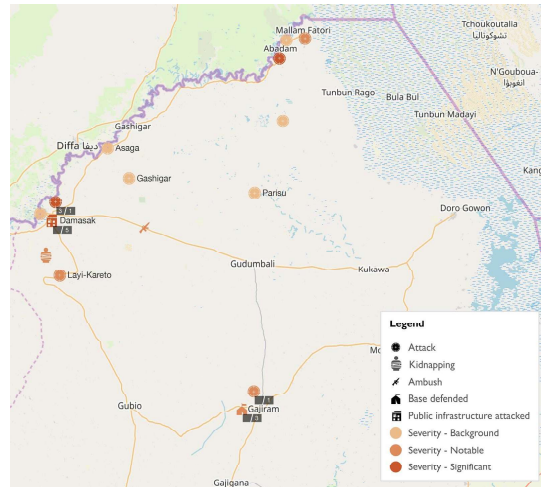


(Damasaku). People appear less pleased with the military's strict posture than in Geidam. In villages outside Damasak, particularly in Layi, KIs are more likely to say they "still live in fear", attributing this to lack of security presence.

Incidents

In a negative development, with around 6 incidents taking place in Damasak LGA and 10 in the broader area, the number of incidents in the Damasak hub has gone back up from a very low number last reporting period (1 incident). All incidents took place in the new year, implying an acceleration of activity in the area. Incidents include a number of illegal checkpoints from where security, government and NGO-affiliated victims were kidnapped. **Most importantly, they also include 2 larger attacks on Damasak town 2 days in a row. This is unusual, as no actual attacks have taken place on Damasak in recent time.** Also of high importance, fighting between ISWAP and Shekau's Boko Haram took place around Sunnawa, confirming the presence of both groups *and* their mutual intention to dominate the territory. This is unequivocally bad news for civilians.



- 15 Jan: Shekau's Boko Haram attacked an ISWAP camp in Sunnawa (Abadam), allegedly to 'take back' around 15 women who had previously been 'taken' by ISWAP from a Boko Haram camp in Diffa, Niger.
- 7 Jan: At an unspecified time in early January, insurgents set up a fake checkpoint and kidnap around 5 people from Bisua on the mainroad near Damasak. No casualties reported. Only men were targeted.
- 29 Jan: Around 4.30pm, ISWAP attack Damasak. After initial exchange of fire, insurgents overrun soldiers stationed at a military post on the edge of town, allowing insurgents to infiltrate. Subsequently, NAF are deployed to repel. UXOs are found near an IOM hub/bunker. ISWAP later claim the attack, saying "army soldiers were killed and wounded." KIs say 1-2 soldiers died as well as 3-4 civilians hit by stray bullets. Notably, KIs also say ISWAP looted foodstuffs and cash.
- 30 Jan: On the following day, ISWAP attack Damasak again. According to 1 KI, insurgents cut a "transmission line" to "deny the state from having power supply."
- 20 Jan: Insurgents set up checkpoints between Layi and Kareto in Mobbar. Around 4 checkpoints were reported on the route. Commuters were informed insurgents were after government workers, soldiers, CJTF, and INGO workers.

GUBIO and parts of NGANZAI

Overall assessment

Despite seeing fewer attacks since September and October, KIs in the Gubio hub remain fearful. Illegal checkpoints and the withdrawal of Chadian troops from a number of locations has caused **concerns over a security gap and possibly retribution from ISWAP as punishment for citizens' cooperation** with security forces.