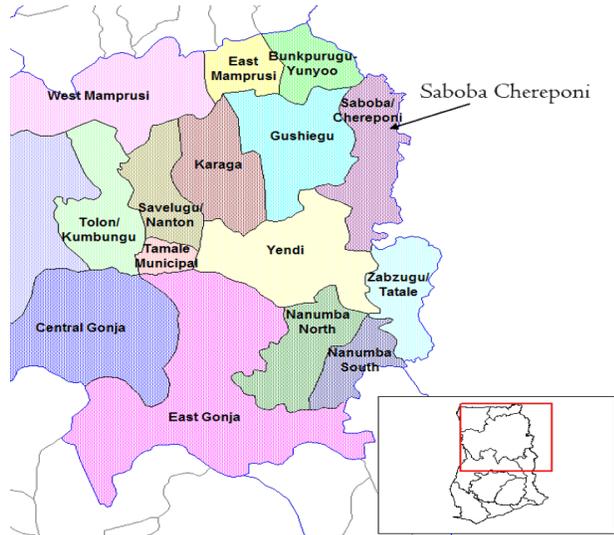




NEWS SITUATION TRACKING - GHANA

ETHNIC CLASHES IN CHEREPONI

Location: Chereponi is located in the North-East Region of Ghana
Issue: Ethnic Armed Violence
Date: March, 2019



Source : https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saboba_Chereponi

COMMUNITY PROFILING

Population: The population of the district, according to the 2010 Population and Housing Census, is 55,932 of which 49.9% are males and 50.4% are females, representing 2.3% of the Northern region's total population of 2,479,461

Basic Demography and Geography of Hotspots:

Chereponi shares boundaries with the following Districts; Gushegu Municipal to the west; Bunkpurugu Nyankpanduri District to the north, Saboba District to the south and The Republic of Togo to the east bordered by the River Oti.

Ethnicity: The predominant ethnic groups within the district are the Konkombas and the Anufors (also called Chokosis) who constitute the main ethnic groups, with smaller ethnic groups such as Bimobas, Moshies, Ewes (also called Bators), and the Fulanis who are also found in the district.

Significance of the district: The district is endowed with enough land and human resources that can help augment the agricultural potential of the region and the country.

Economy: The economy of the district is largely dependent on agriculture with the sector directly and indirectly engaging between 80-90 percent of the population. Only

CRITICAL STAKEHOLDERS

Direct Actors:

- The Konkombas and
- The Anufors (Chokosis)

Affected Persons:

- About 2600 people have been affected so far, particularly women and children.
- Affected communities include Naaduuni, Achima, Tiakasu, Kunkpende, Naaburubu, Kunajiiku, Sedorti, Tojinga, Nandiri, Nached, Tambungu, Nangbangu and Namor,

Interested Actors:

- District Security Council (DISEC),
- The Northern Regional Security Council (REGSEC),
- Chiefs,
- Opinion leaders,
- The Government,
- The Police,
- The Military,
- GOC,
- The National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO)
- West Africa Network For Peacebuilding (WANEP-Ghana)

INCIDENT PROFILING

On 15th March 2019, a man known as Fahad Jababu Sulley (a Chokosi, also Anufo by tribe) alleged to have crossed over to Ghana from Togo, was shot and injured while sitting on a motorbike outside of a home and in a group at Nawieku in the Chereponi District of the newly created North-East Region. Security was beefed up in the area.

However, on 16th March, 2019, the Konkombas allegedly attacked some Chokosis at Kornu, Nansoni, and Kpenchi. It has been alleged that the Chokosis repelled the assailants and also burnt some houses belonging to the Konkombas at Kpenchi, Nabul and Ngbangbanu. On the same day, the Konkombas mounted road blocks on the Cherepone-Yendi road, sieved out four Chokosis on a bus and manhandled them. Thereafter, the violence has spread sporadically to several neighbouring communities including Tigenga, Gbalo, Kornu and Nasoni, and Yunyoo.

On 18th March 2019, the National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO) said it was unable to provide relief services to the over 1800 people displaced in view of the volatile situation. The District Police Command, while lamenting over the deteriorated security situation in the district, has called for more personnel and logistics such as vehicles and motorbikes to be able to patrol the hinterlands and curtail the violence.

However, WANEP-Ghana has received information from its community monitors, indicating that on the same day of this renewed violence, fifty policemen who had been stationed at Chereponi to beef up security and enforce the 6pm to 6am curfew imposed by the Government were withdrawn.

