

Niger Delta Weekly: Spotlighting the Resurgence of Kidnapping for Ransom in Rivers State

May 21-27, 2023

Description

This weekly update spotlights criminal violence in the Niger Delta with a focus on kidnap for ransom in Rivers State. According to data (see map below), over 90 kidnapping incidents and more than 50 related fatalities were reported in Rivers State between January 2021 and March 2023. Recent data indicates a rise in kidnappings in the State. In March 2023, for instance, a woman and her daughter were reportedly kidnapped by gunmen along Garrison Road in Port Harcourt LGA. In April, a gang of cultists who doubles as kidnapers reportedly killed three residents and abducted two others in Ubeta community, Ahoada West LGA. Separately, gunmen reportedly abducted a former president of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) and killed two of his aides along the East-West Road in Obio/Akpor LGA. Also, in April, three persons including a female Federal Commissioner were allegedly abducted at Ogbakiri Junction along the East-West Road in Emohua LGA. Recently, on May 16, 2023, about 12 members of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) were reportedly abducted along the East-West Road in Rumuji town, Emohua LGA.

Why it Matters

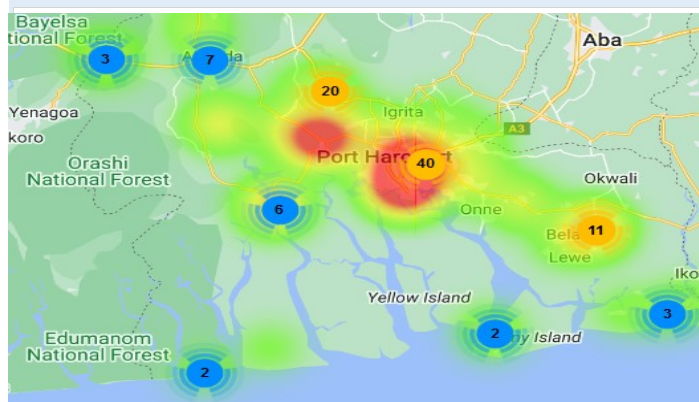
The resurgence of kidnapping for ransom has negatively impacted the dynamics of conflict and insecurity in the State. The current trend and pattern of kidnapping is worrying, especially the targeted abduction of public officials, travelers and businesspersons. Incidents are increasingly becoming recurrent, intense and lethal. If not mitigated, the situation could escalate in ways that could cause social, economic and political disruptions and endanger human security in the State.

Social: The rising prevalence and intensity of kidnapping for ransom could create a general feeling of anxiety and insecurity that could force residents to adopt hostile countermeasures and self-help strategies including mob justice and vigilante violence. This could intensify insecurity and cause social tensions and communal instability which could negatively impact the health and social wellbeing of residents.

Economic: The prevalence of kidnapping for ransom could create a climate of fear and uncertainty that could disrupt economic activities. Kidnapping for ransom could impose enormous financial burdens on individuals, families, businesses and the government, including the cost of ransom and additional expenses on security. Payment of ransom could undermine the economic wellbeing of residents as it could cause economic hardship for individuals and families by draining household income and savings, and subverting legitimate businesses.

Political: The prevalence of kidnapping for ransom could cause public dissatisfaction with the efforts of government security forces to protect lives and properties. This could trigger violent protests and unrest which could present additional security challenges for the State.

Incidents Heat Map of Kidnapping for Ransom in Rivers State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows geographical concentration of reported incidents of kidnap for ransom in Rivers State from January 2021 - March 2023. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Prognosis

The recent resurgence of kidnapping for ransom is a serious conflict risk and security threat in Rivers State. The situation could worsen except preventive actions are taken by stakeholders. Peace actors should work with the State government and the relevant security agencies to intensify ongoing efforts to mitigate the situation. Stakeholders should work with community leaders and the relevant government agencies to identify and address the underlying socio-economic drivers of the current trend of kidnapping in the State.

Contact Us

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Report Incidents: IPDU Early Warning System

Please report any verified incident of conflict to the IPDU SMS early warning system: Text report to **080 9936 2222**

Incident Details: Kindly include the State, LGA, Town, Date, and brief incident description.



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