

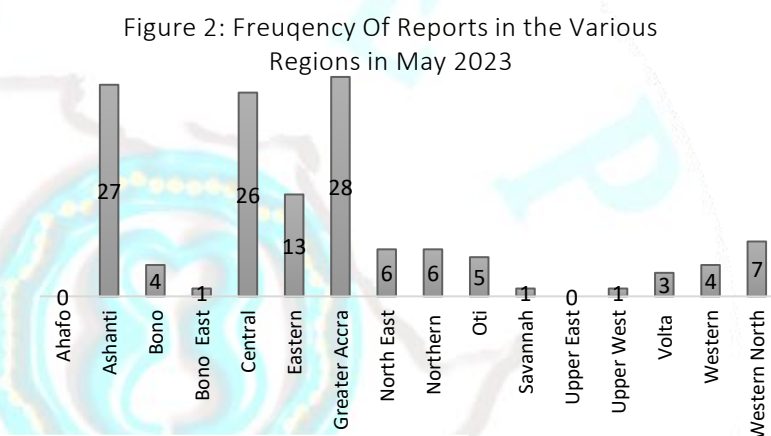
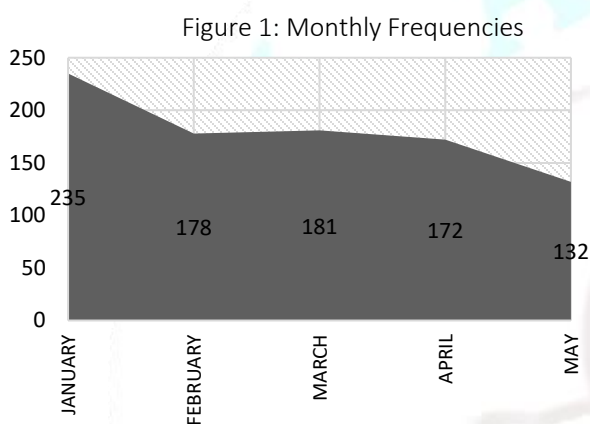


# NEWS MONTHLY BULLETIN- (WANEP-GHANA)

## (MAY 2023)

### I- INTRODUCTION

WANEP’s National Early Warning System (NEWS) recorded 132 human security incidents in April 2023<sup>1</sup>. An accumulated casualty of 257 from these incidents is further disaggregated into 77 fatalities (50 males, 27 females) and 180 injuries (101 males, 65 females, 14 inconclusive on gender of victims, per the reports) in the period.<sup>2</sup>



Source: WANEP Ghana NEWS Monitoring

From figure 1 above, the reporting period recorded 132 incidents, which is the lowest since the year began according to data generated from WANEP Ghana’s data. The data collected on all incidents monitored in the country in May, indicates the Greater Accra, Ashanti and Central regions, in that chronology, as the location with the highest frequency of incident occurrence as shown in figure 2 above.<sup>3</sup> All other regions recorded less than 15 incidents.<sup>4</sup> Armed robberies and road accidents topped the frequencies with 16 and 14 incidents respectively. Other key incidents within the period also included series of building collapses across the country, fire outbreaks, homicides, food poisoning, disease outbreaks, land disputes, flooding, and boat accidents, just to mention a few.<sup>5</sup> From table 1 below, the highest total of casualties (85) were reported from the Central region. The Eastern and Greater Accra regions also recorded significant frequencies, i.e., 42 and 30 respectively.<sup>6</sup> The highest casualty

<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

<sup>5</sup> Please see the last table at the bottom of the page for individual frequencies and related casualty figures.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

proportion was determined from results of road accidents experienced within the reporting period.<sup>7</sup> The highest of these road accident casualties were in the Central region, the reason the total casualty figures are highest in the region.

**Table 1: Reported Casualties for the Period of May 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	10	5	0	22	15	12	0	2	0	7	0	0	0	2	2	77
Injuries	0	6	11	1	63	27	18	0	0	24	10	0	2	3	2	13	180
Total Casualties	0	16	16	1	85	42	30	0	2	24	17	0	2	3	4	15	257

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:

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

Organized crime, particularly armed robbery, was the most recurrent threat under this theme in the reporting month. Sixteen instances were monitored across the country, 11 of which were from the Ashanti region. The Central region had four instances monitored while one was reported from the Western region.

