



Ghana's 2024 Elections

Monitoring of Indecent Language on Radio



Findings for July 1-31, 2024

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1.0 Introduction

This report presents findings from the daily monitoring of selected programs on nine radio stations in Ghana. The data was collected from 1st to the 31st of July 2024. It specifically cites the number of indecent expressions recorded, categorizes these expressions, and identifies the individuals who made the remarks. Additionally, it lists the radio stations where these expressions were made as well as hosts who made indecent remarks. The report concludes with recommendations for relevant stakeholders.

1.1 Background

For the past 31 years, Ghana has maintained a relatively peaceful and democratically stable environment, earning global recognition and favourable rankings. Notably, in the 2022 Global Peace Index (GPI) Report, Ghana was ranked as the most peaceful country in West Africa, 2nd in Africa, and 40th worldwide—an improvement over its 2019 and 2020 rankings. However, the 2023 index saw a significant decline, with Ghana falling to 51st globally, 4th in Africa, and 2nd in West Africa. This decline in rankings is attributed to several factors, including divisive narratives that exacerbate polarization along partisan, ethnic, religious, and chieftaincy lines, as well as the rise of radicalism. These narratives often manifest through hate speech, inflammatory language, political propaganda, and misinformation disseminated via radio.

During election periods, Ghana often witnesses the use of abusive and inappropriate language directed at political opponents, institutions, and other groups. Unfortunately, some radio stations allow political parties and their representatives to misuse the airwaves, with little or no intervention from hosts or presenters. This unchecked behaviour tends to escalate political tensions every four years. In a proactive move to address this issue, the Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA) has been implementing a language monitoring project since 2012. This initiative monitors, reports, and publicly identifies individuals who engage in hate speech and indecent expressions on radio.

Building on insights gained from the 2012, 2016, and 2020 language monitoring projects, the MFWA is once again monitoring radio broadcasts during the 2024 election season. The goal is to contribute to Ghana's peace and democratic stability by fostering a national culture that rejects hate speech, incitement to violence, and other divisive narratives while promoting a narrative of

peaceful coexistence and respectful political discourse. The project involves daily monitoring of selected programs on various radio stations to track and report the use of hate speech and other inappropriate language by politicians and other participants. It also assesses the effectiveness of presenters or hosts in moderating these programs.

2.0 Methodology

The project involves the daily monitoring of expressions used by politicians and other actors who feature on radio programmes such as news bulletins, political discussions and current affairs discussions. It also involves assessing and reporting how presenters or moderators of selected programmes on radio stations handle their programmes and whether or not they tolerate the use of hate speech and other indecent language on their programmes. This report covers the monitoring of ten radio stations in Ghana from July 1 to July 31, 2024. The stations were selected based on findings from previous reports, perceived allegiance to or ownership by politicians or politically exposed persons, and geographical spread. Table 1 presents names and regional locations of the 10 radio stations that were monitored under the current phase of the project.

Table 1: Radio stations monitored under the current phase

No.	Name of Radio Station	Region
1	Accra FM	Greater Accra region
2	Angel FM	Ashanti region
3	Ashh FM	Ashanti region
4	North Star Radio	Northern region
5	Oman FM	Greater Accra region
6	Power FM	Greater Accra region
7	Radio Gold	Greater Accra region
8	Wontumi Radio	Ashanti region
9	Zaa Radio	Northern region
10	Akpini Radio	Volta Region

The monitoring is done based on a validated [monitoring instrument](#). Ten language monitors have been recruited (one monitor per station) and trained on the use of the monitoring instrument. Each monitor is assigned a digital recorder for purposes of recording the programmes they monitor. Monitors send daily reports to the MFWA which are analysed by a team of programme staff and researchers for a consolidated report to be produced.

3.0 Findings

Table 2 presents a breakdown of the subjects that were discussed in various news stories, programs, and discussions on the ten selected radio stations monitored in the period under review. Collectively, 62 instances of indecent expressions were recorded. The data shows that discussions surrounding corruption and elections-related issues were the most prevalent, each accounting for a quarter (26%) of the indecent expressions recorded. This suggests that these topics are particularly sensitive and prone to eliciting strong, often inappropriate, reactions from radio commentators.

