



# NEWS MONTHLY BULLETIN- (WANEP-GHANA)

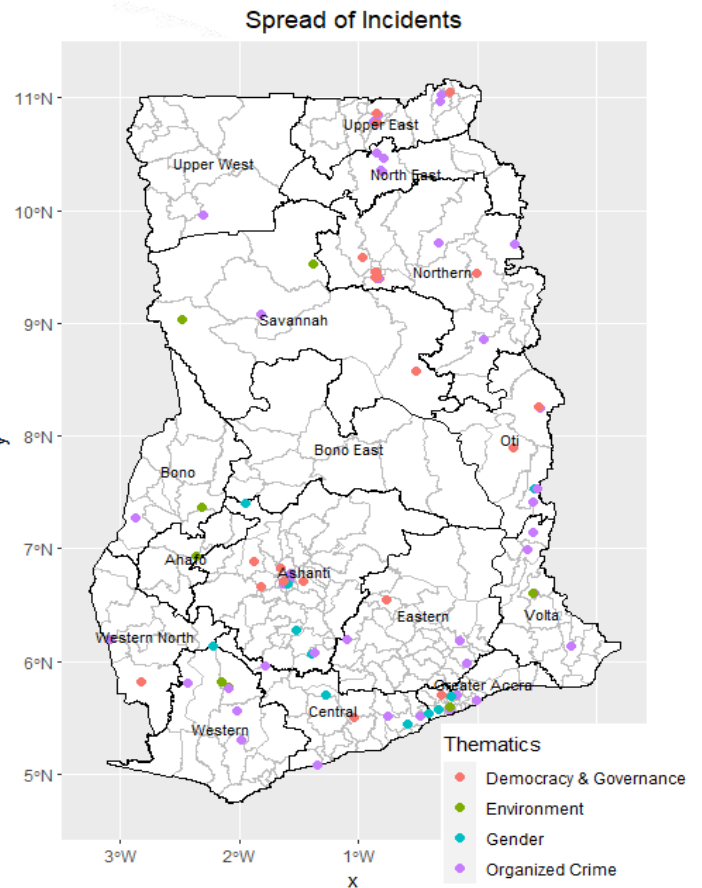
## (JANUARY 2024)

### I- INTRODUCTION

The WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) recorded 172 human security incidents in November 2023<sup>1</sup>. An accumulated casualty of 211 from these incidents is further disaggregated into 78 fatalities and 133 injuries for the reporting period.<sup>2</sup>

From the map beside, the spread of the incident is represented based on the thematic areas. Organized crime & violent extremism and democracy & governance theme were largely reported this month.

The table below shows the spread according to regions, the casualties recorded in all the incidents reported within the period.



Source: WANEP Ghana NEWS Data

Table 1: Reported Casualties for the Period of January 2024

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	1	14	0	2	2	0	13	1	6	2	2	25	0	3	6	1	78
Injuries	0	9	0	0	11	1	11	11	7	21	1	52	0	0	4	4	132
Total Casualties	1	23	0	2	13	1	24	12	13	23	3	77	0	3	10	5	210

Source: WANEP Ghana NEWS Data

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

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

The *Monthly Bulletin* provides an 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 attendant fatalities and casualties are presented under the thematic areas highlighted below:

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

Forty-seven (47) incidents related to organized crime and violent extremism were recorded this month. These were related to incidents such as homicides, armed attacks, armed robbery, fraudulence, kidnapping and drug trafficking.

Armed attacks have continued in Bawku and surrounding districts such as Pusiga, and has extended into other regions such as the North East, Greater Accra, and Ashanti regions. Passenger buses have become targets of some armed men suspected to belong to either of the faction or criminals who have taken advantage of the disorder. Attacks have occurred particularly on the Walewale-Bolga route and also in Bawku West and Binduri Districts.

In one of the sporadic shooting incidents in the Upper East Region, one person was confirmed dead with five others injured in Bawku. The incident occurred at Zongo near the Bawku Police Station. The deceased was identified as Musah Seidu and died as a result of a severe chest injury of a gunshot. The injured were also identified as Firdaus Abdulai aged 17, Sumaila Munira aged 38, Amidu Bugri aged 40, Bukari Seidu aged 50, and Kamal Sadat aged 19.<sup>3</sup> It was not clear what triggered the incident. Another shooting incident happened, and security was heightened following a report of an attack by unidentified gunmen in Bawku resulting in the death of two individuals.<sup>4</sup> The cause of this shooting was not determined but security personnel intensified investigations to prevent further escalation. This has caused widespread fear in the township and affected commercial activities. In the same region, three men, whom some soldiers shot at and killed, were involved in a gunfight with the military at Bawku. It was alleged that the deceased men had attacked the officers who only retaliated, leading to the death of the victims.<sup>5</sup>

