

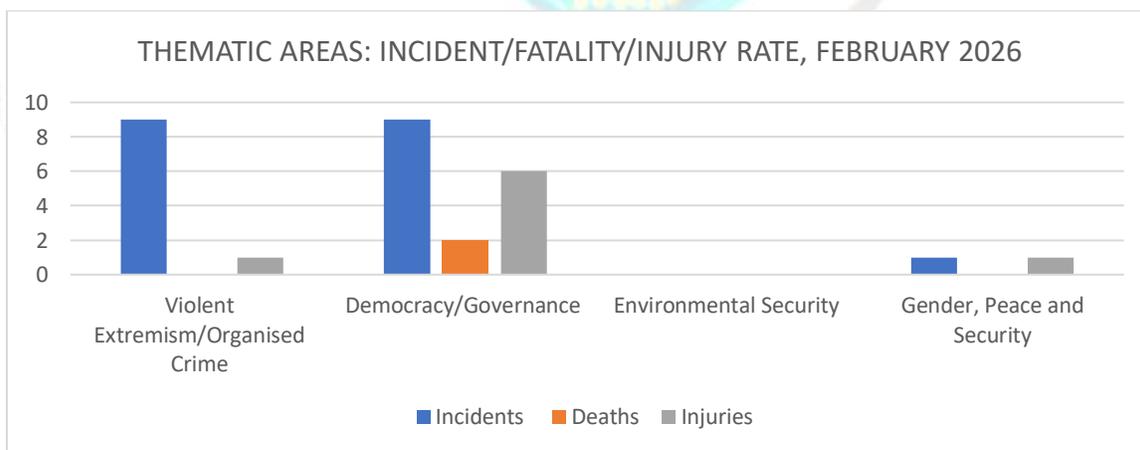
NEWS MONTHLY BULLETIN (WANEP-THE GAMBIA) (FEBRUARY 2026)

1. INTRODUCTION

In the reporting period, a total of nineteen (19) incidents were recorded through the WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS),¹ as part of the *Monthly Conflict Census*. These incidents resulted in two (2) fatalities and seven (7) injuries arising from a range of causes including road accidents, violence, rape and assault reported during the month.²

As depicted in the thematic graph below, the *Democracy and Governance* and *Organised Crime and Violent Extremism* themes recorded a total of nine (9) incidents each, while Gender, Peace and Security theme recorded one (1) incident. The *Environmental Security* theme registered no incident during the reporting period.

Geographically, Kanifing Municipality registered the highest number of incidents with a total of seven (7) incidents, followed by Banjul with six (6) incidents. The West Coast Region recorded four (4) incidents, while the North Bank Region and the Upper River Region reported one (1) incident each. No incidents were recorded in the Central River Region and Lower River Region during the reporting period.