Political party activities and related issues were also significant, making up 10% of the recorded indecent expressions. This indicates that partisan politics remains a hotbed for inflammatory language, contributing to the overall polarization and tension in the media discourse. Other subjects, such as conflicts, demonstrations, and security, also recorded instances of indecent expressions, though to a lesser extent (8% and 3%, respectively). These topics, while less frequent, still demonstrate the potential for discussions to escalate into the use of inappropriate language, especially when they touch on national security or public unrest.

Table 2: Main subject of news story/programme/discussion

Subject	Frequency	Percent
Corruption	16	26
Elections-related issues	16	26
Other	11	18
Political party activities/issues	6	10
Conflicts, demonstrations, etc.	5	8
Security	2	3
Business/ Finance	2	3
Development Projects	2	3
Parliament	1	2
Crime	1	2
Total	62	100

Interestingly, business/finance and development projects, each accounting for 3% of indecent expressions, show that even less politically charged topics can become contentious in certain

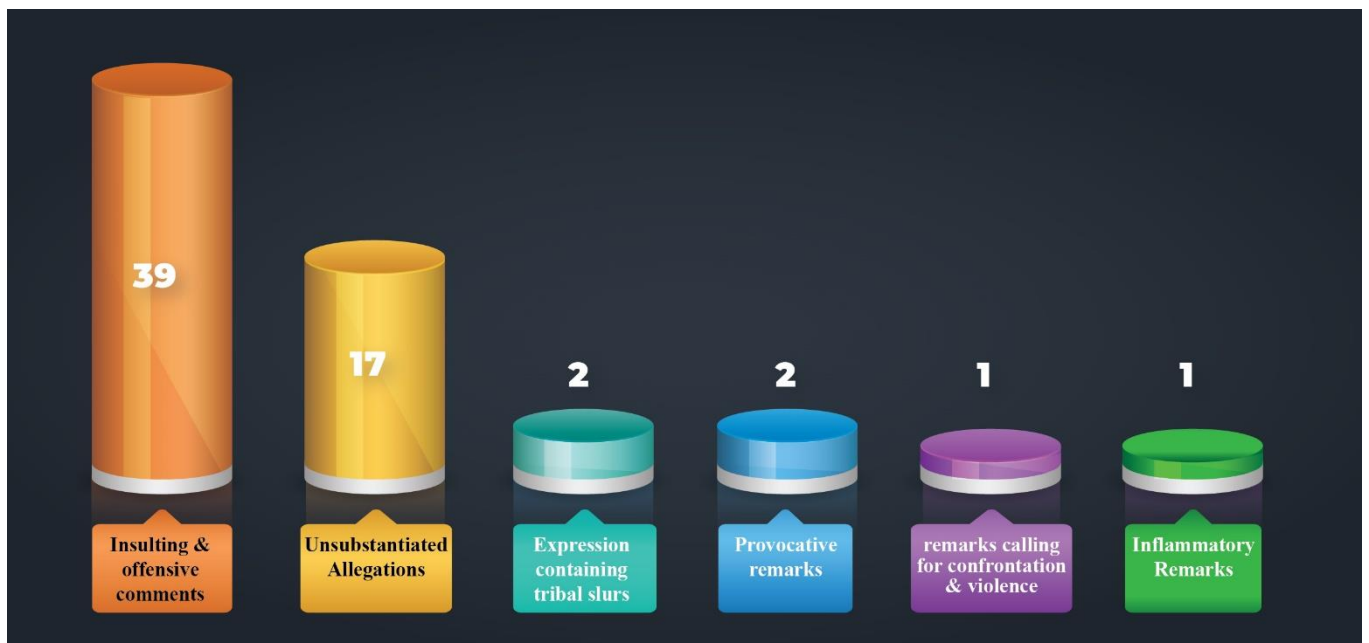
contexts. The "Other" category, which includes various other subjects, constituted 18% of the indecent expressions, highlighting the broad range of issues that can provoke inappropriate language in public discourse.