The situation in the Ashanti region is dire as a series of armed robbery incidents were reported particularly in the Afigya Kwabre South District of the Ashanti Region, at a community called Bouhu-Foase.<sup>8</sup> Residents have reportedly fled their homes to seek safety outside of the area. The frequent attacks have led to property damage and several valuables stolen from victims. In the Akrofuom District, for example, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) branch chairman for Dunkwa-Kadadwen Nkansah Daaho "B" was killed by suspected armed robbers. According to information gathered, the branch Chairman was allegedly driving two Chinese gold dealers from a gold mining site on the Tweapiase—Obuase road on Thursday, May 4, 2023, evening when suspected armed robbers intercepted and started firing shots into the vehicle.<sup>9</sup> In the Central region, particularly in the Awutu Senya East Municipality at Alico, an armed robbery incident also occurred. However, the suspect was

<sup>7</sup> Please see the last table at the bottom of the page for individual frequencies and related casualty figures.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/crime/Armed-robbers-threatening-our-lives-come-to-our-aid-Buoho-Foase-residents-1773365>

<sup>9</sup> <https://kasapafmonline.com/?p=275175>

apprehended and mobbed to death in the early hours of May 6, 2023.<sup>10</sup> The suspect was identified as a known burglar in the area and therefore led to the instant justice meted out to him. A similar mob action was also meted out to two suspected armed robbers in the Gomoa East District, after they attempted to rob a house at Millenium City on May 7, 2023.<sup>11</sup> The vigilance of residence in the area led to the apprehension of the suspects, although the arrest led to subsequent lynching of the suspects rather than submitting them to police custody.

Drug or substance abuse and/peddling were also key issues that were monitored in the Techiman Municipality of the Bono East region, Cave in the Volta region, Bodi District in the Western North region and the Kuntunse-Satellite community, Greater Accra Region.

In the Techiman Municipality, there was shortage of super glue due to suspected drug addicts who use the glue as a form of narcotic, according to shop owners in the area. The glue is believed to be set on fire and covered with a cloth to allow for the formation of a gas that is inhaled. Some shop owners also reported that the drug addicts mixed glue with energy drinks to experience an ecstasy that also gives them strength to go about their daily activities.<sup>12</sup> The situation in the Kuntunse Satellite community also involved a shortage of cough syrup which is believed to improve the energy levels of the addicts. A Medicine Counter Assistant within the community disclosed that they could sell boxes of different grades of cough syrup within a week or days and sometimes run short in supply. The likes of 'Benylin Original', 'Letalin Expectorant', 'Koffex Cough Syrup', and 'Samalin Adult' were the brands that were highly in demand, aside from the popular 'Codeine'.<sup>13</sup>

In terms of smuggling of narcotics, officers of the Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) at the Nyive border intercepted 896 slabs of suspected Indian hemp at Cave in the Volta Region<sup>14</sup>, while the drug trade was reported in an incident that led to the death of a suspect at Sehwi Ahibenso in the Bodi District.<sup>15</sup>

In the reporting period, a joint operation involving the Economic and Organized Crime Office (EOCO) and the Ghana Police Service led to the arrest of 49 persons, after which 4 were identified as the human traffickers, while the remainder were victims of trafficking. EOCO identified the suspects as Nigerians between the ages of 18 and 34 years, forty-seven (47) males and two (2) females. These trafficked persons were reportedly engaged mostly in cyber related crimes.<sup>16</sup> In another event at Drobo in the Jaman South Municipality of the Bono Region, the

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/crime/Thief-beaten-to-death-after-failed-robbery-at-Kasoa-1762448>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/region/managinggh/Brutal-Beatdown-Of-Thieves-Like-Goats-for-Sunday-Heist-Attempt-94244?dicbo=v2-7fjL185>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/region/clubmate/Superglue-shortage-hits-Techiman-as-youth-inhale-it-and-mix-it-with-energy-drinks-to-high-84284#:~:text=So%2C%20apparently%2C%20the%20Techiman%20Municipality>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/health/Youth-abuse-cough-syrup-in-new-drug-abuse-trend-at-Kuntunse-Satellite-1760213>