Meanwhile, the Police have confirmed that two people have died. The NADMO, on the other hand, has indicated that the number of fatalities is three. However, some community

about 40% of the land area is used for agricultural purposes, while a greater proportion is left uncultivated. (MOFA,)

Subsistence farming is mainly practised in the district, with very small farm holdings. Common crops grown by farmers include cereals (i.e. maize, rice, sorghum, millet and fonio etc), Legumes (ie. groundnuts, cowpea, soyabeans etc) as well as yam and cassava.

A good number of farmers in the district are also into cotton and Vegetable production.

There is a high potential for the livestock industry in the district. Farmers rear livestock as a source of livelihood security. Livestock in the district include cattle, sheep, goats, pigs and donkeys and poultry. However, none of these are reared purposely on commercial basis. Donkeys are mostly used for haulage purposes.

Religion: The Chereponi District is a combined mix of Traditionalist majority, Muslims and Christian minority.

members believed the number of deaths could be higher than reported. Besides, vulnerable residents have fled to neighbouring communities and Togo. The renewed conflict has further affected livelihoods of the affected populations, as food and water have become scarce.

Prior to the attack, WANEP-Ghana monitors working under a USAID sponsored Rapid Response Initiative with technical lead by the Regional Peace Council being implemented under the USAID Northern Ghana Governance Activity (NGGA) visited both Chereponi and Saboba to carry out a baseline survey of the cause of the conflict. The preliminary information gathered by the team indicated that the source of the conflict is a land dispute between the Konkomba and Chokosi tribes living at Naduni, a village in Cherepone. It was therefore considered by other communities as purely a local community land dispute with no threat of escalation.

The two tribes in the district have inter-married and integrated to the extent that they all now speak the same Anufo language. In some cases, both tribes have lived in the same compound. But despite the seeming cordial relationship, WANEP-Ghana thinks negative historical legacies of superiority and inferiority complexes characterised by disrespect from the two tribes stereotypes; historical controversies over who has title to the Cherepone land; marginalisation, inequality in the socio-economic and political spheres, and external influences from neighbouring tribes and others are considered to be the key underlining causes of the conflict.

On the 20th of March, the Ya Na, Yakubu Musah confirmed his decision to intervene in the conflict between the two tribes. He has already met with the Divisional and Municipal Police Commanders in the area, as well as the Military Commander in Yendi and is ready to send in his delegation. So far, according to news outlets, 3 people have been confirmed dead, while an approximate value of 1800 persons have been displaced. In addition, hundreds of mud houses have been burnt.

As of 25th of March, calm had been restored since the impasse between the Konkombas and the Chokosis began. At least six Chokosis and three Konkombas communities within Saboba district have been set ablaze following the intertribal conflict.

Further in the tracking of the situation, the Northern Regional Minister, who doubles as the Northern Regional Security Council (REGSEC) Chairman has revealed that a special unit from the police and military has been deployed to the Chereponi District to help bring a lasting solution to the intermittent communal violence between Konkombas and Chokosis. A helicopter has been made available to provide surveillance support to monitor the conflict situation.

As of 25th of March, the Police have indicated that eight persons had been arrested in connection with the violence. Also, about 22 communities, including farms, had been burnt into ashes in the violence, whilst over 2,000 people had been displaced. Some affected families have relocated to Saboba, Gushegu, Yunyoo

and neighbouring Togo for safety

Current Developments have revealed that security forces have captured a 26 year old of a notorious Togolese mercenary allegedly hired into the porous district to assist in the renewed conflict. This is a clear indication that the conflict has assumed a cross-border nature and would require a lot more security action in the border regions to prevent potential ethnic violence and cross-border crimes

The Regional Police Command also indicated that it has launched an extensive manhunt for the other suspects identified by the captured mercenary. So far, 11 persons have been arrested in the violence. Eight have been arraigned before the Court with varied charges and remanded in custody. Current displacement figures has reached a caseload of over 2600 people.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Government of Ghana should as a matter of urgency strengthen security, especially at the neighbouring borders to continue to maintain peace and security in the district.
- There is the need for conflict sensitivity in media reportage on the conflict in order not to fan the embers of heightened ethnic tension and violence in Chereponi.
- The NADMO, local community NGOs, faith-based organisations and other relevant stakeholders should strengthen collaboration to assist in the delivery of humanitarian assistance to affected populations.
- The National Peace Council (NPC), Regional Security Council (REGSEC), District Security Council (DISEC), the Ministry of Chieftaincy and Traditional Affairs, National House of Chiefs and relevant stakeholders should initiate immediate dialogue with the chiefs, leadership of Konkombas and Chokosis, women and youth groups and faith-based organisations in Chereponi to smoke peace pipe and find lasting solution to the protracted conflicts.

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