3.1 Categories of Indecent Expressions Recorded

Figure 1 categorizes various types of indecent expressions that were recorded on air, totalling 62 instances, in the context of discussions on ten selected radio stations in Ghana ahead of the December 2024 general elections. The most prevalent category, Insulting and offensive comments, accounts for a significant majority of the violations, representing 63% (39 instances) of all recorded indecent expressions. This suggests that a large portion of on-air discourse involved language that was directly offensive or derogatory, reflecting a heightened level of disrespect and hostility in public discussions, particularly during a politically charged period.

The second most common violation, Unsubstantiated allegations, constitutes 27% (17 instances) of the total. This indicates that a considerable amount of airtime was devoted to making claims that were not supported by evidence, potentially spreading misinformation or slander. Such allegations can be particularly damaging in an election period, as they may influence public opinion based on falsehoods or distortions of the truth.

Figure 1: Categories of Indecent Expressions Recorded



Expressions containing tribal slurs and Provocative remarks each account for 3% (2 instances) of the recorded violations. Tribal slurs are especially harmful in a multicultural society like Ghana, as they can exacerbate ethnic tensions and undermine national unity. Provocative remarks, on the other hand, likely refer to statements intended to incite or provoke strong reactions, further contributing to a toxic media environment. Remarks calling for confrontation and violence and Inflammatory remarks each make up 2% (1 instance) of the total. Although these categories are less frequent, they are particularly concerning due to their potential to incite actual violence or unrest. Such language, even if rare, can have severe consequences, especially in the context of elections, where tensions are already high.

3.2 Radio Stations and Incidents of Indecent Expressions Recorded

The table 3 presents the distribution of language violations across the ten radio stations monitored in July 2024. The violations include insulting and offensive comments, unsubstantiated allegations, provocative remarks, tribal slurs, and remarks calling for confrontation and violence. Accra FM stands out as the station with the highest number of violations, recording a total of 34 out of the 62 (approximately 55%) incidents. The majority of these were insulting and offensive comments (30 incidents), making it the leading source of such language violations. The station also recorded instances of unsubstantiated allegations (1 incident), tribal slurs (2 incidents), and remarks calling for confrontation and violence (1 incident).

Power FM recorded 15 violations, with a notable concentration of unsubstantiated allegations (8 incidents). Additionally, it recorded 7 instances of insulting and offensive comments. Oman FM accounted for 8 violations, comprising 5 unsubstantiated allegations, 2 provocative remarks, and 1 inflammatory remark. The variety of violations on Oman FM highlights a broader problem where different types of inappropriate language are present. Radio Gold, Ashh FM, Wontumi Radio, and Akpini Radio each recorded minimal violations, ranging from 1 to 2 incidents. Radio Gold had 2 violations (1 insulting comment and 1 unsubstantiated allegation), while the other three stations each recorded only 1 incident. The relatively low number of violations at these stations might suggest better moderation practices or a less provocative audience. However, even isolated incidents can have significant impacts if they occur during critical moments, such as during discussions of sensitive election-related topics.

Table 3: Radio stations and the category of violations recorded

<i>Radio Station</i>	<i>Insulting & offensive comments</i>	<i>Unsubstantiated allegations</i>	<i>Provocative remarks</i>	<i>Expressions containing tribal slurs</i>	<i>Remarks calling for confrontation and violence</i>	<i>Inflammatory remarks</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Accra Fm</i>	30	1	0	2	1	0	34
<i>Power Fm</i>	7	8	0	0	0	0	15
<i>Oman Fm</i>	0	5	2	0	0	1	8
<i>Radio Gold</i>	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
<i>Ashh Fm</i>	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
<i>Wontumi Radio</i>	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
<i>Akpini Radio</i>	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	39	17	2	2	1	1	62

3.3. Social Media Broadcast

The findings reveal that a significant portion of the indecent expressions recorded on the radio stations monitored were streamed live on social media platforms, particularly Facebook and YouTube (Figure 2). Out of the 62 violations identified, 57 were simultaneously broadcasted on these platforms, indicating a substantial overlap between on-air content and online presence. The streaming of indecent expressions on social media greatly amplifies their reach, as these platforms enable real-time sharing with a broad audience.