<sup>14</sup> <https://todayghanamedia.com/volta-region-gis-intercept-over-800-slabs-of-indian-hemp-at-cave/>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/crime/Ghetto-boys-beat-man-to-death-for-failing-to-render-account-for-wee-sold-1769492>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/crime/EOCO-nabs-suspected-human-trafficking-syndicate-in-Accra-1773179>

Ghana Police Service rescued a kidnapped boy from a forest after the father had indicated that his son had been taken. Although investigations into the matter had commenced, conclusions have not been reached or communicated yet.<sup>17</sup>

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

Peace and security threats recorded under the Women Peace and Security theme included issues of assault, homicides, witchcraft accusations, rape/defilement and matters surrounding baby dumping by mothers. The idea of witchcraft/wizardry/sorcery and the accusation of persons especially elderly women, and in rare cases elderly men in Ghana continues to be a significant socio-cultural issue which is deeply rooted in the Ghanaian traditional belief system. Although the practice of accusation has persisted and hidden from mass media over the years, the advent of digital technology especially social media exposed the abuses elderly women and others faced in the country. The case of Akua Denteh brought the phenomenon into limelight and thus subsequently sparked interventions from the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection as well as civil society who operated in the gender space. Despite interventions to shut down witch camps, arrest and prosecute the perpetrators, as well as sensitize communities, more persons have continued to fall victim to witchcraft accusations. In the month of May, two persons were lynched on suspicion of wizardry and witchcraft at Zakpalsi in the Mion District of the Northern region. The woman, Imoro Safura, was chased to the chief's palace, where she was subsequently lynched.<sup>18</sup> The man, on the other hand, was killed at his residence. The two were accused of being responsible for the sickness of a woman in the community after a soothsayer who was consulted by the sick woman's family made such pronouncements.<sup>19</sup> Although investigations have commenced, a conclusion on the matter is still yet to be reached or communicated.

Defilement cases recorded in the period also included sexual abuse of school children by their teachers. Three pupils in the Sehwi Wiawso Municipality of the Western North Region were reportedly defiled by a National Service person who was posted to the school to teach.<sup>20</sup> In a similar circumstance at Benkum in the Eastern region, 15 students accused the headmaster of allegedly defiling them.<sup>21</sup> Other teachers in the school were also

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/regional/How-Ghana-Police-Service-rescued-a-kidnapped-boy-from-a-forest-1775957>

<sup>18</sup> <https://3news.com/two-lynched-over-witchcraft-accusations-at-zakpalsi-n-r/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://3news.com/two-lynched-over-witchcraft-accusations-at-zakpalsi-n-r/>

<sup>20</sup> <https://3news.com/nss-teacher-arrested-for-allegedly-defiling-three-pupils-in-his-class/>

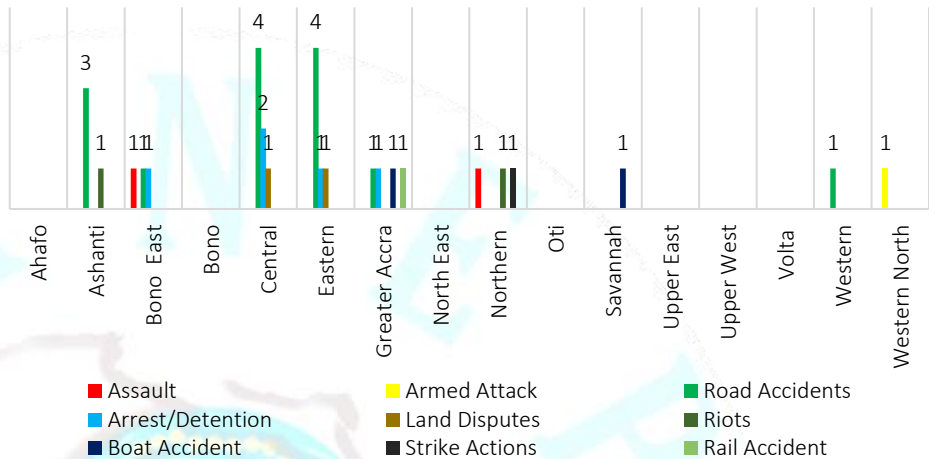
<sup>21</sup> <https://seekersnewsgh.com/benkum-shs-headmaster-interdicted-for-allegedly-having-sex-with-15-students/>

fingered as culprits in the same act.<sup>22</sup> Apart from teachers, other reports on sexual violence against females included fathers, electricians and farmers as perpetrators.<sup>23</sup>

