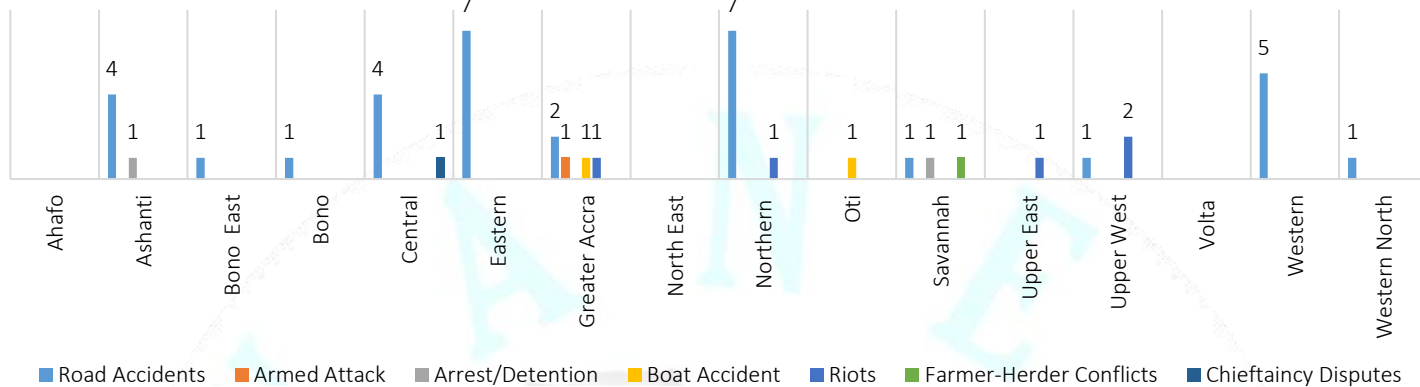
<sup>12</sup> WANEP National Early Warning System Data

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.mogcsp.gov.gh/validation-of-the-strategic-plan-2023-2027-of-the-ecowas-gender-development-centre/>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.mogcsp.gov.gh/validation-of-the-strategic-plan-2023-2027-of-the-ecowas-gender-development-centre/>

From data generated in the reporting period, 36 incidents were identified under issues of importance to democracy and governance.<sup>15</sup> Road accidents, armed attacks, arrest/detentions, boat accidents and riots were among the issues identified within the period.<sup>16</sup>

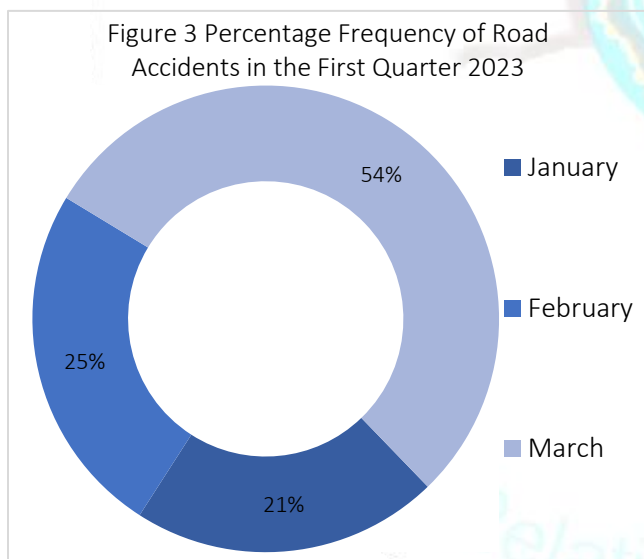
Figure 2: Democracy and Governance Incidents Recorded in March 2023



Source: WANEP Ghana NEWS Monitoring

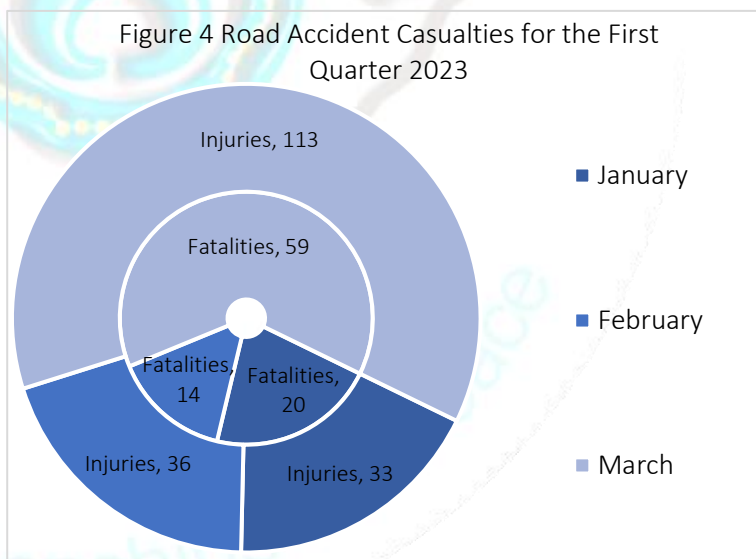
For three consecutive times in 2023, road accidents have comparatively claimed the most lives each month. From figure 2 above, the spread of these accidents indicates the Northern, Western and Eastern region had the highest occurrences for the period.