The killings and military actions in Bawku led a group of women in the Bawku township to stage a protest due to the alleged brutality by military personnel against residents. The protest was sparked when soldiers allegedly entered the Bawku township and discharged firearms indiscriminately, resulting in casualties. Although the

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.adomonline.com/one-dead-five-injured-in-shooting-incident-at-bawku/>

<sup>4</sup> Field Monitor reports

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.adomonline.com/bawku-conflict-3-deceased-men-engaged-in-gun-fight-with-military-mce/>

number of people injured during the protest was not verified, the women, about a hundred in number, were chanting on the streets to demand a cessation of the violence.<sup>6</sup>

Further recent reports from field sources have revealed the active movement of arms and ammunition into Bawku. Persons believed to be fueling the conflict have been reported to be supplying arms through the meat industry, where weapons are placed in dressed meat and transported into Bawku under the guise of supplying meat to consumers.<sup>7</sup> This indicates a likely sustained armed action in Bawku and its surrounding districts if counter measures are not implemented by relevant authorities.

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

The reporting period recorded 12 incidents related to sexual and gender-based violence. These included homicide, rape/defilement, physical assaults, and associated arrests/detentions. These incidents occurred in the Ashanti, Greater Accra, Central, Volta, and the Northern regions. On defilement cases, seven incidents were observed within the period especially in the Greater Accra region. At Ashongman in the Greater Accra region, a 39-year-old male cleaner was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment for sexually abusing a 13-year-old girl. The victim went on an errand to fetch water behind her house, giving an opportunity for the accused person to lure her into his room and abuse her.<sup>8</sup> In another incident in Greater Accra region, a 47-year-old driver sexually abused his 13-year-old stepdaughter at Tetegu. The incident occurred when the victim's mother travelled to Ajumako in the Central Region and left the children in the care of the accused person.<sup>9</sup> Another incident also occurred in the same region, making the Gender-Based Violence Court to sentence the offender to eight years imprisonment for defiling a 14-year-old girl at New Amanfrom. The complainant and the accused person's wife left for work at Odorkor, and the accused person took advantage of their absence and lured the victim into his room and sexually abused the victim.<sup>10</sup>

On the bright side, the perpetrators of these incidents were apprehended and served jail sentences, indicating the commitment and conscious efforts to end sexual and gender-based violence in Ghana, although more needs to be done to address the issue.

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

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<sup>6</sup> <https://citinewsroom.com/2024/01/women-protest-against-military-intervention-in-bawku/>

<sup>7</sup> Field sources

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.adomonline.com/cleaner-jailed-20-years-for-defilement/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.myjoyonline.com/driver-jailed-15-years-for-defiling-stepdaughter/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.myjoyonline.com/labourer-jailed-8-years-for-defiling-neighbours-daughter/>

Key issues related to governance and democracy within the period involved nationwide strike actions taken largely by organized labour, electoral disputes during the parliamentary primaries of the ruling party, chieftaincy disputes, farmer-herder disputes and road accidents that have continued to erode the lives of road users.

The Ghana Association of University Administrators' (GAUA) decision to embark on a strike action in demand for better conditions of service was backed by other unions such as the University Teachers Association of Ghana, University of Ghana chapter (UTAG-UG), the Senior Staff Association of Universities of Ghana and the Tertiary Education Workers Union (TEWU). The actions were reportedly necessitated by the failure of the government to address pressing concerns affecting them. These include the employer's (government) reluctance to address their welfare needs, including tier-two pension funds, vehicle maintenance allowance, and overtime allowance, among others.<sup>11</sup> The impact has been dire since the unions embarked on the strike. Services such as cleaning the tertiary institutions' environment, setting up classrooms for teaching and learning, providing security services, and hospital services among others were withdrawn, thus affecting student-life on campus.<sup>12</sup>

Some violence, threats and alleged electoral malpractices marked the parliamentary primaries of the New Patriotic Party at locations such as Yendi and Adansi Asokwa. Five electoral officials in Yendi were reportedly interdicted after their alleged involvement in an attempt to withhold some ballot papers to create an advantage in favor of the incumbent Member of Parliament (MP) Farouk Aliu Mahama.<sup>13</sup> This was after Hajia Abibata Mahama, the contender, alleged that an official of the Electoral Commission (EC) attempted to pocket some of her ballots. She petitioned the party's leadership, claiming that some party officers conspired with the incumbent MP to rig the elections, thereby declaring the MP as the winner of the primaries.<sup>14</sup> At Adansi Asokwa, K.T. Hammond, the incumbent MP, had alleged that Mr Binfoh Darkwa (the contender) had hired thugs to intimidate his supporters. The MP was thus seen in the presence of Police Officers in a viral video issuing threats of physically assaulting his contender if he (the contender) did not leave town. The polls however ended peacefully while the incumbent MP retained his position as MP.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> <https://citinewsroom.com/2024/01/tewug-declares-indefinite-strike-effective-february-1/>

<sup>12</sup> See for further information. <https://www.graphic.com.gh/news/education/university-staff-declares-nationwide-strike.html>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.modernghana.com/news/1290108/npp-primaries-five-ec-officers-interdicted-over.html>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.modernghana.com/news/1290108/npp-primaries-five-ec-officers-interdicted-over.html>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.myjoyonline.com/ill-give-you-a-showdown-beat-you-mercilessly-k-t-hammond-threatens-contender/>

Within the period, also, at least 66 casualties resulted from at least 15 road accidents identified within the month.<sup>16</sup> The accidents occurred in the Ashanti, Central, Eastern, Greater Accra, Northern, Savannah, Upper East, Volta and Western North regions.<sup>17</sup> In one incident, a celebrated Ghanaian highlife singer, Kaakyire Kwame Appiah was involved in an accident on the Nkawkaw road in the Eastern Region. There were four individuals in the vehicle and the incident happened when a large truck veered off its lane and caused his car to somersault several times.<sup>18</sup> In another incident, the convoy of the Second Lady Samira Bawumia, was involved in an accident while traveling to the Ashanti region. The incident happened after a sprinter bus run into two vehicles in Mrs. Bawumia's convoy. The Second Lady escaped unhurt but lost one of her bodyguards in the incident.<sup>19</sup> Five persons also died, and others were injured in an accident at Lamboya, near Zebilla, in the Upper East Region. The accident occurred when two tire bursts occurred on the Toyota Hiace with 15 passengers, traveling from Bolgatanga towards Bawku. Four of the victims perished on the spot while another died on arrival at the Zebilla Government Hospital.<sup>20</sup> Another accident on the Adenta-Dodowa road in the Greater Accra region was also recorded and this involved a Hyundai commercial vehicle with passengers on board, and a truck. The incident left many dead and others who sustained various degrees of injuries.<sup>21</sup> In all the accidents that were monitored, the causes were largely attributed to over speeding and poor vehicle maintenance.

#### V- ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY (ES):

The main environmental issue affecting human security in this period is the harmattan weather which is characterized by dry and dusty northeasterly trade winds, which blow from the Sahara over West Africa into the Gulf of Guinea.<sup>22</sup> The dust particles brought by these trade winds posed health risks related to the respiratory system and also challenges with visibility. In addition to these challenges, the harmattan created extreme dry conditions that facilitated easy flammability of plant matter and other materials, thus the rise in fire outbreaks as the harmattan season progresses.

About seven fire outbreaks were monitored within the period. In the Greater Accra region, some residents of the Achimota School, a suburb of the Okaikwei North Constituency, suffered a fire incident that gutted about 15 structures. Several properties, including television sets, refrigerators, and a car, among other items, were

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<sup>16</sup> WANEP NEWS Data

<sup>17</sup> WANEP NEWS Data

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.adomonline.com/kaakyire-kwame-appiah-involved-in-ghastly-accident/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.adomonline.com/second-ladys-convoy-involved-in-an-accident/>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.ghanaiantimes.com.gh/tragedy-5-perish-others-injured-in-road-crash-at-lamboya/>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.adomonline.com/gory-accident-on-adenta-dodowa-road-video/>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/science/harmattan>

damaged as a result.<sup>23</sup> At the Dome Market also in the Greater Accra region, at least fifty (50) shops were destroyed by a fire outbreak in some parts of the market. The incident affected shops and other structures although the cause of the fire was not immediately unknown. The Ghana National Fire Service (GNFS) encountered challenges because of congested nature of the market, thus making it difficult for response to be effective and efficient.<sup>24</sup> In the Bono region, two fire victims died at Fiapre in the Sunyani West Municipality after fire swept through a household in the community. The bodies of the two were discovered after the fire was extinguished.<sup>25</sup> Other locations of the firebreaks included Danyame and Bantama in the Ashanti region, and Bole in the Savannah region where a bush fire destroyed a farmland.<sup>26</sup>

