



# NEWS MONTHLY BULLETIN (WANEP-THE GAMBIA)

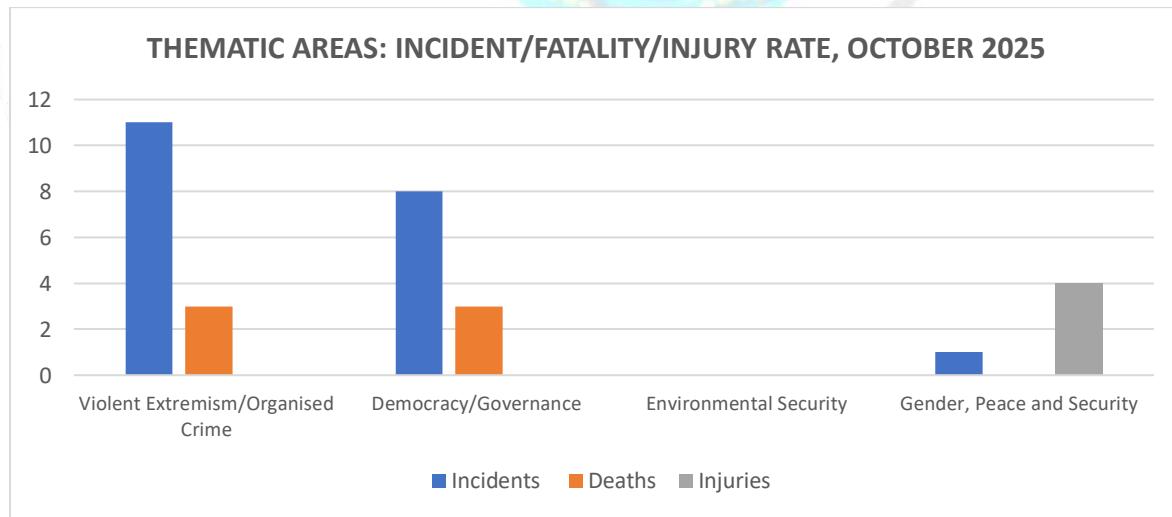
## (October, 2025)

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In the reporting period, a total of twenty (20) 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 six (6) fatalities and four (4) injuries arising from a range of causes including physical assault, murder, rape, and explosion in the month.<sup>2</sup>

As depicted in the thematic graph below, *Organised Crime and Violent Extremism* theme recorded the highest number of incidents, with a total of 11. Democracy and Governance theme recorded eight (8) incidents while the *Gender, Peace, and Security* theme recorded one (1) incident. No incident was registered for the *Environmental Security* theme.

Geographically, Banjul documented the highest number of incidents with a total of nine (9), followed by the West Coast Region with five (5) incidents. The Kanifing Municipality and the Upper River Region also recorded two (2) incidents each, while the North Bank Region and Central River Region recorded one (1) incident each. No incidents were recorded in the Lower River Region during the reporting period.