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

A total of 30 incidents were reported under democracy and governance. Assault, armed attack, road accidents, arrest/detention, land disputes, riots, boat accident, strike actions, and a rail accident were among the issues monitored within the period. From the figure beside, the regions in which the incidents occurred is presented.

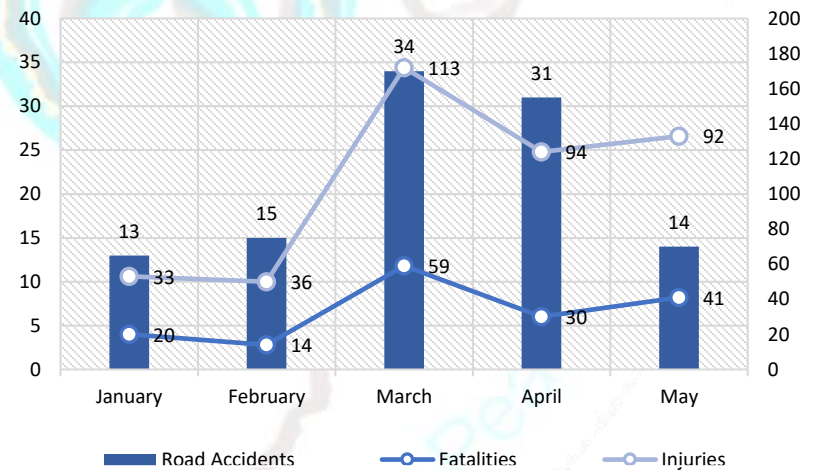
Figure 3: Regional Spread of Democracy and Governance Incidents recorded in May 2023



Source: WANEP Ghana NEWS Monitoring

Road accidents emerged as the most frequently reported incident under this theme, totaling 14 instances.<sup>24</sup> According to data from WANEP Ghana’s system, this month recorded one of the lowest frequencies in the occurrence of accidents. From the trends graph besides, March 2023 had the highest frequency, followed by April 2023. Despite the reduction in frequency from March till this month, the casualty rates continue to sustain. The highest fatality numbers were reported in March 2023 (59) while the second highest was recorded this month (41).<sup>25</sup> For injuries,

Figure 4: Road Accident Trends Since January 2023



Source: WANEP Ghana NEWS Monitoring

<sup>22</sup> <https://seekersnewsgh.com/benkum-shs-headmaster-interdicted-for-allegedly-having-sex-with-15-students/>

<sup>23</sup> Please refer to all Weekly Highlights Shared within the month of May 2023, particularly under the Gender Peace and Security theme for further details of these incidents

<sup>24</sup> WANEP National Early Warning System Data

<sup>25</sup> WANEP National Early Warning System Data

the highest were again recorded in March, April then May, in that chronology. The accidents were mostly concentrated in the Central, Eastern and Ashanti regions.

For the accidents that occurred in the Eastern region, the locations included Mamfe Akuapem, Adukrom-Akuapem, Enyiresi and at Bepoase. In the Central region, a repetitive pattern of accidents in the Gomoa areas has continued into this reporting period. In April last month, places like Gomoa Onyadze, Gomoa Akraman, Gomoa Buduatta, and Gomoa Potsin recorded accidents. This month the accidents occurred at the Gomoa Okyereko Junction, Gomoa Anteadze, and Gomoa Okyereko. One other accident also was reported from the Assin Fosu region.<sup>26</sup> On May 27, 2023, 16 people perished at Gomoa Okyereko on the Kasoa-Winneba highway, leaving 20 persons injured.<sup>27</sup> Ten days earlier on May 17, 2023, a passenger died on the spot, while 22 others suffered injuries after the vehicle they were traveling in, burst a tyre at Gomoa Anteadze.<sup>28</sup> These two incidents contributed mostly to the high numbers of casualties recorded in the period. The National Road Safety Authority (NRSA) has stated that about 10% of road accidents in Ghana are linked to poor tyre maintenance.<sup>29</sup> While the maintenance culture of most vehicle operators is questionable, other major causes of road accidents especially in this reporting period included over speeding, driving under alcohol influence, distracted driving leading to crash into parked trailers on road shoulders, and further catalyzed by inadequate road infrastructure in certain parts of the country.

