



NEWS MONTHLY BULLETIN (WANEP-THE GAMBIA)

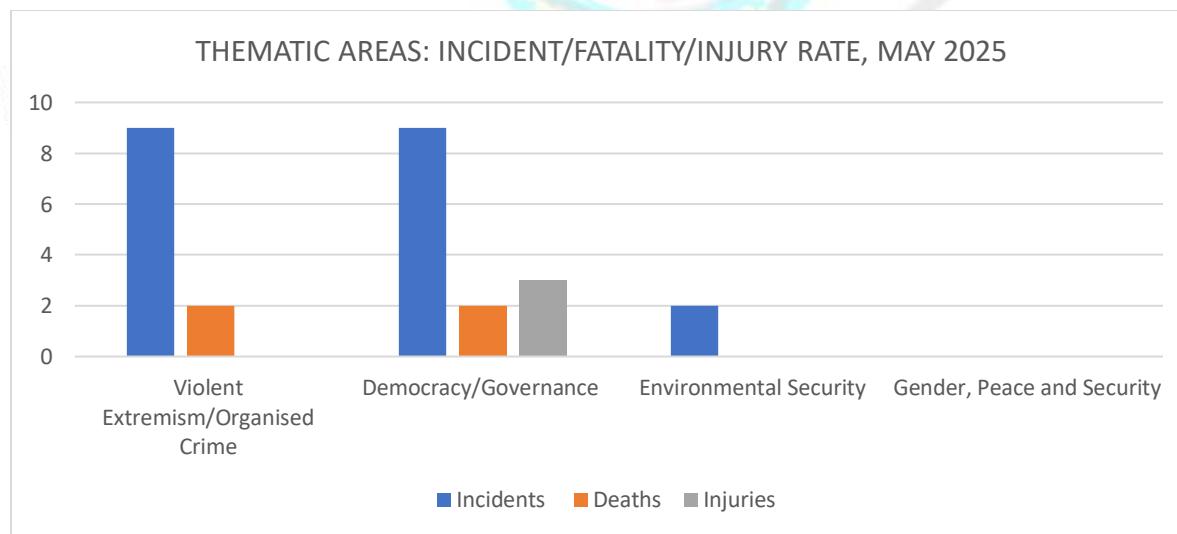
(MAY, 2025)

1. INTRODUCTION

In the reporting period, a total of 20 incidents were recorded through the WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS)¹ as part of the Monthly Conflict Census. These incidents resulted in four (4) fatalities and three (3) injuries arising from a range of causes including murder, road accidents, assault, drug seizures and robbery recorded in the month.²

As illustrated in the thematic graph below, Organised Crime and Violent Extremism and Democracy and Governance themes each accounted for the highest number of incidents, with nine (9) incidents each. This was followed by Environmental Security theme with two (2) incidents while Gender, Peace, and Security theme reported no incident in the period.

Geographically, Banjul recorded the highest number of incidents with thirteen (13), followed by the West Coast Region with four (4). The Kanifing Municipality, Lower River Region and Upper River Region each recorded one (1) incident, while no incidents were recorded in the Central River Region, and North Bank Region during the reporting period.