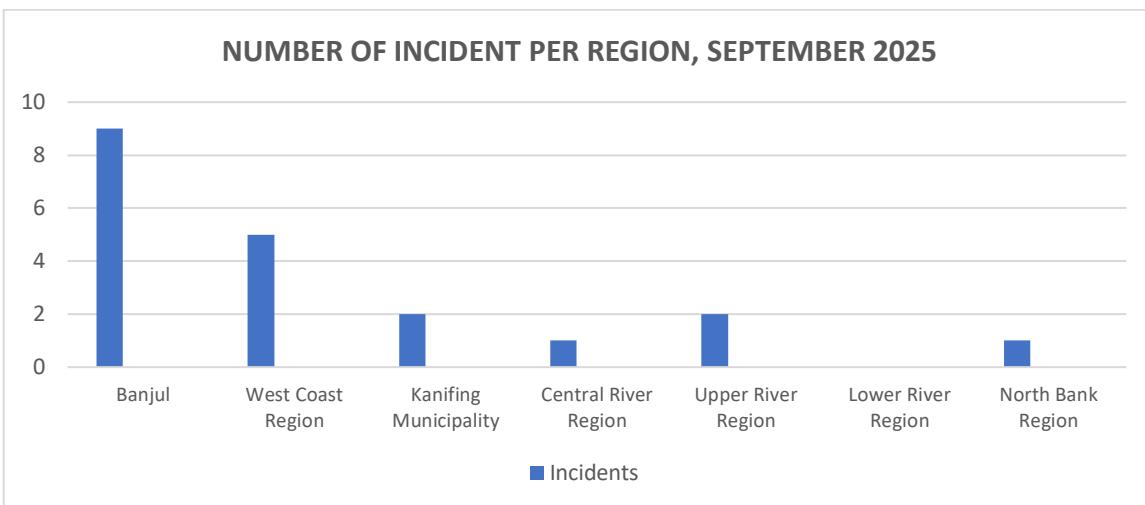


Source: WANEP-NEWS<sup>3</sup>

<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>

The *Monthly Bulletin* presents an analysis of the security challenges identified from monitoring trends of incidents through the WANEP NEWS and the mass media. It also offers recommendations for stakeholders' interventions and mitigation.

## 2. ORGANISED CRIME AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM

The Gambia continues to record a rise in complex criminal activities that pose threats to national security and public safety. In the reporting period, the Gambia Police Force launched a manhunt following a fatal domestic assault and two separate murder incidents<sup>5</sup> involving minors in the North Bank Region<sup>6</sup> — highlighting increasing youth involvement in violent acts. Additionally, an armed robbery incident in Madinayel village in the Upper River Region,<sup>7</sup> where masked men raided multiple shops before fleeing across the border, underscores the transnational nature of emerging rural-border criminal networks and the operational gaps in community policing and border security surveillance.

Drug trafficking remains a major security concern, with the Drug Law Enforcement Agency (DLEAG) and the Police Intervention Unit arresting nine (9) individuals involved in the

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

<sup>5</sup> The Standard Newspaper (2025). Police hunt man who allegedly killed stepmother. Available at: <https://standard.gm/police-hunt-man-who-allegedly-killed-stepmother/>

<sup>6</sup> The Standard Newspaper (2025). 2 KILLED as minors fight IN NBR. Available at : <https://standard.gm/2-killed-as-minors-fight-in-nbr/>

<sup>7</sup> The Point Newspaper (2025). Armed robbers escape to Senegal after attack in URR. Available at: <https://thepoint.gm/africa/gambia/headlines/armed-robbers-escape-to-senegal-after-attack-in-urr>

cultivation of cannabis in the Central River Region,<sup>8</sup> while a British national was apprehended at Banjul International Airport with 60 packs of suspected cannabis ruderalis.<sup>9</sup> The increasing local cannabis cultivation and continued exploitation of Gambian air corridors for trafficking are increasingly linking the country to wider regional criminal markets.

Cyber-crime and critical infrastructure sabotage also persisted in the period. The conviction of five foreign nationals for cyber-related offences at the Brikama Magistrates Court, coupled with the vandalism of a major Gamtel telecommunications hub disrupting over 2,000 phone lines, reflects the intersection between cyber threats, economic disruption, and national security risks.<sup>10</sup> These developments align with regional cyber-crime trends. According to the 2025 Africa Cybercrime Assessment, The Gambia ranked among the top 20 African countries affected by ransomware attacks, with 1,729 incidents recorded in 2024<sup>11</sup>, emphasising growing vulnerability among state systems and private service providers.

Irregular migration continues to challenge border control and human security frameworks. The Gambia Immigration Department intercepted 80 migrants and facilitators in Brufut<sup>12</sup>, and an additional 19 in Bonto in the West Coast Region in The Gambia.<sup>13</sup> This reinforces the need for targeted livelihood interventions, improved intelligence-sharing with neighbouring states, and sustained monitoring of smuggling routes along the West African migration corridor.

### 3. DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

The Gambia witnessed significant political and institutional developments shaping the country's governance landscape in the month. Political mobilisation gained momentum with the launch of the Golden Era Party (GEP) by 36-year-old entrepreneur and former U.S. Army veteran, Mr. Saikou Sawo<sup>14</sup> alongside the "Unite for Change" movement announced by the Mayor of Kanifing Municipality, Talib Bensouda. Both actors framed their platforms around addressing entrenched

<sup>8</sup> Narco-mag DLEAG Gambia Official page (2025). Available at: [dleag-gambia.com](http://dleag-gambia.com)

