

GHANA ARMED FORCES



PRESS RELEASE

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GHANA ARMED FORCES REBUTS KILLING ALLEGATIONS AT BAWKU

The Ghana Armed Forces (GAF) has noticed with concern allegations by some individuals in Bawku and the media that soldiers deployed on Operation Maida Buuri to restore calm in the area have killed 3 innocent Kusasi youth at Sabongari, a suburb of Bawku. It is also alleged that the assailants were initially held in custody by own troops and subsequently executed. It was further suggested that the Missiga Assemblyman personally approached the Bawku Detachment at about 1930hrs to negotiate the release of the deceased assailants. GAF wishes to categorically state that these allegations are false and unfounded.

Reports from 11 Mechanised Battalion deployed in Bawku indicate that factions to the conflict appear to have resumed escalation of violence with fatal consequences. The current streak of violence begun on Friday 12 January 2024 at about 1455hrs with the murder of one Issah Halidu, a 40-year-old Mamprusi. The deceased reportedly attempted rustling 4 cattle at Avengo, a Kusasi dominated settlement, but was pursued by unidentified gunmen and shot in the head and back. Troops dispatched to the scene retrieved two 7.62 x 39mm live rounds from the deceased's pocket.

On the night of Friday 12 January and early hours of Saturday 13 January 2024, sporadic gunshots were heard at New Station, Daduuri and Maziama. On Wednesday 17 January 2024, at about 1320 hrs, unknown gunmen attacked members of the public behind Bawku Divisional Police Station killing 2 victims and injuring 4 others. The deceased victims were of the Mamprusi and Moshie tribe while the other victims with various degrees of injuries were of Bissa, Busanga and Grushie descent. On the same day, at about 2000hrs, unknown assailants murdered one Azumah Alhassan, a 47-year-old Kusasi Professor at Sokabisi, Bolgatanga. This spawned sporadic gunshots at Bawku later at night.

Furthermore, on Thursday 18 January 2024 at about 0430hrs, unknown gunmen hiding in a valley fired at own troops position at Avengo. In another development, at about 0530 hrs same day, a Ghana Police patrol team spotted 2 locals attempting to light up an Rocket Propelled Grenade (RPG) bomb at a Goil Filling Station in Bawku. The suspects fled upon sighting the patrol team leaving behind the bomb. Ghana Police retrieved the Unexploded Ordinance (UXO) and handed over same for safe custody at 11 Mechanised Battalion Magazine at Bazua.

It is worth mentioning that at about 2030 hrs same day, own troops conducting night foot patrols around Hasania School at Sabongari were fired upon by 4 gunmen. Troops returned fire

spontaneously neutralising 3 of the assailants. The fourth suspect managed to escape. Troops retrieved one AK-47 rifle loaded with 16 rounds of 7.62 x 39 mm ammunition. Ghana Police team arrived the location subsequently to convey the deceased assailants to the morgue. The AK-47 rifle with serial number 81-1/13024074 inspected by Bawku Divisional Police personnel is currently in own custody.

In as much as GAF regrets the demise of the assailants, the escalating violence in the Bawku general area is unfortunate. The presence and attempt to detonate high explosives such as RPG bombs in the operational environment signposts the changing dynamics of the threat profile. Following these incidents and subsequent false allegations making the rounds, GAF finds it necessary to disclose details of the operations on Thursday 18 January 2024 with the view to debunking false information and the unsubstantiated notion that a particular group is being targeted by troops deployed in Bawku.

It is instructive to note that directly engaging the military is a development that could result in fatal consequences; as troops will spare no opportunity to defend themselves as well as protect residents of Bawku. Therefore, factions in the Bawku conflict are cautioned against drawing the military into direct armed confrontation while efforts are undertaken to resolve the current impasse.

GAF wishes to assure the general public of its fervent commitment to protecting the citizenry. It is therefore imploring the support of all peace-loving Ghanaians, especially the good people of Bawku to facilitate the process of bringing lasting peace to the area and also to aid GAF and sister security agencies in de-escalating tension in the interest of peace, security and socio-economic development of Bawku and the nation in general.



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Note to Editors

For favour of publication, please.

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