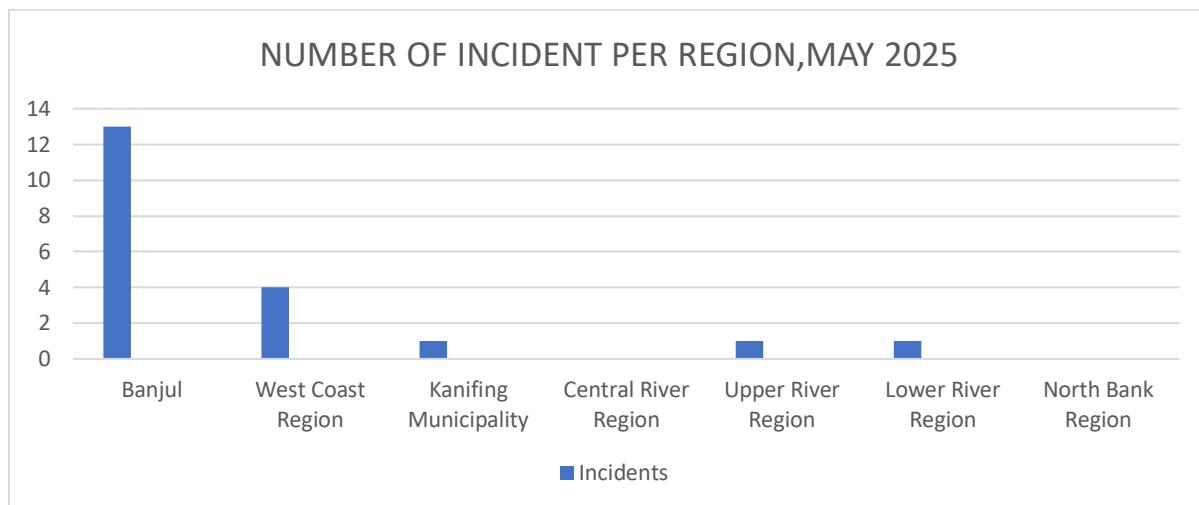


Source: WANEP-NEWS³

¹ news.wanepsystems.net

² WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS): news.wanepsystems.net

³ news.wanepsystems.net



Source: WANEP-NEWS⁴

2. ORGANISED CRIME AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM

In the reporting period, The Gambia experienced a notable rise in organized crime and violence-related incidents, signalling persistent security challenges across various sectors. Key developments include the arrest and prosecution of four male suspects by The Gambia Police Force for cyber-enabled crimes such as extortion, fraud, and forgery⁵, highlighting the growing threat of digital criminal networks. In separate incidents, a male resident was discovered with a fatal stab wound in Tanji Solifo⁶ and a suspected murder of a female resident reported in Bernabeh Village.⁷ Both cases remain under active police investigation, highlighting the disturbing trend in violent crimes. Additionally, a reported burglary incident at the Majum Complex, further reflects a mix of opportunistic and premeditated criminal activities within the country.

Parallel to these developments, authorities have intensified efforts to counter organized crime and drug trafficking. The Gambia Immigration Department's apprehension of two suspected migrant smugglers⁸ marks a critical step in dismantling transnational smuggling networks linked to irregular migration. Meanwhile, a major crackdown by the Drug Law Enforcement Agency The Gambia (DLEAG) led to the arrest of 29 suspects and the seizure of illicit substances, including 17

⁴ news.wanepsystems.net

⁵ Official Facebook Page of The Gambia Police Force (2025). POLICE PROSECUTE IN COMPUTER-RELATED FRAUD AND FORGERY CASE. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/PolisoMagazine> (Accessed May 2, 2025).

⁶ Paradise TV

⁷ Foroyaa Newspaper (2025). Police Open Murder Inquiry After Woman Found Dead in URR. Available at: <https://foroyaa.net/police-open-murder-inquiry-after-woman-found-dead-in-urr/> (Accessed May 22, 2025).

⁸ Foroyaa Newspaper (2025). 2 Suspected Migrant Smugglers Arrested in Failed 'Backway' Attempt. Available at: <https://foroyaa.net/2-suspected-migrant-smugglers-arrested-in-failed-backway-attempt/> (Accessed May 7, 2025).

wraps of Kush, 2319 pills of ecstasy, and 4 pellets of suspected cocaine.⁹ DLEAG also filed 14 new illicit drug cases and detained 31 individuals across 26 drug-related offenses.¹⁰ These developments suggest both the growing complexity of criminal networks and the increasing capacity of security agencies to respond. However, the recurrence of violent and organized crimes calls for a more sustained and integrated approaches to law enforcement, intelligence sharing, and community-based crime prevention.

3. DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

In May 2025, The Gambia witnessed several significant developments related to democracy and governance, reflecting both ongoing challenges and incremental progress in state accountability and public sector management. The United Democratic Party (UDP) raised concerns over transparency and electoral integrity following the Gambia Immigration Department's deployment of a mobile ID registration team to Mauritania. Meanwhile, dissatisfaction among civil servants over stagnant wages highlighted growing discontent with the government's civil service compensation framework, raising questions about the state's responsiveness to economic pressures and public sector sustainability.

In the media space, The Gambia's drop in the continental press freedom ranking from 9th to 10th position¹¹ underscored tensions between the state and the press. The Gambia Press Union attributed this decline to increased journalist arrests and prosecutions, further straining public trust and civic engagement. In a related development, The Gambia Police Force arrested over 16 individuals linked to an unauthorized protest organized by Gambians Against Looted Assets (GALA), after their request for a protest permit was denied.¹² This action sparked concerns regarding the state's tolerance for peaceful dissent and its management of civic freedoms.

At the security level, Chief of Defence Staff Lt. Gen. Mamat O. Cham addressed growing criticism over the continued presence of the ECOWAS Mission in The Gambia (ECOMIG). The Chief of Defence Staff reaffirmed its role in the broader security sector reform agenda and dismissed allegations of foreign dominance over national defense.¹³ Also, in the reporting period, the government initiated a high-level inquiry into the disposal of assets seized from former President

⁹ The Standard Newspaper (2025). DLEAG arrests 29, seizes prohibited and controlled drugs. Available at: <https://standard.gm/dleag-arrests-29-seizes-prohibited-and-controlled-drugs/> (Accessed May 13, 2025).

¹⁰ The Standard Newspaper (2025). DLEAG files 14 new drug cases in court. Available at: <https://standard.gm/dleag-files-14-new-drug-cases-in-court/> (Accessed May 19, 2025).

¹¹ The Standard Newspaper (2025). Gambia drops in press freedom ranking for Africa. Available at: <https://standard.gm/gambia-drops-in-press-freedom-ranking-for-africa/> (Accessed May 5, 2025).

¹² Official Facebook Page of The Gambia Police Force (2025). POLICE ARREST A GROUP OF INDIVIDUALS FOR STAGING UNAUTHORISED PROTEST. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/PolisoMagazine> (Accessed May 8, 2025).

¹³ The Standard Newspaper (2025). CDS tells soldiers not to allow critics poison their minds about Ecomig. Available at: <https://standard.gm/cds-tells-soldiers-not-to-allow-critics-poison-their-minds-about-ecomig/> (Accessed May 15, 2025).

Yahya Jammeh. President Barrow's announcement of a special investigative committee marks a renewed political commitment to transitional justice and asset recovery.¹⁴ These incidents portray a nation navigating its democratic transition amid persistent institutional challenges and public scrutiny.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY

In the reporting period, environmental security concerns in The Gambia intensified as communities and advocacy groups raised alarms over ongoing ecological degradation and public health risks. Residents of Kajaba in Gunjur, Kombo South, reported persistent air pollution caused by smoke from fish-smoking operations at the Gunjur beach landing site.¹⁵ The smoke, coupled with the stench of decaying fish, has created increasingly unbearable living conditions, raising serious concerns about respiratory health and environmental sustainability. Similarly, The Gambia Environmental Alliance (GEA) issued a formal condemnation of ongoing sand mining activities along the country's coastline citing severe environmental degradation, disruption of marine ecosystems, and long-term risks to coastal resilience.¹⁶ The GEA called for the immediate cessation of all operations, enforcement of existing environmental regulations, prosecution of perpetrators, and the initiation of a comprehensive coastal rehabilitation strategy. These developments reveal the institutional gaps in regulatory oversight, and limited inter-agency coordination. Continued sand mining poses significant threats to biodiversity, exacerbates coastal erosion, and undermines the adaptive capacity of communities facing climate-induced vulnerabilities.

