

# Niger Delta Weekly: De-escalating Separatist Agitation and Targeted Violence in Imo State

October 03-09, 2021

## Description

This edition of the weekly update spotlights violent agitation in the Niger Delta with a focus on violent separatist agitation in Imo State. According to data (see map below), separatist agitation and targeted violence caused over 220 fatalities in Imo State between January 2019 and June 2021. Latest incidents indicate an increase in targeted violence and criminal victimization as a result of a resurgence of violent separatist agitation in the State. A weekly 'sit-at-home' order issued by supporters of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) has resulted in the restriction of movement and intensify insecurity in the State. In August 2021, for instance, gunmen reportedly killed two persons and burned two commercial buses over non-compliance with the IPOB 'sit-at-home' order in Ngwogwu town, Aboh Mbaise LGA. Separately, in August, five residents were reportedly killed, 20 shops destroyed and 10 vehicles vandalized in a series of attacks by gunmen in Okporo town, Orlu LGA. Recently, on October 1, 2021, a bus driver was reportedly killed by gunmen who were enforcing the "sit-at-home" order in Nguru town, Aboh Mbaise LGA.

## Why it Matters

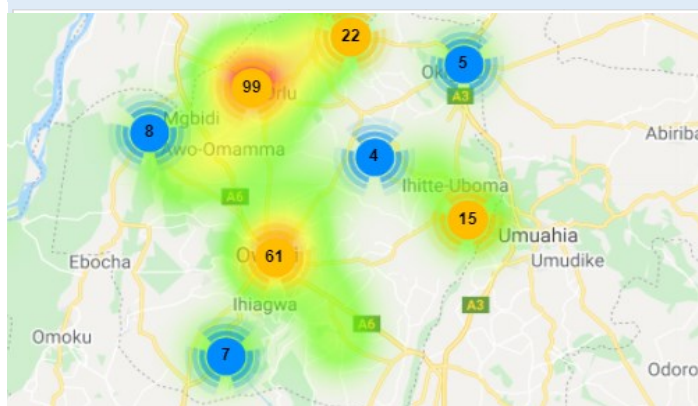
The growing wave of violent separatist agitation and targeted killings by unknown gunmen has the potential to intensify violent criminality and communal tensions in the State. If not appropriately de-escalated, the situation could degenerate and cause widespread hooliganism, breakdown of law and order, and consequently the deployment of repressive security strategies that could lead to human rights abuses. This could cause significant social disruption with far-reaching economic and political consequences at the State and regional levels.

**Social:** Violent separatist agitation and restriction of movement as a result of the weekly 'sit-at-home' order could lead to public unrest and lawlessness, and undermine communal stability and social well-being of residents. This could also exert pressure on law enforcement agencies to deploy repressive countermeasures that could cause arbitrary killings and criminal victimization including mob violence.

**Economic:** Violent agitation and targeted killings could create an insecure environment that is detrimental to economic development. Restriction of movement could disrupt business activities and cause loss of livelihoods and economic opportunities. Recurrent incidents of violence could also scare off investors, reduce government revenue from taxation, and undermine the economic wellbeing of residents.

**Political:** The growing wave of violent separatist agitation and targeted killings could weaken citizens' trust in the capacity of the government to protect lives and properties. This could undermine the authority of the government and cause civil disorder in the State.

## Fatalities Heat Map of Separatist Agitation and Targeted Violence in Imo State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows concentration of fatalities caused by homicidal and criminal violence in Imo State from January 2019 - June 2021. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map [www.p4p-nigerdelta.org](http://www.p4p-nigerdelta.org)

## Prognosis

The current wave of violent agitation and targeted killings has the potential to escalate in ways that could adversely impact the socio-political and security landscape in Imo State. Stakeholders should work with the State government and the relevant security agencies to deploy appropriate strategies to de-escalate the current wave of violent separatist agitation. Stakeholders should also collaborate with State government to identify and address the underlying drivers of the rising wave of killings by unknown gunmen in the State.

## Contact Us

**Inquiries:** Afeno Super Odomovo, Research Coordinator

**Telephone:** 08172401595

**Email:** [afeno@pindfoundation.org](mailto:afeno@pindfoundation.org)

## 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.



FOUNDATION FOR PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES IN THE NIGER DELTA



FOUNDATION FOR NIGER DELTA PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE