

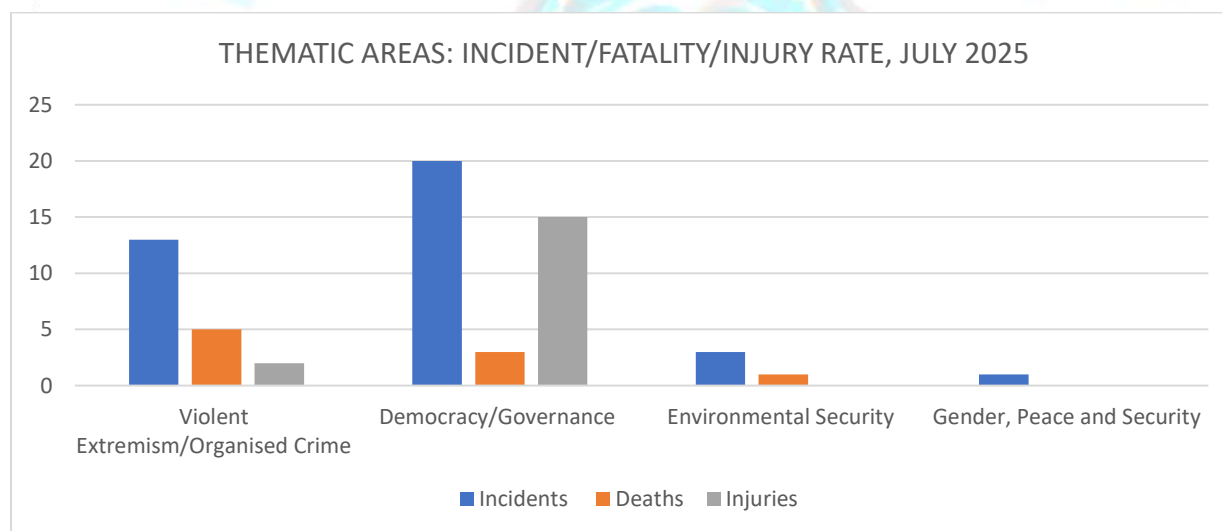
# NEWS MONTHLY BULLETIN (WANEP-THE GAMBIA)

## (JULY, 2025)

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In the reporting period, a total of thirty-seven (37) incidents were recorded through the WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS)<sup>1</sup> as part of the *Monthly Conflict Census*. These incidents resulted in nine (9) fatalities and seventeen (17) injuries, arising from a range of causes including suicide, murder, road accidents, drug-related cases, and fire outbreaks reported during the month.<sup>2</sup>

As depicted in the thematic graph below, the *Democracy and Governance* theme recorded the highest number of incidents, with a total of twenty (20). This was followed by *Organised Crime and Violent Extremism* theme, which accounted for thirteen (13) incidents. The *Environmental Security* theme recorded three (3) incidents, while the *Gender, Peace, and Security* reported the lowest, with one (1) incident documented.



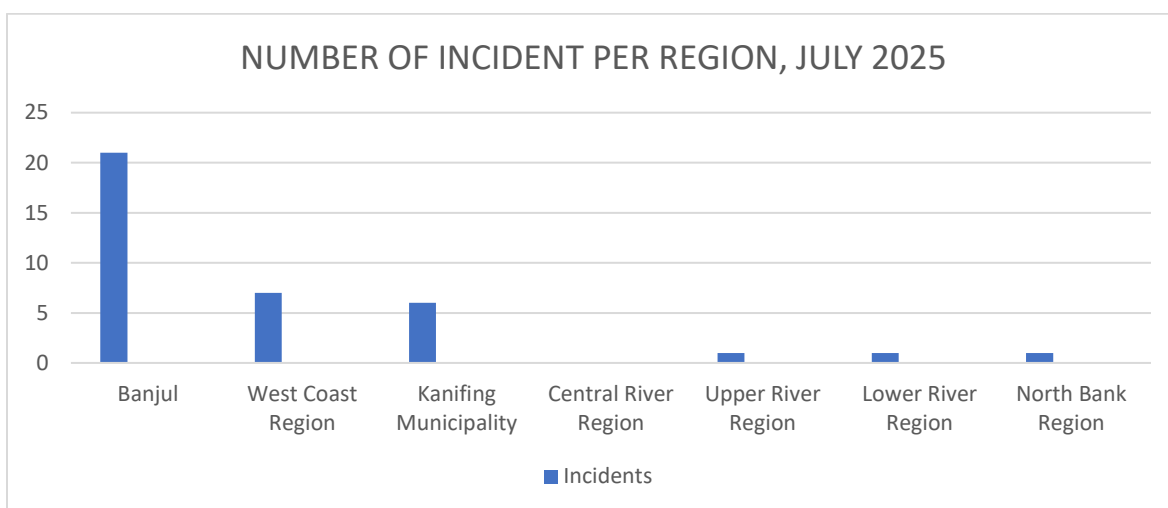
Source: WANEP-NEWS<sup>3</sup>

Geographically, Banjul recorded the highest number of incidents with a total of twenty-one (21), followed by the West Coast Region with seven (7) and the Kanifing Municipality with six (6) incidents. The North Bank Region, Lower River Region and Upper River Region each reported one (1) incident. No incidents were recorded in the Central River Region during the reporting period.

<sup>1</sup> news.wanepsystems.net

<sup>2</sup> WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS): news.wanepsystems.net

<sup>3</sup> news.wanepsystems.net



Source: WANEP-NEWS<sup>4</sup>

## 2. ORGANISED CRIME AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM

In the reporting period, incidents reported across various regions of The Gambia reflect a concerning pattern of violent crimes, suspicious deaths, and systemic fraud. The discovery of two separate murder cases—one in Farafenni and the other in a courtroom conviction—highlights the persistence of lethal interpersonal violence, particularly involving stabbing and suspected homicide.<sup>5</sup> The incidents in Old Yundum and Kembujeh suggest growing challenges around substance abuse and potential mental health crises, as evidenced by the suspected drug-induced death and the discovery of a decomposed body by apparent suicide.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, the electrocution of a 12-year-old at a DARA<sup>7</sup> facility points to unsafe infrastructure in child-focused spaces, raising critical questions about regulatory compliance and child safety standards.<sup>8</sup>

Beyond these fatalities, institutional corruption (example, fraud and other economic crimes) remains a pressing concern. The arraignment of three government officials from the National Registry Office for economic crimes exceeding D14 million<sup>9</sup> underscores persistent accountability deficits within public institutions. Similarly, the arrest related to Gamtel infrastructure vandalism suggests ongoing sabotage of national assets, with implications for communication security and

<sup>4</sup> news.wanepsystems.net

<sup>5</sup> Official Facebook Page of The Gambia Police Force (2025). POLICE INVESTIGATE SUSPECTED MURDER IN FARAFENNI. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/PolisoMagazine> (Accessed July 1, 2025).

<sup>6</sup> Official Facebook Page of The Gambia Police Force (2025). POLICE INVESTIGATE FATAL DRUG INCIDENT IN OLD YUNDUM. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/PolisoMagazine> (Accessed July 14, 2025).

<sup>7</sup> Dara means Quranic school

<sup>8</sup> Official Facebook Page of The Gambia Police Force (2025). POLICE INVESTIGATE ALLEGED ELECTROCUTION CAUSING DEATH. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/PolisoMagazine> (Accessed July 14, 2025).

<sup>9</sup> The Standard Newspaper (2025). 3 gov't officials charged with stealing over D14M. Available at: <https://standard.gm/3-govt-officials-charged-with-stealing-over-d14m/> (Accessed July 6, 2025).

public service delivery.<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile, the tragic drowning of an infant<sup>11</sup> in a private pool in Brusubi reflects risks posed by poor child supervision and lack of safety controls in domestic settings.

### 3. DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

The Gambia's ranking as the 4th most peaceful country in Africa and 55th globally in the 2025 Global Peace Index<sup>12</sup> marks a notable achievement in the country's post-transition journey since 2017. This progress reflects gains in political stability, reduced levels of conflict, and improved public safety mechanisms. However, a major setback in the reporting period was the National Assembly's second rejection of the 2024 draft constitution, an outcome that has hampered<sup>13</sup> critical institutional reforms and further undermined public trust in the democratic process. President Adama Barrow's controversial push for a third term<sup>14</sup>, has reignited national debates around constitutionalism, term limits, and the future of democratic consolidation in The Gambia. This development risks deepening political divisions and may fuel pre-electoral tensions, particularly as the country approaches the 2026 general elections.

At the institutional level, systemic inefficiencies remain entrenched. The discovery of D23.9 million in payments to ghost workers across several ministries highlights lapses in payroll management and fiscal oversight.<sup>15</sup> While the state's internal audit mechanism halted these irregularities, such cases raises concerns about transparency and effectiveness in public sector governance. Meanwhile, the National Assembly's Special Select Committee's ongoing public hearings on the sale and disposal of assets linked to former President Yahya Jammeh suggests a renewed commitment to promote transparency and transitional justice.<sup>16</sup> However, the integrity of the process must be safeguarded from political interference, especially as high-profile government officials such as Ministers Hamat NK Bah and Musa Drammeh, both with oversight roles during the Janneh Commission's tenure have been summoned to testify.<sup>17</sup> Their involvement further raises the stakes for institutional integrity.

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<sup>10</sup> Official Facebook Page of The Gambia Police Force (2025). SENEGAMBIA POLICE ARREST SUSPECTS FOR DAMAGE GAMTEL FIBRE CABLES. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/PolisoMagazine> (Accessed July 14, 2025).

<sup>11</sup> Official Facebook Page of The Gambia Police Force (2025). POLICE RESPOND TO REPORT OF DROWNING CASE. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/PolisoMagazine> (Accessed July 2, 2025).

<sup>12</sup> The Standard Newspaper (2025). GAMBIA IS 4TH MOST PEACEFUL COUNTRY IN AFRICA. Available at: <https://standard.gm/gambia-is-4th-most-peaceful-country-in-africa/> (Accessed June 29, 2025).

<sup>13</sup> Foroyaa Newspaper (2025). Gambian Parliament Rejects 2024 Draft Constitution in Second Major Blow to Reform Agenda. Available at: <https://foroyaa.net/gambian-parliament-rejects-2024-draft-constitution-in-second-major-blow-to-reform-agenda/> (Accessed July 13, 2025).

<sup>14</sup> The Standard Newspaper (2025). BARROW WARNS AGAINST ATTEMPTS TO STOP HIS THIRD TERM BID. Available at: <https://standard.gm/barrow-warns-against-attempts-to-stop-his-third-term-bid/> (Accessed July 14, 2025).

<sup>15</sup> The Standard Newspaper (2025). Over D23M paid to ghost workers at 3 ministries. Available at: <https://standard.gm/over-d23m-paid-to-ghost-workers-at-3-ministries/> (Accessed July 5, 2025).

<sup>16</sup> Kerr Fatou Online TV (2025)

<sup>17</sup> The Republic Official Facebook Page (2025).

The recent government agreement with the Bakers Union to increase bread prices from D10 to D12 has sparked public concern amidst rising inflation.<sup>18</sup> In addition, opposition parties have raised alarm over the increase in presidential candidate deposits, from D10,000 to D1 million, an action perceived as exclusionary and undemocratic<sup>19</sup>. While the appointment of a new Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) Chairman, Joseph Colley, and Vice Chairman, Cherno M. Jallow,<sup>20</sup> signals ongoing electoral reform, the effectiveness and impartiality of the commission will be tested in the lead-up to the 2026 elections.

In the reporting month, a major anti-corruption protest was held at Westfield, drawing hundreds of protesters including youth, civil society groups, political actors and concerned citizens, who demanded accountability, transparency and meaningful institutional reform. The demonstration, led by the advocacy group '*Gambians Against Looted Assets (GALA)*', represented a widespread public outcry against corruption and perceived impunity within public and selected private institutions.<sup>21</sup> While largely peaceful, the protest signalled a resurgence in civic activism and amplified public calls for transparency, political reform and institutional integrity.

#### 4. ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY

Environmental security concerns are becoming increasingly evident in urban areas of The Gambia, as seasonal rains continue to expose persistent vulnerabilities in infrastructure and waste management systems. The reporting month recorded the death of a 4-year-old child following heavy rainfall in Bundung, further highlighting the dangers associated with inadequate drainage and flood control systems. Simultaneously, residents of Ebo-Town and Tallinding Farokono have raised alarms over abandoned compounds now serving as illegal dumpsites, posing significant health risks during the rainy season.<sup>22</sup> In response to growing public concern over flooding, the National Roads Authority (NRA) and its partners embarked on an inspection tour of the newly constructed OIC roads<sup>23</sup>. The visit followed widespread complaints from local communities about poor water management along major roadways, underscoring the urgent need for improved urban planning, environmental oversight, and climate-resilient infrastructure.

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<sup>18</sup> Foroyaa Newspaper (2025). Bread Rise Deepens Gambia's Cost of Living Crisis. Available at: <https://foroyaa.net/bread-rise-deepens-gambias-cost-of-living-crisis/> (Accessed July 5, 2025).

<sup>19</sup> Fatu Network (2025). PAP Leader Says D1 Million Presidential Deposit Aims to Exclude Competent Low-Budget Candidates. Available at: <https://fatunetwork.net/pap-leader-says-d1-million-presidential-deposit-aims-to-exclude-competent-low-budget-candidates/> (Accessed July 21, 2025).

<sup>20</sup> The Standard Newspaper (2025). Joseph Colley is new IEC chairman. Available at: <https://standard.gm/joseph-colley-is-new-iec-chairman/> (Accessed July 12, 2025).

<sup>21</sup> Paradise TV (2025)

<sup>22</sup> Foroyaa Newspaper (2025). Abandoned Compounds in Ebo-Town, Tallinding Farokono Become Dumpsites. Available at: <https://foroyaa.net/abandoned-compounds-in-ebo-town-tallinding-farokono-become-dumpsites/> (Accessed July 1, 2025).

<sup>23</sup> Foroyaa Newspaper (2025). NRA Assesses OIC Roads as Residents Complain of Flooding. Available at: <https://foroyaa.net/nra-assesses-oic-roads-as-residents-complain-of-flooding/> (Accessed July 18, 2025).

## 5. GENDER, PEACE AND SECURITY

During the reporting period, the Soma Police launched an investigation into an alleged case of child marriage in Sare Biran village involving a 15-year-old girl<sup>24</sup>. The act constitutes a violation of The Gambia's Children's Act of 2005, which prohibits marriage below the age of 18, as well as international conventions such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, both of which The Gambia is a signatory. The incident has reignited calls from rights advocates and child protection stakeholders for more robust enforcement of existing child protection laws.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. The Ministry of Interior, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, should strengthen multi-agency coordination between law enforcement, health services, and community-based organizations to address the underlying drivers of violent crime, including substance abuse and mental health challenges. Efforts should prioritize community policing, school- and youth-focused awareness campaigns, and the establishment of referral pathways for psychosocial support and rehabilitation.
- b. The National Assembly should fast-track the comprehensive constitutional reform through an inclusive and transparent process that reflects the will of the Gambian people. Additionally, electoral reforms should ensure fairness and accessibility, particularly by reviewing the recent increase in presidential candidate deposits, to safeguard democratic participation and rebuild public confidence ahead of the 2026 elections.
- c. The government should prioritize climate-resilient infrastructure by investing in effective drainage systems, urban sanitation, and enforcement against illegal dumping. Government agencies such as the National Road Authority (NRA) , Department of Physical Planning and municipal councils should collaborate with local communities to monitor flood-prone zones and carry out seasonal maintenance, especially during the rainy season.
- d. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare should strengthen enforcement of child

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<sup>24</sup> Official Facebook Page of The Gambia Police Force (2025). POLICE INVESTIGATE ALLEGED CHILD MARRIAGE IN JARRA WEST. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/PolisoMagazine> (Accessed July 14, 2025).



protection laws by enhancing community awareness, increasing community-based monitoring and ensuring prosecution of offenders involved in child marriages. Support structures such as local child protection committees and referral systems should be empowered to coordinate referrals and prevent rights violations.

## CONCLUSION

The reporting period reveals a complex interplay of progress and persistent challenges across The Gambia's security and governance landscape. While the country's commendable ranking in the 2025 Global Peace Index highlights gains in peace and political stability, the recurrence of violent crimes, institutional corruption, environmental vulnerabilities and gender-based violations reveals systemic gaps that continue to undermine resilience. Public frustration over economic hardship and delayed reforms further compounds these issues. Addressing these multifaceted challenges requires a coordinated, rights-based approach involving government institutions, civil society, and development partners, amongst others, to strengthen accountability, enhance public service delivery, and sustain democratic progress.

### CENSUS OF INCIDENTS FOR JULY 2025

THEMATIC AREA	NO of Attacks.	VICTIMS	
		DEATHS	INJURIES
<b>ORGANISED CRIME:</b> (Armed-robbery, assassination, armed violence mob attack, arson and cult/gang clash).		-	-
Abduction	-	-	-
Cybercrime/Fraud	1	-	-
Extrajudicial killing			
Physical/Armed Assault	1		1
Herder-Community Conflict	-	-	-
Illicit Drug Trafficking	1	1	-
Homicide	3	3	
Suicide	1	1	-
<b><u>DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE:</u></b>			
Demonstration (peaceful)	1	-	
Demonstration (violent)			

Strike		-	-
Intimidation and Threats		-	-
Arrest/Detention	2	-	-
Road Accident	3	2	15
Building Collapse			
Election-Related Violence			
Boat Mishap			-
Fire Outbreak + Gas Explosion	2	1	1
<b><u>ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY:</u></b>			
<b><u>Pandemic/Epidemics:</u></b>		-	<b><u>Confirmed/Infected Cases</u></b>
Wildlife poaching/trafficking			
Flood/Rainstorm	3	1	-
<b><u>GENDER, PEACE AND SECURITY:</u></b>			
SGBV: Sexual Assault/Rape			
Human Trafficking		-	-

<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>17</b>
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*Through its National Early Warning System (NEWS), the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP- The Gambia) 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-(The Gambia) field monitors, and also information gathered from the various national and international media.*

OFF MAMA YAKUME AVENUE, FAJARA, KSMD, TEL +220 2777179, WEBSITE: WWW.WANEP.ORG