Figure 3 Percentage Frequency of Road Accidents in the First Quarter 2023



Source: WANEP Ghana NEWS Monitoring

Figure 4 Road Accident Casualties for the First Quarter 2023



From the statistics gathered by WANEP Ghana’s NEWS, as depicted in the charts above, 54 percent of road accidents this year, were reported in March 2023. Consequently, the highest casualty rates (151) were reported within the month of March 2023. The percentage rate of change in frequency of 15 percent from January to

<sup>15</sup> WANEP National Early Warning System Data

<sup>16</sup> WANEP National Early Warning System Data

February 2023, to 48 percent from February to March 2023 is significant and a cause for concern as the data indicates a consequential rise in the number of casualties.

Boat accidents have been critical in Ghana for many years, particularly in the country's coastal and riverine areas. These accidents have resulted in numerous fatalities and injuries, as well as significant economic losses. Two of the notable boat accidents that occurred within the period of March 2023 occurred in the Greater Accra and Oti regions. Five persons reportedly died in a boat accident on the Azizanya-Azizakpe route in Ada, after a boat transporting some over 40 passengers capsized. The trigger of the accident on March 18, 2023, was attributed a storm that occurred at the time. However, reports also suggest the accident occurred because of overloading of the boat.<sup>17</sup> At a village in the Krachi Nchumuru District to Sabaja in the Krachi West Municipality of the Oti region, reports indicated the death of eight (8) persons after a boat capsized in the Oti River. Two children were part of the deceaseds. Reports concluded that the boat had exceeded its carrying capacity, thus forced the occurrence of the accident.<sup>18</sup> Each year, from year 2012, at least one boat incident was recorded. The similar incidents that occurred in 2012 Yeji, 2013 Kete-Krachi, 2014 Ada Foah and 2015 Apam were caused by a combination of factors including overloading, poor maintenance, and bad weather conditions.<sup>19</sup>

Another key incident that was notable within the period was the invasion of Ashaiman and adjoining communities after the killing of a soldier in the area.<sup>20</sup> The killing of the military officer is condemnable. Similarly, the attack on residents of Ashaiman by the military officers is reprehensible. From a human rights perspective, the invasion of Ashaiman raises questions about the use of excessive force by the security agencies in dealing with citizens, and derails efforts to improve civil-military cooperation (CIMIC). The incident further highlights the need to strengthen citizens engagement through civil-military education on human rights and humanitarian laws.

## V- ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY (ES)

Environmental security issues recorded in the period include cases of fire outbreaks, rainstorms, flooding, earth tremor, measles outbreak, illegal mining, and others<sup>21</sup>. Data readily available from the Ashanti Regional Fire Service indicated a total of 60 incidence of fire and 5 fatalities in the region in March 2023.<sup>22</sup> This depicts a reduction in frequency from 178 incidents in January 2023 to 131 in February 2023 according to the data shared by the Fire Command. For other regions, the data is not readily available, however WANEP Ghana's monitoring

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Boat-carrying-over-20-mourners-in-Ada-capsizes-5-feared-dead-1733165>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/region/smartnewsghana/8-persons-die-in-a-boat-accident-on-Oti-River-73715>

<sup>19</sup> See "Boat Accidents: A Tragic Tale of Ghana's Poor Water Transport System" by Isaac Kaledzi, published on Voice of America's website on September 13, 2019.

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/ashaiman-slain-soldier-identified-as-21-year-old-sherif-imoro.html>

<sup>21</sup> See table below for list of other incidents identified within the period

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/regional/Ashanti-Region-records-60-fires-5-deaths-in-March-alone-GNFS-1738409>

of fire events identified key occurrences in the Greater Accra, Volta and Western North regions (1 each).<sup>23</sup> As the rainy season has approached, the frequency of fire outbreaks is expected to reduce, as seen in the case of the reduction in the Ashanti region particularly.

The challenges induced by rainfall this month, were experienced in the Ashanti and Greater Accra region. Locations such as Breman<sup>24</sup>, Kwame Nkrumah Circle, Kasoa, Bortianor, and Dzonwulu bore the brunt of flood waters leading to the death of at least 5 persons including children.<sup>25</sup> Rainstorms reportedly ripped off roofings in Sampa<sup>26</sup>, Nakore and Chansah communities<sup>27</sup> as well as affected a thermal plant at Aboadze in the Shama District of the Western region.<sup>28</sup>

As predicted last month, the risk of the spread of diseases were eminent especially when the country was hit with a vaccine shortage. This month, cases of Measles were reported in the Ketu South District of Volta region with 10 incidents identified.<sup>29</sup> Although no death was recorded and some consignments of vaccines have been acquired, the chances of other regions confirming cases is possible subsequently.

