

Niger Delta Weekly: Mitigating the Spate of Kidnapping for ransom in Bayelsa State

September 05-11, 2021

Description

This edition of the weekly update spotlights organized crime in the Niger Delta with a focus on kidnapping for ransom in Bayelsa State. Recent data indicates an increase in incidents of kidnapping for ransom in Bayelsa State. According to data (see map below), more than 70 incidents of kidnapping were reported in the State between January 2018 and June 2021. Latest incidents show that kidnapping for ransom is increasingly becoming frequent and intense in the State. In July 2021, for example, the 86-year old mother of the Secretary to the Bayelsa State Government was reportedly abducted by kidnappers along Azikoro Road in Yenagoa, the state capital. The kidnappers demanded a ransom of 500 million naira. Separately, in July, a 34-year old banker and proprietor of a popular nightclub was reportedly abducted by kidnappers at a building construction site in Yenagoa, the state capital. The kidnappers demanded a 200 million naira ransom. Recently, on September 05, 2021, the 70-year old father of a local government chairman was reportedly kidnapped by gunmen at his residence in Kpansia community, Yenagoa LGA.

Why it Matters

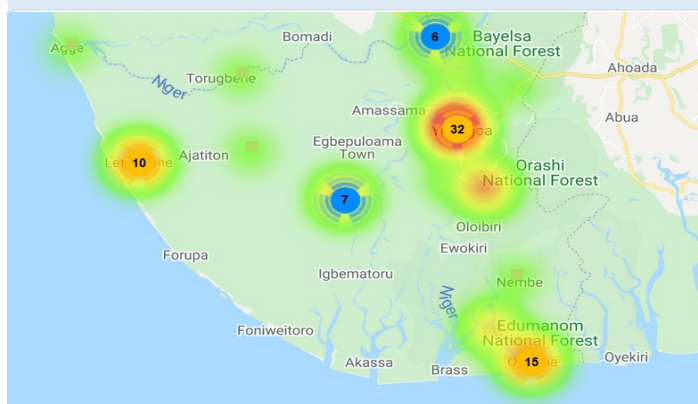
The emerging trends of kidnapping in Bayelsa State is alarming. Kidnapping for ransom is increasingly becoming frequent and concentrated in Yenagoa, the state capital, including the targeted abduction of family members of government officials. If not mitigated, the current wave of kidnapping could undermine human security in the State with far-reaching socio-economic and political repercussions.

Social: The prevalence of kidnapping for ransom could be socially upsetting, particularly in terms of the threat it poses to the lives of victims, the agony it causes family members and the general feeling of insecurity it causes in society. The risk of kidnapping could compel residents to adopt illegal coping mechanisms including vigilantism and mob justice. This could cause communal tensions and instability in ways that could endanger the health and wellbeing of residents.

Economic: Rising cases of kidnapping could create a hostile environment that is detrimental to economic development. Kidnapping for ransom could cause economic distortions that can destabilize legitimate businesses, scare off investors and reduce government's revenue from taxation. Payment of ransoms could also impose huge financial burdens on individuals and businesses. Ransoms could undercut household income and cause economic hardship for families.

Political: The emerging trends of kidnapping the family members of government officials for ransom could bring about a general feeling of insecurity among public officials and reduce their productivity. This could disrupt governance and cause political instability in the State.

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



Heat Map shows concentration of reported incidents of kidnapping for ransom in Bayelsa State from January 2018 - June 2021. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Prognosis

Kidnapping for ransom is a major threat to human security in Bayelsa State. The phenomenon is increasingly becoming intense and geographically concentrated in the state capital, especially the abduction of businesspersons and family members of government officials. The emerging trends of kidnapping have the potential to exacerbate insecurity in the State. Peace and security actors should collaborate with the State government to identify and address the underlying drivers of the current wave of kidnapping in the State.

Contact Us

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Incident Details: Kindly include the State, LGA, Town, Date, and Brief Incident Description.



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