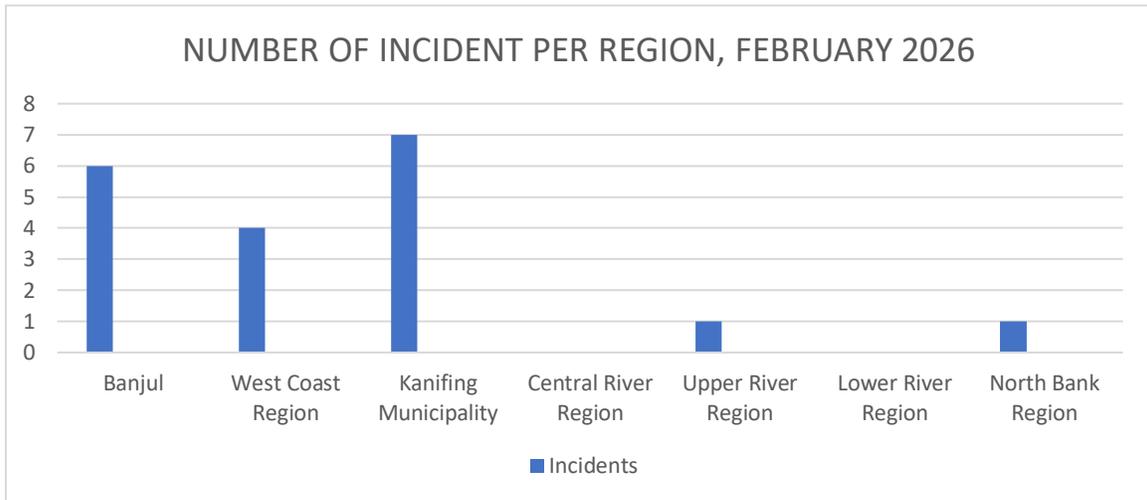


Source: WANEP-NEWS³

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 Drug Law Enforcement Agency of The Gambia (DLEAG) reportedly confiscated 49,000 ecstasy pills alongside significant quantities of cannabis, cocaine, and other illicit substances in a nationwide operation⁵, leading to the arrest of over 30 suspects. This large-scale seizure signals both the persistence and possible expansion of synthetic and transnational drug trafficking networks operating within The Gambia. The scale and diversity of the drugs intercepted suggest organized supply chains with regional linkages, reinforcing concerns about the country’s vulnerability as a transit and consumption hub. The Gambia Police Force arrested a suspect linked to the theft incident in Serrekunda London Corner⁶, investigations into an attempted robbery at a Forex Bureau in Manjai⁷, suspected home breaking in Basse⁸, and a D1,000,000 theft case under investigation by the police in Senegambia, reflect sustained pressure on acquisitive and organized criminal activities. These incidents highlight the intersection between drug markets, property crimes, and financial offenses, which collectively strain law enforcement capacity and heighten public insecurity.

⁴ news.wanepsystems.net

⁵ Kerrfatou (2026). Gambian Authorities Seize Tens of Thousands of Ecstasy Pills in Nationwide Drug Sweep. <https://www.kerrfatou.com/gambian-authorities-seize-tens-of-thousands-of-ecstasy-pills-in-nationwide-drug-sweep/>

⁶ The Gambia Police Force Official Facebook Page (10-02-2026). Police arrest suspects in a viral video theft in London corner, gambiapoliceforce.com

⁷ The Gambia Police Force Official Facebook page (12-02-2026) Police Investigate attempted robbery at forex bureau in manjai, gambiapoliceforce.com

⁸ The Gambia Police Force Official Facebook Page (10-02-2026) Police in Basse arrest two suspects in home breaking theft case in Basse. gambiapoliceforce.com

Judicial responses during the reporting period demonstrate a firm stance against criminality, with the Bundung Magistrates' Court sentencing a female resident to a mandatory four-year term for assault causing bodily harm⁹, and the Brikama Magistrates' Court imposing a 12-year sentence to a male resident for the possession of 3.5kg cannabis sativa with intent to traffic¹⁰. Additionally, the Kanifing Magistrate Court convicted three individuals for theft¹¹, reinforcing accountability mechanisms at the community level. However, violence during the West African Senior Secondary School (WASS) inter-house competition at Serrekunda West Park¹², which led to business closures and public fear, underscores how youth-related disturbances can escalate into broader security concerns if not effectively managed. While none of the reported incidents directly indicate violent extremist activity, the convergence of drug trafficking, economic crimes, and sporadic public violence presents structural risk factors—such as youth vulnerability, criminal recruitment pathways, and erosion of public trust—that could be exploited by extremist actors if preventive measures, community policing, and youth engagement strategies are not strengthened.

3. DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

In the reporting period, President Adama Barrow reportedly exercised his prerogative of mercy under Section 82 of the 1997 Constitution to grant clemency to fifty-six (56) male inmates from Mile 2 Central Prison¹³; a move likely aimed at decongesting prisons and reinforcing rehabilitative justice principles. In the economic governance sphere, The Gambia Ports Authority is reportedly renegotiating its 30-year deep-sea port concession agreement with Albayrak Group, covering six years of operating Banjul Port and 24 years for constructing and managing a new port in Sanyang¹⁴. This development carries significant implications for national revenue generation, debt exposure, and long-term infrastructure control. Meanwhile, The Gambia Press Union, with support from International IDEA and the European Union, launched three key media policy documents to strengthen ethics, safety, and accountability¹⁵—signaling progress in democratic consolidation. The Third National Dialogue, convened at the Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara International Conference Centre, further reflects inclusive governance efforts by bringing