Other major incidents which occurred this month included two boat accidents. Nine school children were drowned on Wednesday, May 10, 2023, after a boat carrying mostly students capsized around Faana in the Weija Gbawe Municipality in Accra. The accident happened while the children were being transported home from school on the other side of the river. In the Savannah region one person was confirmed dead while several others were missing after a boat transporting passengers from Dorkorchina to Kpandai allegedly capsized because of overloading. Indeed, the National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO) within the period, also confirmed that 18 people had died and 32 people remain missing after a boat carrying passengers capsized on the Volta Lake. According to NADMO, the occupants were traveling from an illegal mining site to an over-bank community in the Bono East Region when the boat collided with a tree stump. The boat was reportedly overloaded, causing the accident.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Please refer to all Weekly Highlights Shared within the month of May 2023, particularly under the Gender Peace and Security theme for further details of these incidents

<sup>27</sup> <https://yen.com.gh/ghana/234435-accident-kasoa-winneba-highway-claims-lives-16-passengers-20-critical-condition/>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/regional/One-dead-22-injured-in-accident-at-Gomoa-Anteadze-1768886>

<sup>29</sup> Mr Dennis Yeribu, Principal Manager, Planning and Programmes Directorate of the National Road Safety Authority (NRSA), made this known during a campaign they organized in collaboration with Vulco and with support from the Ghana Police Service.

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/bbc/Boat-accident-kill-18-for-Ghana-32-still-dey-miss-1776794>

The accidents recorded in the period have resulted in significant economic losses for individuals, and their families. These losses stem from expenses related to medical treatment, reduced productivity due to injuries or disabilities of the affected individuals, and the need for family members to take time off productive work or school to provide care for the injured.

## V- ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY (ES)

As the global community grapples with the increasing challenges posed by environmental degradation and climate change, the significance of environmental security has become paramount. Ghana especially stands at a critical juncture where the preservation and sustainable management of environmental resources have become vital for future well-being. In the reported period, pockets of illegal mining activities continue to occur in regions such as the Ashanti, Bono East and Eastern regions, amidst the national discussions on the act, in relation to the report submitted to the President of the Republic two years ago by Professor Frimpong Boateng. The effects of the illegal mining activities cannot be overstated, especially when the health of communities come into question.

In the wake of rainstorms and /or torrential rainfalls, communities have suffered the impacts of floods and series of building collapses (including rainstorm induced collapses) across the country. In the Sehwi Wiawso Municipality of the Western North Region, 50 pupils were affected following the collapse of a dilapidated Kramokrom DA Primary school structure on May 23, 2023. Ten of these pupils were injured in the process.<sup>31</sup> Residents of Tinguri, Yawoku, Gbani, Gbeduri, and Tinkaya in the West Mamprusi Municipality of the North East Region had their houses destroyed by rainstorm in the respective communities. Roofing sheets of the buildings were brought down by a storm that accompanied the rains on May 05, 2023.<sup>32</sup> A series of collapses were also recorded in the Greater Accra region at places like Nmai Dzorn, near Ashaley Botwe, Old Bortianor, and at Adenta. At least 2 persons died and between 5 to 10 persons injured in total, from all the building collapses in the region.<sup>33</sup>

In the case of the Sehwi Wiawso Municipality, the collapse of the school structure is particularly concerning as it underscores the need for regular inspections and maintenance of educational facilities to prevent such incidents and safeguard the well-being of students and staff. Similarly, the destruction of houses in Tinguri, Yawoku, Gbani, Gbeduri, and Tinkaya in the West Mamprusi Municipality due to rainstorms and accompanying strong winds is distressing for the affected residents. Losing homes can be a devastating experience, and it highlights the vulnerability of communities to extreme weather events. Again, it is a tragic reminder for the various other