<sup>9</sup> Kerr Fatou News (2025). British Woman, 26, Arrested at Banjul Airport With Two Suitcases of Suspected Cannabis. Available: <https://www.kerrfatou.com/british-woman-26-arrested-at-banjul-airport-with-two-suitcases-of-suspected-cannabis/>

<sup>10</sup> Jollof News (2025). Vandalization Of Gamtel's Cable Cabin Causes Widespread Disruptions. Available at : <https://jollofnews.gm/vandalization-of-gamtel-s-cable-cabin-causes-widespread-disruptions/>

<sup>11</sup> Foroyaa Newspaper (2025). Rising Cyber Threats Alarm Gambians. Available at: <https://foroyaa.net/rising-cyber-threats-alarm-gambians/>

<sup>12</sup> The Standard Newspaper (2025). GID intercepts 80 would-be migrants at Brufut. Available at : <https://standard.gm/gid-intercepts-80-would-be-migrants-at-brufut/>

<sup>13</sup> Kerr Fatou (2025). Police Apprehend 19 Alleged Irregular Migrants in Bonto Village. Available at : <https://www.kerrfatou.com/police-apprehend-19-alleged-irregular-migrants-in-bonto-village/>

<sup>14</sup> Alkamba Times (2025). Gambian Entrepreneur and Former US Army Veteran Saikou Sawo Launches Golden Era Party Ahead of 2026 Polls. Available at: <https://alkambatimes.com/gambian-entrepreneur-and-former-us-army-veteran-saikou-sawo-launches-golden-era-party-ahead-of-2026-polls/>

socio-economic concerns including youth unemployment, poor service delivery, and rising irregular migration, indicating broadening political engagement ahead of the electoral cycle. Their emergence also marks growing citizen demand for alternative leadership and governance models capable of responding to citizens grievances, governance gaps and rising socio-economic pressures.

Meanwhile, the Local Government Commission of Inquiry (LGCI) concluded its 28-month investigation into the financial and administrative operations of local councils across the country.<sup>15</sup> Its findings are expected to inform local governance reforms, strengthen accountability mechanisms and reinforce transparency at sub-national levels, critical for public trust and decentralisation efforts. In a parallel governance accountability development, former Auditor-General Modou Ceesay filed a lawsuit at the Supreme Court against Attorney General and Inspector General of Police,<sup>16</sup> contesting his removal from office as unconstitutional. The case is likely to test institutional independence and the rule of law, potentially setting a precedent for public sector protection and separation of powers.

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) released the official calendar for the 2026–2027 election cycle,<sup>17</sup> outlining key timelines for voter registration, nominations, campaigns, and the conduct of both national and local elections. . This early planning signals institutional readiness but will require sustained civic education and logistical planning to ensure inclusivity and public confidence ahead of a competitive political period. , Despite progress in political and institutional processes, service-delivery gaps continued to impact public welfare. At The Gambia's main referral hospital, three premature babies died due to a power outage caused by a transformer explosion.<sup>18</sup> In addition, the Minister of Transport, Ebrima Sillah, raised alarm over the country's escalating road safety crisis, with 30 to 60 accidents recorded monthly. <sup>19</sup> The trend points to multiple underlying factors, including weak enforcement of traffic regulations, poor road infrastructure, over-speeding, and inadequate driver training, amongst others.

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<sup>15</sup> The Point Newspaper (2025). LGCI concludes hearing, final report targets accountability, reforms. Available at : <https://thepoint.gm/africa/gambia/headlines/lhci-concludes-hearing-final-report-targets-accountability-reforms>

<sup>16</sup> The Standard Newspaper (2025). EX-AG Ceesay takes govt to supreme Court. Available at : <https://standard.gm/ex-ag-eesay-takes-govt-to-supreme-court/>

<sup>17</sup> The Standard Newspaper (2025). IEC announces 2026-2027 election dates. Available at: <https://standard.gm/iec-announces-2026-2027-election-dates/>

<sup>18</sup> Jollof News (2025). 3 Babies Die in Banjul Transformer Explosion. Available at: <https://jollofnews.gm/3-babies-die-in-banjul-transformer-explosion/>

<sup>19</sup> The Point Newspaper (2025). Gambia records up to 60 road accidents monthly — Minister Sillah. Available at : <https://thepoint.gm/africa/gambia/headlines/gambia-records-up-to-60-road-accidents-monthly-minister-sillah>

#### **4. ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY**

No major environmental-related incidents were recorded in the month, indicating a period of relative stability across climate and disaster-related risks. This stability presents an opportunity for authorities and local structures to reinforce environmental preparedness efforts including strengthening community resilience, promoting sustainable resource management, and enhancing early warning mechanisms, to mitigate future environmental risks.