Illegal mining continues to be a challenge in Ghana although efforts to contain the menace have intensified and taken several forms. In the Western region, some illegal miners attacked the Golden Star Wassa Mine at Benso on Thursday, March 16, 2023. According to the Head of Group Corporate Affairs of the company, the attackers burnt some company properties including 12 vehicles.<sup>30</sup> Police interventions, including investigations were subsequently reported. Injured security men and workers were treated and discharged subsequently.

### **Implications for Peace and Security**

Peace and security are critical factors for sustainable development and the well-being of citizens. They are interlinked and mutually reinforcing, and their absence can have far-reaching consequences on social, economic, and political stability.

The excesses of the security services against citizens, for example, have potential to erode public trust and confidence in law enforcement, which can undermine the rule of law in the country. This can lead to a breakdown

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<sup>23</sup> WANEP NEWS Data

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/regional/21-year-old-girl-s-body-found-a-week-after-flood-in-Suame-1729847>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.ghanaiantimes.com.gh/2-children-drown-after-torrential-rains-at-bortianor/>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/regional/Blackout-houses-destroyed-in-Sampa-as-rainfall-causes-havoc-1729352>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/regional/Rainstorm-rips-up-roof-of-Nakore-Chansah-JHS-1731662>

<sup>28</sup> Monitor's report

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/health/Ketu-South-records-10-cases-of-measles-Dr-Djokoto-1730393>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Illegal-miners-attack-mining-company-burn-12-vehicles-1733036>

in social order and increased tensions between the state and citizens. As seen in the instances in Ashaiman and other parts of the country, issues like mob justice and violent confrontations against law enforcement agencies are manifestations of seeming fractured state-citizens relations, which is counterproductive to social cohesion.

For the environment, activities of illegal mining continue to impact negatively on the health of communities and environments. The destruction of forests, water sources, and other ecosystems has become evident as the Ghana Water Company continues to bemoan the high turbidity levels in its source waters, and the attendant impacts on its operations. The desire for the monetary outcomes of illegal mining, if not controlled, would culminate into the total depletion, in the long run, of the viable environment affected by the act. This underscores the urgent need for additional action to protect the country's water resources.

For the past years, rainstorms and flooding have devastated lives and property in communities across the country. This month and the ones to come usher in the rainy season which may characterize torrential & destructive rainfalls, and consequent flooding. Given the lack of innovative measures to prevent flooding in known flood-prone locations each year, the implications could be no different from previous experiences unless effective early warning measures are instituted to prevent floods from displacing people, degrading the environment, damaging infrastructure, while posing negative health impacts.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Government needs to strengthen the capacity of the Ghana Meteorological Service to be able to detect weather hazards timely and inform the public, while strengthening collaboration with the National Disaster Management Organization and the security agencies to ensure the early response to environmental risks and impact on vulnerable populations.
- Concerned institutions such as the Domestic Violence & Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection as well as the justice system must be advocates for the strengthening and enforcement of related legal frameworks. Through awareness creation, victim support and the enhancement of data collection on gender related issues, targeted interventions could improve the rate of occurrence of the varied gender-based violence incidents.

## CONCLUSIONS

The report has brought to light various incidents related to human security that were documented in Ghana during March 2023. Among these incidents, road accidents were the most frequently occurring, mostly reported in the Northern and Eastern regions. The accidents caused the highest number of casualties in the Bono East,

Eastern, Central and Ashanti regions. Other incidents highlighted in the report include homicides, armed robberies, fire outbreaks, smuggling, car snatching, among others. These human security challenges highlighted in the reporting period, therefore calls for the need for key stakeholders to strengthen collaboration and responses to mitigate the adverse impacts of the threats on human security in the country.

### CENSUS OF INCIDENTS FROM THE WANEP NEWS

THEMATIC AREA	NO OF INCIDENTS	CASUALTIES	
		DEATHS	INJURIES
<b>ORGANIZED CRIME &amp; VIOLENT EXTREMISM:</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>
Theft	5	-	-
Homicides	9	6	1
Arrest/Detention	4	-	-
Cyber Criminality	1	-	-
Mob Justice	3	2	1
Car Snatching	1	-	-
Armed Robbery	3	1	0
Smuggling	2	-	-
Kidnapping	2	-	-
Fraudulence	2	-	-
<b>DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE:</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>301</b>
Road Accidents	34	59	113
Armed Attack	1	1	184
Arrest/Detention	2	-	-
Boat Accident	2	13	0
Riots	5	0	3
Farmer-Herder Conflicts	1	0	1
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>
Fire Outbreaks	63	5	0
Arrest/Detention	1	-	-
Flooding	3	3	0
Rainstorms	3	-	-
Earth Tremor	1	-	-
Electrocution	1	1	0
Drowning	1	-	-
Disease Outbreak (Measles)	10	-	-
Armed Attack	1	1	10
Arson	1	-	-
Illegal Mining	1	-	-
Illegal Mining Accidents	1	1	0



WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY:	15	5	1
Assault	3	0	1
Arrest/Detention	6	1	0
Baby Dumping	1	1	0
Homicides	3	3	0
Child Trafficking	1	-	-
Rape/Defilement	1	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>314</b>

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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