

# Niger Delta Weekly: Spotlighting the Rising Threat of Mob Violence in Delta State

April 03-09, 2022

## Description

This weekly update spotlights the growing threat of vigilantism and mob justice in the Niger Delta with a focus on mob violence in Delta State. According to data (see map below), vigilantism and mob violence caused more than 130 fatalities in Delta State between January 2018 and December 2021. Recent incidents indicate an upsurge in incidents of mob violence in the State, driven mainly by a rise in criminality including robbery, kidnapping and killings for ritual purposes. In January 2022, for example, a suspected ritual killer was reportedly set ablaze by a mob in Otovwodo community, Ughelli North LGA. In February, a middle-aged woman was reportedly beaten to death by mob over alleged witchcraft practices in Mbiri community, Ika North East LGA. In March, three male robbery suspects were reportedly burned to death by a mob in Ofuoma community, Ughelli North LGA. More recently, on March 27, 2022, a middle-aged male robbery suspect was reportedly beaten to death by a mob in Ughelli town, Ughelli North LGA. The suspect was reportedly lynched while trying to rob a Point of Sale (POS) outlet in the area.

## Why it Matters

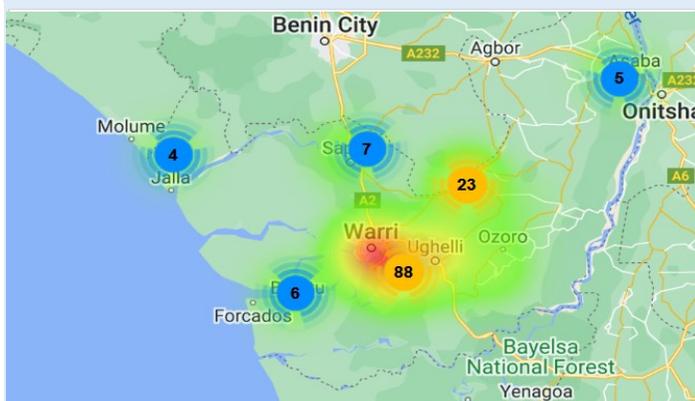
Mob violence is increasingly becoming a major threat to public security in the State, driven largely by public recourse to vigilante justice - the tendency by individuals or groups to take the law into their hands to dispense justice summarily without recourse to legal procedures - as a way of responding to criminality and other misconducts. Mob violence is a serious risk to the rule of law and public safety. Its prevalence could have weighty socio-economic and political implications.

**Social:** The prevalence of mob violence could encourage a culture of collective violence which could cause social disorder and encourage human rights violations. The dehumanizing nature of mob violence - lynching and burning of victims - devalues human life and dignity, and it could cause post-traumatic stress disorder among residents. Also, disciplinary mob violence could evolve into acts of criminal victimization and arbitrary killings. This could cause a breakdown of law and order in ways that could undermine human security in the State.

**Economic:** Recurrent incidents of mob lynching could create a climate of fear and insecurity that is detrimental to economic development. Lynch mob attacks could escalate into civil unrest which could result in looting, arson and vandalism. This could disrupt business activities and cause loss of livelihoods and economic opportunities

**Political:** Rising incidents of mob justice could undermine the criminal justice system in the State. It could create a domino effect whereby mob lynching and extra-judicial killings become the new normal in law enforcement and the criminal justice system. This could cause serious security, administrative and political challenges for the State.

## Fatalities Heat Map of Vigilantism and Mob Violence in Delta State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows concentration of fatalities caused by vigilantism and mob violence in Delta State from January 2018 - December 2021. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map [www.p4p-nigerdelta.org](http://www.p4p-nigerdelta.org)

## Prognosis

Mob violence is a prevailing threat to peace, security and communal stability in the state, driven mainly by public distrust in the judicial and penal system and perceived policing vacuum amidst rising criminality. Stakeholders should work with the State government to address the underlying drivers of mob justice. Stakeholders should also work with the relevant government agencies and media outfits to raise public awareness of the negative effects of mob lynching, and advocate for appropriate preventive and remedial measures.

## 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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