⁹ The Standard Newspaper (2026). Woman gets 4 years for spraying boyfriend with hot oil. <https://standard.gm/woman-gets-4-years-for-spraying-boyfriend-with-hot-oil/>

¹⁰ The standard Newspaper (2026) Man gets 12 years for drug trafficking. <https://standard.gm/man-gets-12-years-for-drug-trafficking/>

¹¹ Kerr Fatou (2026). Three Young Men Sentenced to Six Months in Jail and Fined in Goat Theft Case. <https://www.kerrfatou.com/three-young-men-sentenced-to-six-months-in-jail-and-fined-in-goat-theft-case/>

¹² The Point Newspaper (2026) Violent inter-house clash forces shops to close as residents demand gov't ban. <https://thepoint.gm/africa/gambia/headlines/violent-inter-house-clash-forces-shops-to-close-as-residents-demand-govt-ban>

¹³ The Standard newspaper (2026) Barrow Pardons 56 prison inmates. <https://standard.gm/barrow-pardons-56-prisoners/>

¹⁴ The Standard Newspaper (2026) GOV'T TO RENEGOTIATE DEEP SEA PORT AGREEMENT WITH ALBAYRAK. <https://standard.gm/govt-to-renegotiate-deep-sea-port-agreement-with-albayrak/>

¹⁵ The Standard Newspaper (2026) GPU, partners launch media policies to guide ethics and safety in journalism. <https://standard.gm/gpu-partners-launch-media-policies-to-guide-ethics-and-safety-in-journalism/>

together state and non-state actors to deliberate on harnessing human capital and infrastructure for sustainable development.

On the public safety front, a fatal accident involving a seven-passenger vehicle along the Jabang Highway claimed two lives¹⁶, underscoring persistent road safety challenges. The Gambia Armed Forces reportedly repositioned its military vehicle checkpoint to mitigate risks and enhance enforcement presence¹⁷. Migration management also remained a priority, with The Gambia Police Force Anti-Crime Unit in Barra intercepting 71 would-be migrants in coordinated operations across the North Bank Region¹⁸, highlighting ongoing irregular migration pressures. Additionally, the Independent Electoral Commission reportedly rejected registration applications from the Unite Movement for Change (UMC) and six other aspiring political parties for non-compliance with the Elections Act¹⁹, reflecting regulatory enforcement within the political space. In the foreign affairs domain, the Ministry disclosed unawareness regarding reports of Gambians recruited to fight in Ukraine and allegedly killed²⁰, raising concerns about external recruitment networks and the monitoring of citizens in foreign conflicts. Collectively, these developments point to an active governance environment balancing reform, regulation, and emerging socio-economic and security pressures.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY

No environmental security incidents were recorded during the reporting period. There were no reported cases of environmental degradation, natural disasters, resource-based conflicts, pollution outbreaks, or climate-related disruptions across the country. This calm trend suggests relative stability within the environmental sector; however, continued monitoring and early warning mechanisms remain essential to promptly detect emerging risks such as illegal logging, coastal erosion, flooding, or disputes over land and natural resources that could undermine livelihoods and community resilience.

5. GENDER, PEACE AND SECURITY

¹⁶ The Standard newspaper.gm (2026). 2 killed in Jabang car crash. <https://standard.gm/2-killed-in-jabang-car-crash/>

¹⁷ Kerrfatou.com (2026) GAF Relocates Bwiam Checkpoint After Spate of Fatal Accidents. <https://www.kerrfatou.com/gaf-relocates-bwiam-checkpoint-after-spate-of-fatal-accidents/>

¹⁸ Kerr Fatou (2026) Anti-Crime Unit Intercepts 30 in North Bank Operation Targeting Irregular Migration. <https://www.kerrfatou.com/anti-crime-unit-intercepts-30-in-north-bank-operation-targeting-irregular-migration/>

¹⁹ The Standard newspaper (2026) IEC EXPLAINS WHY IT TURNED DOWN UMC, 6 OTHER PARTIES. <https://standard.gm/iec-explains-why-it-turned-down-umc-6-other-parties/>