Because of the negative impact of fire outbreaks to public infrastructure especially, the Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG) advised citizens, especially those in the rural areas to desist from setting fire to bushes during the dry season. This was emphasized because bushfires affected stable power supply and increased the cost of maintenance. The fire incidents also hampered the effective execution of extension projects in underserved areas and also caused electricity poles to be burnt, affecting businesses as power goes off, leading to the loss of productive hours and revenue.<sup>27</sup>

Issues related to illegal mining were also reported within the period. Two persons, a male and a female were confirmed dead after an illegal mining pit they were working in collapsed on them at Ataase, a community near Nkonya in the Amenfi East Municipality of the Western Region. The two were part of a group of about a hundred illegal miners who were in a pit when the incident occurred.<sup>28</sup> The destruction of forest reserves persists, water bodies remain inundated with pollutants, and the menace of illegal mining shows no sign of reduction. Local communities living near these violated areas often bear the brunt of illegal mining, facing health hazards, some displacement, and loss of livelihoods especially those into agriculture and fishing.

### **Implications for peace and security in the next reporting period**

- Because there is an unending feud between the Kusasis and the Mamprusis in Bawku, the violence may continue intermittently when certain triggers present opportunities. Organized criminal networks may

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<sup>23</sup> <https://www.adomonline.com/achimota-college-residents-count-losses-after-fire-guts-15-structures/>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.peacefmonline.com/pages/local/news/202401/497583.php>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.adomonline.com/sunyani-two-perish-in-fire-outbreak-at-fiapre/>

<sup>26</sup> See January weekly highlights for details to these fire incidents at [www.wanepghana.org](http://www.wanepghana.org)

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.adomonline.com/bush-fires-affecting-stable-power-supply-desist-from-it-ecg-appeals-to-public/>

<sup>28</sup> <https://3news.com/news/amenfi-east-two-confirmed-dead-after-collapse-of-galamsey-pit/>

continue to use the volatile situation in Bawku to perpetrate more attacks on businesses and public transport operators as well as passengers to create fear and panic and maintain a sense of insecurity.

- The harmattan season will continue into February and thus portends a high possibility of fire outbreaks increasing in frequency. Furthermore, respiratory challenges would continue to affect especially areas where there is high concentration of the harmattan phenomenon especially in the northern part of Ghana.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Government should strengthen and sustain its multi-stakeholder engagements with community leaders, traditional authorities, religious leaders, and youth and women groups, and mediators to facilitate dialogue and reconciliation between the conflicting parties (Kusasi and Mamprusi) in Bawku.
- The Government should consider the need to increase public awareness and strengthen law enforcement through engagement with transport unions to mitigate road accidents in the country
- The Ghana National Fire Service should intensify collaboration with various relevant agencies including the Police Service, Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Authorities (MMDAs), and Civil Society Organizations, to reduce fire outbreaks and their impact through fire safety education and awareness campaigns on building codes and fire safety regulations. The Government should also continue to strengthen the capacity of the Ghana Fire Service to enhance response and efficiency in fire incident management.

## CONCLUSIONS

The report has highlighted the human security incidents recorded in Ghana in January 2024. These included homicides, road accidents and armed robberies which had the highest frequency of occurrence among other incidents. Other key incidents like fire outbreaks, demonstrations and strikes actions also created challenges for stability in the country. These require urgent attention and the action of critical stakeholders to mitigate the threats and impact 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>84</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Armed Attack</b>	4	3	10
<b>Armed Robbery</b>	15	10	40

Arrest/Detention	29	-	-
Assault	3	-	-
Drug Trafficking	1	-	-
Fraudulence	5	-	-
Homicides	11	10	3
Mob Justice	1	-	-
Theft	10	-	-
Kidnapping	3	-	-
Extortion	1	-	-
Smuggling	1	-	-
<b>WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY:</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
Arrest/Detention	11	-	-
Homicides	10	10	2
Assault	5	0	9
Rape/Defilement	7		
<b>DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE:</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>69</b>
Arrest/Detention	4	-	-
Farmer-Herder Conflicts	1	0	16
Demonstrations	6	0	1
Armed Attack	5	12	8
Chieftaincy Disputes	1	1	4
Assault	2	-	-
Road Accidents	15	26	40
Building Collapse	1	1	0
Strike Actions	4	-	-
Arson	1	-	-
Homicides	1	-	-
Election Disputes	3	-	-
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>
Drowning	1	1	0
Fire Outbreaks	7	2	-
Illegal Mining	2	-	-
Illegal Mining Accidents	1	2	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>133</b>

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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