5. GENDER, PEACE AND SECURITY

In the reporting period, no incidents related to gender-based violence, conflict-related sexual abuse, or other threats to gender, peace, and security were recorded in The Gambia. The absence of reported cases in the period is a positive indicator, suggesting a period of relative stability and safety for women and vulnerable groups. However, this positive development reinforces the importance of continued vigilance, investment in prevention mechanisms, and support services

¹⁴ The Standard Newspaper (2025). BARROW promises accountability in jammeh assets saga. Available at: <https://standard.gm/barrow-promises-accountability-in-jammeh-assets-saga/> (Accessed May 15, 2025).

¹⁵ Foroyaa Newspaper (2025). Kajaba Residents Concerned about Toxic Fish Smoke from Gunjur Beach. Available at: <https://foroyaa.net/kajaba-residents-concerned-about-toxic-fish-smoke-from-gunjur-beach/> (Accessed May 13, 2025).

¹⁶ Foroyaa Newspaper (2025). GEA Condemns Sand Mining Scandal, Demands Justice for Coastal Communities. Available at: <https://foroyaa.net/gea-condemns-sand-mining-scandal-demands-justice-for-coastal-communities/> (Accessed May 21, 2025).

to consolidate progress in promoting gender equality, protecting human rights, and strengthening the peace and security framework across the country.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. Strengthen Interagency Coordination and Intelligence-Led Policing:** To effectively combat crime, the Government of The Gambia should establish a National Criminal Intelligence Coordination Centre (NCICC) to facilitate real-time information sharing among the Gambia Police Force, Drug Law Enforcement Agency, Gambia Immigration Department, and other relevant bodies. It should be equipped with advanced data analytics tools to track criminal trends and map hotspots.
- b. Institutionalize Civic Space and Press Freedom Protections:** The government should revise the current Public Order Act to ensure clarity on the legal framework for peaceful protest, public gathering, and media freedom. This legislation should include independent oversight mechanisms to review permit denials and ensure due process.
- c. Enforce Community-Led Environmental Regulation and Restoration Programs:** To address environmental issues such as illegal sand mining and pollution from artisanal practices, the Ministry of Environment should implement a Community Environmental Enforcement and Restoration Initiative (CEERI). This would empower local communities through environmental stewardship training, formal reporting mechanisms, and participatory enforcement roles in partnership with municipal councils.
- d. Institutionalize Gender Monitoring and Early Warning Systems:** The National Gender Security Monitoring Framework (NGSMF) under the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Welfare, should track gender-based threats, support community alerts, and provide ongoing gender-sensitive training for security and judicial actors.

CONCLUSION

The security landscape in The Gambia highlights challenges and opportunities for progress across the thematic areas. The gradual increase in organised crime, governance-related tensions, environmental degradation, and the need for sustained gender security efforts reinforces the importance of a coordinated and rights-based policy response. Strengthening institutional capacity, fostering interagency collaboration, and deepening citizen engagement remain vital for building national resilience.

CENSUS OF INCIDENTS FOR MAY 2025

THEMATIC AREA		VICTIMS
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	NO of Attacks.	DEATHS	INJURIES
ORGANISED CRIME: (Armed-robbery, assassination, armed violence mob attack, arson and cult/gang clash).	1		
Abduction		-	-
Cybercrime/Fraud	1	-	-
Extrajudicial killing			
Physical/Armed Assault			
Herder-Community Conflict			
Illicit Drug Trafficking	2	-	-
Homicide	2	2	
Suicide			-
<u>DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE:</u>			
Demonstration (peaceful)	1	-	3
Demonstration (violent)			
Strike		-	-
Intimidation and Threats		-	-
Arrest/Detention		-	-
Road Accident	1	2	
Building Collapse			
Election-Related Violence			
Boat Mishap			-
Fire Outbreak + Gas Explosion			

<u>ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY:</u>			
<u>Pandemic/Epidemics:</u>		-	<u>Confirmed/Infected Cases</u>
Wildlife poaching/trafficking			
Flood/Rainstorm			-
<u>GENDER, PEACE AND SECURITY:</u>			
SGBV: Sexual Assault/Rape			
Human Trafficking		-	-
Total	8	4	3

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.

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