Figure 2: Social Media handles that broadcasted violations live on radio



This exposure not only allows the content to reach more people instantly but also ensures that it remains accessible long after the initial broadcast. Given the viral nature of social media, these expressions can be repeatedly shared, viewed, and potentially used to incite further tensions or propagate misinformation. This dual broadcast responsibility on air and online emphasizes the need for stringent content moderation among media outlets. Ensuring that broadcasts adhere to standards of decency is crucial, not only to prevent immediate harm but also to mitigate the long-term consequences of such content being preserved and disseminated online.

Further, the challenge of regulating this content extends to social media platforms and relevant authorities, who must work together to address the spread of harmful and divisive language, particularly during politically sensitive times. Swift action to remove or counter such content is essential to maintaining a peaceful and respectful public discourse ahead of the general elections in December 2024. Table 4 presents the number of violations streamed live on the respective social media handles of the monitored radio stations.

Table 4: Violation streamed live on social media (N=57)

Radio Station	Facebook	YouTube
Accra Fm	34	34
Power Fm	10	4
Oman Fm	8	0
Radio Gold	2	0
Ashh Fm	1	0
Wontumi Radio	1	1
Akpini Radio	0	1
Total	56	40

3.4 Culprits of Indecent Expressions Used on Radio

Table 4 shows the names of the individuals who authored the 62 indecent expressions. The expressions are presented according to the identified categories. Further details of the radio stations and the dates on which the categorised expressions were made are presented in the appendix of this report. The analysis reveals that a few individuals are responsible for the majority of indecent expressions recorded on radio ahead of Ghana's December 2024 general elections.

Notably, Accra FM's Kwabena Bobie Ansah emerges as the leading culprit, responsible for 30 out of the 62 violations, which include a significant number of insulting and offensive comments, unsubstantiated allegations, remarks inciting confrontation, and tribal slurs. Oheneba Boamah Bennie of Power FM follows as the second-highest offender, with 6 violations, all involving insulting and offensive comments. Mugabe Maase also of Power FM authored four indecent expressions in the period under review. Other individuals, including Listowel Nana Kusi Poku, and Nicholas Omane Acheampong among others, are responsible for one or two violations each. Although their contributions are less frequent, the nature of their offenses, such as the use of tribal slurs or inflammatory remarks, still has the potential to incite division and conflict.

The findings indicate that a concentrated group of individuals is driving much of the harmful rhetoric observed on radio during this critical election period. The significant influence these individuals have over public discourse, particularly when they engage in repeated and varied forms of indecent expression, poses a serious threat to Ghana's democratic stability. The persistent use of insulting, offensive, and inflammatory language by these individuals can heighten political tensions, deepen societal divisions, and foster an environment of hostility and mistrust. This is particularly concerning when such expressions include tribal slurs or calls for confrontation, as they can exacerbate existing social and political conflicts.

