

# Niger Delta Weekly: Spotlighting Kidnapping and Sea Robbery in Bayelsa State

March 14-20, 2021

## Description

This edition of the weekly update spotlights violent criminality in the Niger Delta with a focus on sea robbery and kidnapping for ransom in Bayelsa State. Recent incidents indicate a rise in incidents of sea robbery and kidnapping for ransom in the State. According to data (see map below), over 80 incidents of sea robbery and kidnapping were reported in the State between January 2019 and January 2021. Data shows that Kidnapping is becoming increasingly intense and geographically dispersed in the State, occurring both on land and in the waterways. In February 2021, for example, seven travelers including a traditional leader were reportedly abducted in two simultaneous attacks by gunmen suspected to be sea robbers along the Okpoma/Odioma and the Nembe/Brass waterways in Brass LGA. Separately, in February, a young girl was reportedly abducted by kidnapers in Biogbolo community, Yenagoa LGA. Recently, on February 26, 2021, a female civil servant was reportedly abducted by a gang of kidnapers who disguised as members of a government task force along Imgbi Road in Yenagoa, the state capital.

## Why it Matters

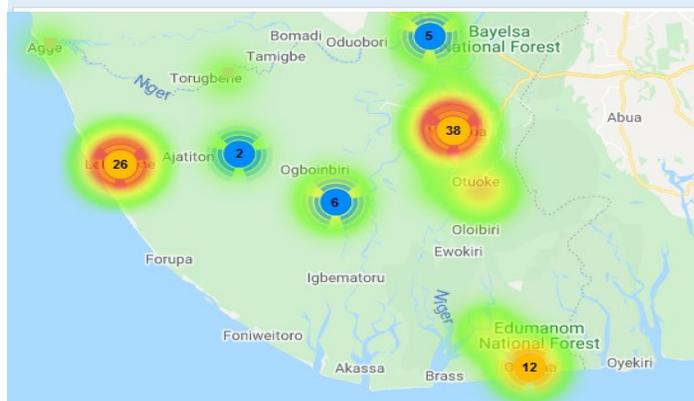
The emerging trend and pattern of sea robbery and kidnapping in Bayelsa State is worrying. Kidnapping for ransom is becoming increasingly frequent and intense both on land and in the waterways. The growing incidents of sea robbery and kidnapping have the potential to intensify in ways that could cause serious threat to human security with severe socio-economic and political consequences for the State.

**Social:** The impact of recurrent incidents of sea robbery and kidnapping could be socially disrupting. The threat of kidnapping and sea robbery could engender mistrust and a general feeling of insecurity. This could impel residents to adopt aggressive coping strategies and self-help measures including vigilantism and mob justice. This could cause social tensions and endanger communal stability in ways that could adversely affect the health and wellbeing of residents.

**Economic:** The prevalence of sea robbery and kidnapping could impose heavy financial burdens on individuals and businesses including the loss of goods or the cost of security or ransom. As a coastal state, sea robbery could impede the movement of goods and services and thus increase the cost of waterborne transportation. Recurrent sea robbery and kidnapping could also disrupt the local fishing economy and endanger the livelihoods of residents in coastal communities.

**Political:** The prevalence of sea robbery and kidnapping could cause public dissatisfaction with the efforts of government security agencies to protect lives and property. This could cause protests and unrest which could present additional security challenges for the State.

## Incidents Heat Map of Sea Robbery and Kidnapping in Bayelsa State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows concentration of reported incidents of kidnapping and sea robbery in Bayelsa State from January 2019 - January 2021. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map [www.p4p-nigerdelta.org](http://www.p4p-nigerdelta.org).

## Prognosis

Kidnapping and sea robbery are growing security threats in Bayelsa State. They are becoming increasingly intense and geographically dispersed. The situation could worsen unless preventive measures are taken by stakeholders. Peace actors should work with the state government and security agencies to intensify ongoing efforts to curtail kidnapping and sea robbery. Stakeholders should also ensure that the proposed South-South regional security outfit is structured to effectively deal with maritime crimes in the riverine areas.

## 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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