

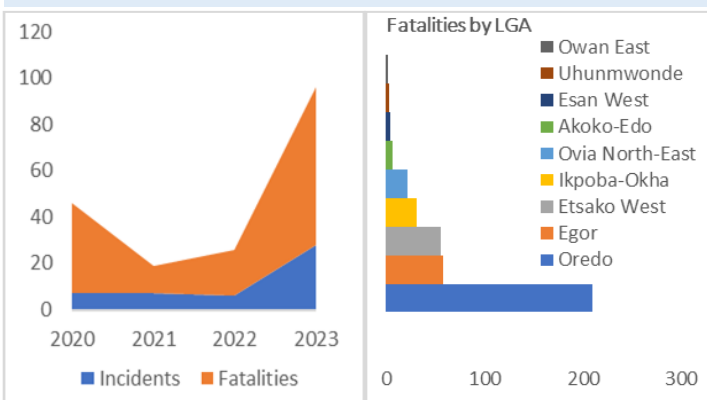
Niger Delta Weekly: Mitigating the Resurgence of Cult-related Gang Violence in Edo State

November 17-23, 2024

Background

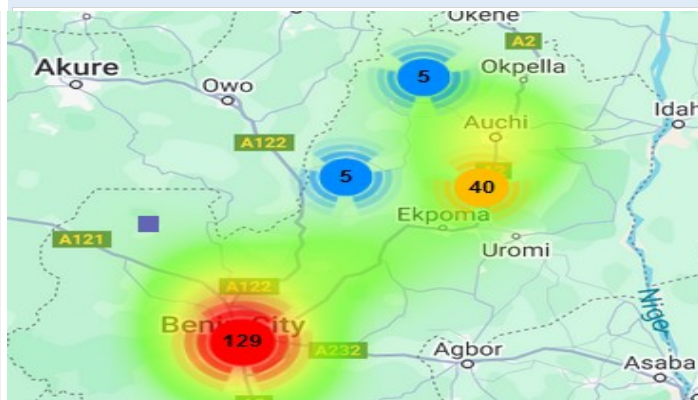
This weekly update spotlights organized criminal violence in the Niger Delta, focusing on cult-related gang violence in Edo State. Clashes between cult gangs have been a major driver of lethal violence and insecurity in the state, primarily fueled by supremacy battles among rival groups. According to data (see map below), gang violence resulted in over 200 fatalities in Edo State between January 2020 and September 2024. Recent incidents indicate a resurgence of violent clashes between cult gangs in the state. For instance, in October 2024, two rival gang members were allegedly killed during a clash in Okpella, Etsako East Local Government Area (LGA). That same month, about eight people were reportedly killed in a series of clashes between rival cult gangs at various locations in Upper Sakponba, Ikpoba Okha LGA. In November, a young man was allegedly shot dead by gunmen at Nomayo Bus Stop in Upper Sakponba, Ikpoba Okha LGA. Most recently, on November 11, 2024, gunmen suspected to be members of a rival cult gang reportedly killed a would-be groom near Esigie Police Station in Benin City, Oredo LGA.

Key Facts and Figures: Trends and Dynamics of Cult-related Gang Violence in Edo State



Data shows that Oredo LGA had the highest fatalities caused by cult-related gang violence in the state during the period. Sources: ACLED and Nigeria Watch data formatted on PIND's P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Fatalities Heat Map of Cult-related Gang Violence in Edo State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows the geographical concentration of fatalities caused by gang violence in Edo State from January 2020 - September 2024. Sources: All data sources formatted on PIND's P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Why it Matters

The resurgence of gang violence could trigger cycles of reprisal attacks, including targeted killings of residents. This escalation could result in prolonged battles for supremacy and territorial dominance among numerous cult gangs. The violence may also intersect with organized crime and intensify communal tensions, potentially leading to widespread hooliganism, social disorder, and a breakdown of law and order in the state. If not addressed, these developments could disrupt socio-economic and political stability in the state.

Anticipated Trends and Dynamics

Based on recent trends and historical data, the current wave of gang violence risks further escalation. To counter this threat, civil society organizations (CSOs) should collaborate with government security agencies to strengthen anti-cultism initiatives. Additionally, peace and development actors must engage the State government and community leaders to tackle the root causes of gang violence. Coordinated and sustained efforts are vital to mitigating the ongoing violence and fostering lasting peace and stability in the State.

Contact Us

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Please report any verified incident of conflict to the IPDU SMS early warning system: Text report to **080 9936 2222/0912 233 4455**

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



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