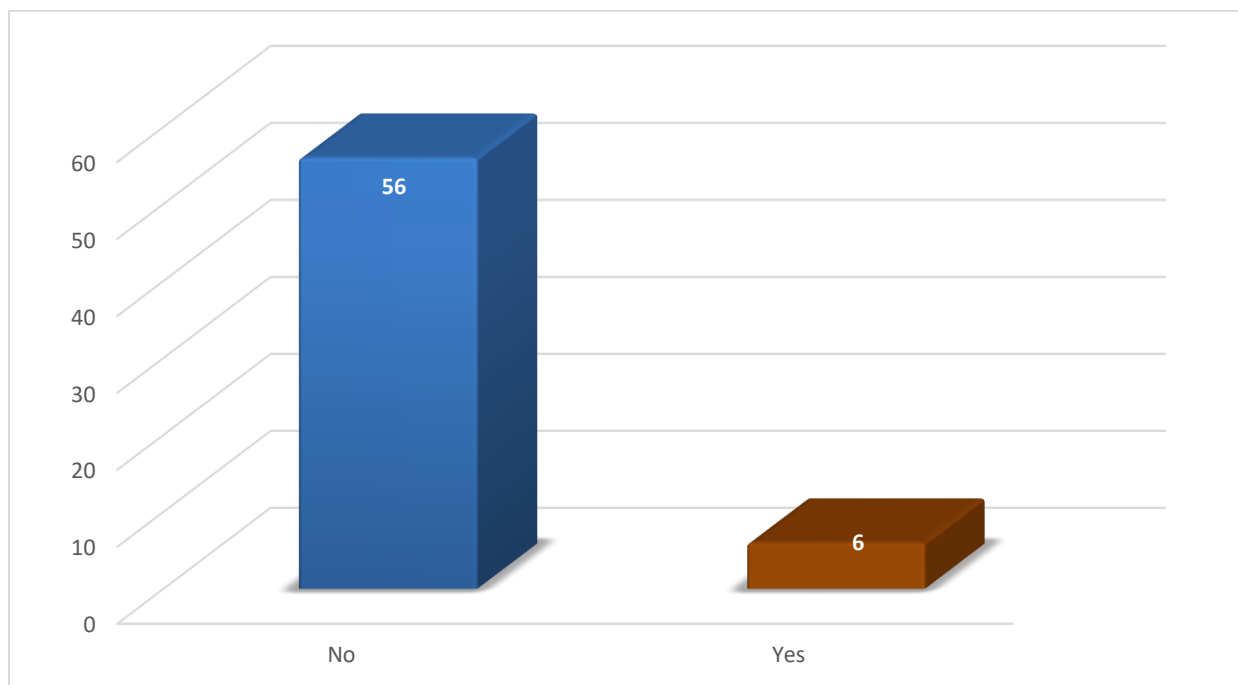
Table 5: Number and categories of expressions authored by culprit

Name of culprit	Insulting and offensive comments	Unsubstantiated allegations	Remarks calling for confrontation and violence	Expressions containing tribal slurs	Inflammatory remarks	Provocative remarks	Total
Kwabena Bobie Ansah	26	1	1	2	0	0	30
Oheneba Boamah Bennie	6	0	0	0	0	0	6
Listowel Nana Kusi Poku	3	1	0	0	0	0	4
Mugabe Maase	1	3	0	0	0	0	4
Bright	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Nicholas Omane Acheampong	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
Yaw Amofa Boakye	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
Hajia Fati Abubakar Zigra Badao	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Kwabena Frimpong	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Nana Otu Darko	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Prof. John Osei Bobie	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Solomon Quaye	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Mutarla Mohammed	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Dokyi (A Caller from East Legon)	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Godwin Asare Bediako	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Kojo Twum Boafo	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Kofi Abusuapanyin	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Kwabena Adjei	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total	39	17	1	2	1	2	62

4.0 Assessment of Moderation of Programmes by Hosts

As part of the language monitoring project, moderators or hosts are assessed to find out how they conduct themselves on their respective programmes and also, how they handle their programmes to ensure that hate speech and other indecent expressions are not used on their platforms. Findings from the period under review (July 1-31, 2024) highlights a concerning attitude among radio show hosts towards the use of indecent expressions on air.