²⁰ The point newspaper (2026). Gov't unaware of enlistment, as 26 Gambians die in foreign conflict - Foreign Affairs Minister. <https://thepoint.gm/africa/gambia/headlines/govt-unaware-of-enlistment-as-26-gambians-die-in-foreign-conflict-foreign-affairs-minister>

On the gender, peace and security front, the State Law Office has reportedly filed a criminal charge of rape against a 24-year-old footballer and resident of Abuko in the Kanifing Municipality for allegedly raping a 10-year-old girl²¹. The case underscores serious concerns regarding sexual and gender-based violence, particularly against minors, and highlights the critical role of the justice system in ensuring accountability and child protection. The development is likely to generate heightened public attention, reinforcing calls for strengthened safeguarding mechanisms, community vigilance, and sustained advocacy to prevent abuse and protect vulnerable children.

RECOMMENDATIONS

a. The Gambia government should strengthen inter-agency intelligence sharing and border surveillance among the Drug Law Enforcement Agency of The Gambia, The Gambia Police Force, and regional counterparts to dismantle transnational drug networks, while expanding community policing and structured youth engagement programs to reduce vulnerability to criminal recruitment.

b. The Ministry of Transport Works and Infrastructure should enhance transparency and public accountability in major national decisions—particularly the ongoing port concession renegotiations by The Gambia Ports Authority—through parliamentary oversight, stakeholder consultations, and public disclosure mechanisms, while reinforcing civic education and compliance support to political actors through the Independent Electoral Commission to promote inclusive and credible democratic participation.

c. The government of The Gambia is encouraged to institutionalize proactive environmental risk monitoring by strengthening early warning systems, local disaster preparedness committees, and enforcement against illegal exploitation of natural resources, ensuring rapid response capacity to emerging threats such as flooding, coastal erosion, and land-use conflicts despite the absence of reported incidents during the period.

d. The Ministry of Children and Social Welfare should intensify child protection mechanisms and survivor-centered response systems by strengthening collaboration between the State Law Office, law enforcement, social welfare services, and community-based structures to ensure timely prosecution of sexual and gender-based violence cases, expanded psychosocial support for survivors, and sustained public awareness campaigns to prevent abuse and protect minors.

CONCLUSION

²¹ The Point newspaper (2026) 24-yr-old footballer to appear in Court for allegedly raping 10-yr-old girl. <https://thepoint.gm/africa/gambia/headlines/24-yr-old-footballer-to-appear-in-court-for-allegedly-raping-10-yr-old-girl>

The reporting period reflects sustained law enforcement efforts against organized crime, ongoing governance reforms, environmental stability, and renewed attention to gender-based violence and child protection. While no direct indicators of violent extremism or environmental threats were recorded, underlying risk factors—such as drug trafficking networks, youth vulnerability, irregular migration, and sexual violence—require continuous monitoring and proactive intervention. Strengthening institutional coordination, transparency, community engagement, and preventive mechanisms will be critical to consolidating national stability, safeguarding vulnerable populations, and promoting sustainable peace and development.

CENSUS OF INCIDENTS FOR FEBRUARY 2026

THEMATIC AREA	NO of Attacks.	VICTIMS	
		DEATHS	INJURIES
ORGANISED CRIME: (Armed-robbery, assassination, armed violence mob attack, arson and cult/gang clash).	5		
Cybercrime/Fraud		-	-
Physical/Armed Assault	2		1
Illicit Drug Trafficking	2		-
Homicide			
Suicide			-
<u>DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE:</u>			
Demonstration (peaceful)		-	
Good governance initiative	6		
Intimidation and Threats		-	-
Arrest/Detention		-	-
Road Accident	1	2	6
illegal migration	2		
Building Collapse			
Election-Related Violence			
Fire Outbreak + Gas Explosion			

<u>ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY:</u>			
<u>Pandemic/Epidemics:</u>		-	<u>Confirmed/Infected Cases</u>
Flood/Rainstorm			-
<u>GENDER, PEACE AND SECURITY:</u>	1		1
SGBV: Sexual Assault/Rape			
Human Trafficking1		-	-
Total	19	2	8

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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