#### **5. GENDER, PEACE AND SECURITY**

In the reporting period, the Brusubi Magistrate Court presided over by Magistrate Isatou Jallow, delivered a landmark judgment sentencing a male resident to 28 years imprisonment with hard labour for the rape of four women.<sup>20</sup> The judgement reflects a strengthening institutional response to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) and reinforces judicial commitment to survivor protection and accountability. While this ruling marks a positive step toward deterrence and justice for victims, SGBV remains a major human security challenge in The Gambia, often driven by entrenched gender norms, under-reporting, and limited survivor support systems. The case highlights the need for continued investment in gender-sensitive justice pathways, psychosocial services and community-level prevention initiatives, as well as enhanced coordination between law enforcement agencies, social welfare institutions, and women-led civil society networks. Advancing Women, Peace and Security priorities including legal protection, access to justice, and safe reporting mechanisms remains crucial to sustaining progress and ensuring that women and girls can contribute meaningfully to peace and development.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

a. To counter evolving threat of organised crime and violent extremism, The Gambia government should enhance intelligence-sharing and joint operations among the Police, DLEAG, Immigration Department, and intelligence services. Strengthening community-policing structures, youth mentorship programmes, and cross-border cooperation, particularly with Senegal, will help disrupt criminal networks and prevent youth recruitment.

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<sup>20</sup> The Standard Newspaper (2025). Serial rapist jailed for 28 years. Available at: <https://standard.gm/serial-rapist-jailed-for-28-years/>  
**(National Early Warning System-(The Gambia)**

- b. To consolidate democratic gains, The Gambia should continue to promote transparency, accountability, and inclusive governance through institutional reforms guided by the findings of the Local Government Commission of Inquiry. The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) should be adequately resourced to ensure credible, inclusive and peaceful elections ahead of the 2026–2027 electoral cycle.
- c. Although no major environmental threats were recorded proactive disaster preparedness and climate resilience remains crucial. Authorities should invest in early warning systems, environmental monitoring, and community-based adaptation programs to mitigate future risks from floods, droughts, or coastal erosion.
- d. To build on the progress made in addressing gender-based violence, The Gambia should scale up survivor-centered support services, including access to legal aid, psychosocial counseling, and safe shelters for victims. Continuous public awareness campaigns should be implemented to challenge harmful gender norms and promote protection for women and girls.

## CONCLUSION

The reporting period reflects steady progress in rule-of-law enforcement, democratic engagement, and social protection, alongside recurrent risks linked to organised crime and gender-based violence. Sustaining peace and development in The Gambia will require coordinated institutional action, enhanced community participation, and continued commitment to accountability, rights protection, and inclusive governance. Going forward, a coordinated, inclusive, and rights-based approach—anchored on transparency, accountability, and citizen participation—will be essential to sustaining peace, deepening democracy, and promoting national security and development in The Gambia.

### CENSUS OF INCIDENTS FOR OCTOBER 2025

THEMATIC AREA	NO of Attacks.	VICTIMS	
		DEATHS	INJURIES
ORGANISED CRIME: (Armed-robbery, assassination, armed violence mob attack, vandalism, arson and cult/gang clash).	2		
Cybercrime/Fraud	2	-	-

Physical/Armed Assault	1	1	
Illicit Drug Trafficking	1		-
Homicide	2	2	
<b><u>DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE:</u></b>			
Demonstration (peaceful)	2	-	
Intimidation and Threats		-	-
Arrest/Detention	2	-	-
Road Accident	3		
Illegal migration			
Election-Related Violence	3		
New Political Party, Election			
Fire Outbreak + Explosion	1	3	
<b><u>ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY:</u></b>			
<b><u>Pandemic/Epidemics:</u></b>	-	-	<b><u>Confirmed/Infected Cases</u></b>
Flood/Rainstorm			-
<b><u>GENDER, PEACE AND SECURITY:</u></b>			
SGBV: Sexual Assault/Rape	1		4
Human Trafficking	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>

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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