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/regional/Dilapidated-structure-collapses-on-pupils-in-Sehwi-Wiawso-1772204>

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/regional/Residents-seek-support-from-government-after-rainstorm-destruction-on-buildings-1771415>

<sup>33</sup> See all Weekly Highlights shared within the month of May 2023, particularly under the Gender Peace and Security theme for further details of these incidents.

locations that experienced building collapses, of the importance of constructing buildings with standard construction materials and sticking to mandated building maintenance requirements to withstand adverse weather and structural triggers.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, with support from the various Government agencies such as the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU), National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) as well as civil society, needs to promote education and awareness campaigns to debunk myths, superstitions, and misconceptions about witchcraft. This should involve strengthening law enforcement to effectively protect victims and prosecute perpetrators, and engagement with community leaders, religious institutions, schools, and the media to disseminate accurate information about the causes of societal problems.
- The Government of Ghana needs to enhance the enforcement of environmental laws and regulations related to illegal mining activities. This should involve the Ghana Police and Immigration Services increasing effective surveillance and monitoring efforts, implementing stricter penalties for offenders, and improving coordination among all relevant government agencies.
- There is the need for the Government to strengthen community engagement through provision of alternative livelihood support to populations to assuage their involvement in the illegal mining activities.
- Government agencies, for instance the NCCE should consider an intense awareness campaign and provide support for drug addiction. The campaign must seek to educate the public, especially the youth, about the dangers of drug abuse and its repercussions. With support from the Government as well as private donors and civil society, the Ghana Health Service (GHS) should improve existing rehabilitation and treatment centers and equip them to provide effective counseling, therapy, and medical support for individuals struggling with substance abuse.

## CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the issues highlighted underscore the importance of addressing security, public safety, and social well-being in Ghana. From illegal mining activities and building collapses to road accidents, armed robberies, and drug abuse, these challenges have significant consequences for development. To safeguard the future well-being of the country, it is crucial to prioritize the preservation and sustainable management of environmental resources,



strengthen law enforcement efforts, enhancing community policing, & implementing effective crime prevention strategies, as well as implementing comprehensive approaches that involve sufficient public education.

### CENSUS OF INCIDENTS FROM THE WANEP NEWS

THEMATIC AREA	NO OF INCIDENTS	CASUALTIES	
		DEATHS	INJURIES
<b>ORGANIZED CRIME &amp; VIOLENT EXTREMISM:</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>
<i>Armed Robbery</i>	16	1	3
<i>Arrest/Detention</i>	6	-	-
<i>Mob Justice</i>	2	-	-
<i>Homicides</i>	4	5	0
<i>Drug Trafficking</i>	4	-	-
<i>Armed Attack</i>	2	0	5
<i>Human Trafficking</i>	1	-	-
<i>Kidnapping</i>	1	0	1
<b>DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE:</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>96</b>
<i>Assault</i>	2	1	1
<i>Armed Attack</i>	1	-	-
<i>Road Accidents</i>	14	41	92
<i>Arrest/Detention</i>	5	-	-
<i>Land Disputes</i>	2	0	1
<i>Riots</i>	2	0	2
<i>Boat Accident</i>	2	10	0
<i>Strike Actions</i>	1	-	-
<i>Rail Accident</i>	1		
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>47</b>
<i>Fire Outbreaks</i>	12	-	-
<i>Building Collapse</i>	12	3	25
<i>Food Poisoning</i>	1	0	22
<i>Flooding</i>	3	-	-
<i>Rainstorms</i>	3	-	-
<i>Illegal Mining Accidents</i>	2	7	0
<i>Drowning</i>	1	2	0
<i>Disease Outbreak (Rabies)</i>	1	-	-
<i>Illegal Mining</i>	1	-	-
<b>WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY:</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>28</b>
<i>Assault</i>	5	0	5

Homicides	5	6	0
Suicides	2	1	0
Arrest/Detention	8	-	-
Witchcraft Accusations	1	-	-
Rape/Defilement	8	0	22
Baby Dumping	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>180</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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