Figure 3: Attempts by show moderators to correct the use of indecent language on air



The overwhelming majority of moderators (90%) allowed these violations to occur without any intervention (Figure 3), suggesting a lack of responsibility or unwillingness to maintain the decorum expected in public discourse. This finding is not particularly surprising because an analysis of the status of the culprits indicates that a significant majority of the indecent expressions, accounting for 73% (45 out of 62), were made by the hosts of the radio programs. In particular, Kwabena Bobie Ansah, host of *The Citizen Show* on Accra-based Accra FM, singularly recorded almost half (30) of the 62 violations recorded. Others are two programme host of Accra-based Accra FM: Oheneba Boamah Bennie (6), host of the *The Battle Ground* show, and Mugabe Maase, host of *Inside Politics* show,

Regrettably, those in positions of authority and responsibility within the program are the primary contributors to the spread of harmful language on air. Hosts and hostesses typically guide discussions and set the tone for the show, making their involvement in indecent expressions particularly concerning. Their role is meant to ensure that the discourse remains professional and respectful, yet the data shows that they are the most frequent violators of these standards. The remaining 27% (17 out of 62) of indecent language incidents were attributed to discussants—guests or participants invited to share their views on various topics as studio guest or via virtual means (phone ins and text or voice messages). While these individuals have less control over the program compared to the hosts, their contributions to the spread of indecent language are still significant. Discussants may feel emboldened to use offensive language, particularly if the program's host is also engaging in or condoning such behaviour.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

This report presents the findings from a radio language monitoring exercise conducted from July 1 to July 31, 2024, across ten selected radio stations in Ghana. The project was designed to systematically track and assess the use of language by politicians and other actors on radio programs, including news bulletins, political discussions, and current affairs segments. The monitoring focused not only on the expressions used but also on the role of presenters or hosts in managing their programs, particularly in relation to their tolerance or discouragement of hate speech and other forms of indecent language.

The analysis revealed a concerning pattern of indecent expressions, with 62 violations recorded during the monitoring period. The most prevalent forms of indecent language were insulting and offensive comments, primarily made during discussions on sensitive topics such as elections, corruption, and development projects. Accra FM and Power FM were particularly noted for their high incidence of violations. Moreover, the amplification of these expressions on social media platforms like Facebook and YouTube further increased their reach and potential impact.

The data also highlighted a significant issue within the radio broadcasting environment: the role of hosts and presenters in perpetuating indecent language. A substantial portion of the violations was attributed to hosts themselves, indicating a lack of moderation and accountability. Notably,

Nana Bobie Ansah, host of The Citizen Show on Accra FM, was identified as the most frequent offender, responsible for 30 out of the 62 recorded indecent expressions.

In consideration of the above findings, the MFWA makes the following recommendations:

1. Political party leaders should urge their representatives, affiliates, and communicators to prioritize issue-based discussions and avoid using indecent language.
2. Radio stations, particularly presenters and moderators, should maintain professionalism by refraining from indecent expressions and ensuring that their guests adhere to respectful, fact-based expressions.
3. Program moderators should establish and enforce clear ground rules for their shows to maintain decorum.
4. The National Media Commission (NMC), the Ghana Independent Broadcasters Association (GIBA), and the Ghana Journalists Association (GJA) need to enhance regulatory and self-regulatory mechanisms to enhance media professionalism.

Appendix: Reference to Indecent Expressions Recorded in July 2024

Name of Culprit	Designation	Date	Radio Station	Radio Programme	Type of Violation	Frequency
Bright	Discussant	17-Jul-24	Oman Fm	Islamic Hour in politics	Unsubstantiated allegations	2
Dokyi	Discussant	05-Jul-24	Radio Gold	Gold Morning Conversation	Unsubstantiated allegations	1
Godwin Asare Bediako	Discussant	24-Jul-24	Wontumi Radio	Talk Ghana	Insulting and offensive comments	1
Hajia Fati Abubakar Zigra Badao	Discussant	30-Jul-24	Power Fm	Dwaboase	Unsubstantiated allegations	1
Hon. Kojo Twum Boafo	Discussant	23-Jul-24	Power Fm	Inside Politics	Unsubstantiated allegations	1
Kofi Abusuapanyin	Discussant	24-Jul-24	Power Fm	Inside Politics	Unsubstantiated allegations	1
Kwabena Adjei	Discussant	17-Jul-24	Oman Fm	National Agenda	Provocative remarks	1
Kwabena Bobie Ansah	Host	01-Jul-24	Accra Fm	The citizen show	Expressions containing tribal slurs	2
Kwabena Bobie Ansah	Host	04-Jul-24	Accra Fm	Citizen Show	Unsubstantiated allegations	1
Kwabena Bobie Ansah	Host	04-Jul-24	Accra Fm	Citizen Show	Insulting and offensive comments	6
Kwabena Bobie Ansah	Host	08-Jul-24	Accra Fm	The citizen show	Insulting and offensive comments	2
Kwabena Bobie Ansah	Host	09-Jul-24	Accra Fm	The citizen show	Insulting and offensive comments	4
Kwabena Bobie Ansah	Host	10-Jul-24	Accra Fm	The citizen show	Insulting and offensive comments	6
Kwabena Bobie Ansah	Host	10-Jul-24	Accra Fm	The citizen show	Remarks calling for confrontation and violence	1
Kwabena Bobie Ansah	Host	22-Jul-24	Accra Fm	The citizen show	Insulting and offensive comments	4
Kwabena Bobie Ansah	Host	17-Jul-24	Accra Fm	The citizen show	Insulting and offensive comments	4
Kwabena Frimpong	Host	15-Jul-24	Oman Fm	National Agenda	Unsubstantiated allegations	1
Kwesi	Discussant	17-Jul-24	Wontumi Radio	Talk Ghana	Unsubstantiated allegations	1
Listowel Nana Kusi Poku	Discussant	08-Jul-24	Power Fm	Inside Politics	Unsubstantiated allegations	1
Listowel Nana Kusi Poku	Discussant	09-Jul-24	Accra Fm	The citizen show	Insulting and offensive comments	1

Name of Culprit	Designation	Date	Radio Station	Radio Programme	Type of Violation	Frequency
Listowel Nana Kusi Poku	Host	22-Jul-24	Accra Fm	The citizen Show	Insulting and offensive comments	1
Listowel Nana Kusi Poku	Discussant	16-Jul-24	Power Fm	Inside Politics	Unsubstantiated allegations	1
Mugabe Maase	Host	08-Jul-24	Power Fm	Inside Politics	Unsubstantiated allegations	3
Mugabe Maase	Host	12-Jul-24	Power Fm	Inside Politics	Insulting and offensive comments	1
Mutarla Mohammed	Discussant	20-Jul-24	Akpini	Alhaji and Alhaji	Unsubstantiated allegations	1
Nana Otu Darko	Host	03-Jul-24	Accra Fm	The citizen show	Insulting and offensive comments	1
Nicholas Omane Acheampong	Discussant	02-Jul-24	Oman Fm	National Agenda	Unsubstantiated allegations	1
Nicholas Omane Acheampong	Discussant	31-Jul-24	Oman Fm	National Agenda	Provocative remarks	1
Oheneba Boamah Bennie	Host	01-Jul-24	Power Fm	Battle Grounds	Insulting and offensive comments	3
Oheneba Boamah Bennie	Host	08-Jul-24	Power Fm	Battle Ground	Insulting and offensive comments	1
Oheneba Boamah Bennie	Host	24-Jul-24	Power Fm	Battle Grounds	Insulting and offensive comments	1
Oheneba Boamah Bennie	Host	31-Jul-24	Power Fm	Battle Grounds	Insulting and offensive comments	1
Prof. John Osei Bobie	Discussant	19-Jul-24	Ashh Fm	Key Note	Unsubstantiated allegations	1
Solomon Quaye	Discussant	15-Jul-24	Oman Fm	National Agenda	Unsubstantiated allegations	1
Yaw Amofa Boakye	Host	04-Jul-24	Oman Fm	National Agenda	Inflammatory remarks	1
Yaw Anokey Frimpong	Discussant	11-Jul-24	Radio Gold	Pampaso	Insulting and offensive comments	1



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