

Niger Delta Weekly: Preventing the Resurgence of Sea Robbery and Kidnapping in Rivers State

July 25-31, 2021

Description

This edition of the weekly update spotlights violent criminality in the Niger Delta with a focus on sea robbery and kidnapping in Rivers State. There has been an increase in reported incidents of kidnapping and robbery at sea in Rivers State since 2018. According to data (see map below), over 100 incidents of sea robbery and kidnapping were reported in Rivers State between 2018 and 2020. Recent incidents indicate the resurgence of sea robbery and kidnapping in the State. In March 2021, for instance, 10 expatriate fishermen who were supposedly abducted by pirates in February, off the Atlantic coast in Gabon, were reportedly rescued by Nigerian security forces. In May, two persons were reportedly killed by sea robbers along the waterways in Ke community, Degema LGA. Separately, in May, sea robbers who disguised as security operatives reportedly attacked a passenger boat, killed two persons and injured five others at Angulu-Ama Creek in Asari-Toru LGA. More recently, on July 19, 2021, gunmen reportedly hijacked a passenger boat and abducted eight travelers along Kula-Abonnema waterways in Akuku-Toru LGA.

Why it Matters

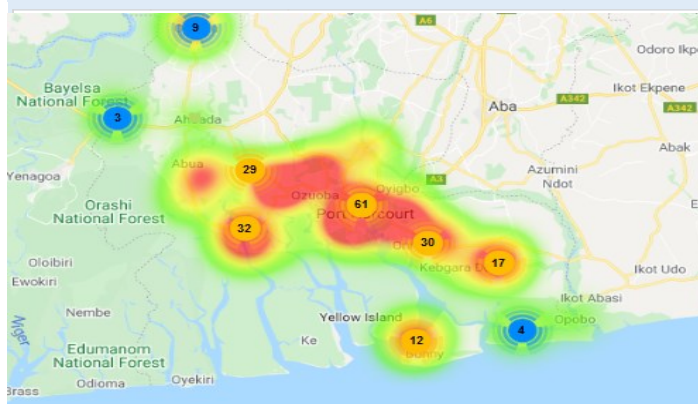
A resurgence of armed robbery and kidnapping at sea could endanger maritime safety and security in Rivers State. This could undermine maritime trade and waterborne transportation in the State. Rising incidents of armed robbery and kidnapping at sea could also exacerbate insecurity, especially considering that maritime insecurity affects security on land. This could cause significant socio-economic disruptions with far-reaching implications for political stability in the State.

Social: Rising cases of sea robbery and kidnapping could intensify other criminal activities including militancy, illegal oil bunkering, gang violence, as well as drugs and arms trafficking. This could exacerbate social tensions and insecurity in coastal communities. It could also cause occupational disruptions and endanger livelihoods in ways that can adversely affect the health and social wellbeing of residents.

Economic: The resurgence of sea robbery and kidnapping could cause serious economic disruptions. It could destabilize the local fishing economy and hinder the movement of persons, goods and services between riverine and upland communities. Recurrent incidents could also disrupt oil and gas production, and therefore reduce the State government's revenue from taxation and federal allocation.

Political: An increase in sea robbery and kidnapping could present additional security challenges in the State. Illicit profits from sea robbery and kidnapping could be used to fund organized criminal networks such as militant groups, oil bunkering syndicates and cult gangs which can cause instability and undermine the security of the State.

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



Heat Map shows concentration of reported incidents of sea robbery and Kidnapping in Rivers State from January 2018 - December 2020. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Prognosis

The current trend and pattern of sea robbery and kidnapping in Rivers State has the potential to escalate in ways that could change the security environment and bring uncertainty to socio-economic activities in the State. Peace and development actors should work with the State government and relevant security agencies to intensify ongoing efforts to curtail sea robbery, kidnapping and other piratical attacks. Security agencies should also utilize existing technology to optimize surveillance of the waterways 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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