

Niger Delta Weekly: Spotlighting the Prevalence of Criminal Insurgency in Imo State

September 04-10, 2022

Description

This weekly update spotlights organized criminality in the Niger Delta with a focus on criminal insurgency in Imo state. According to data (see map below), criminal insurgency - criminal subversion of state legitimacy - and counter-insurgent violence caused over 400 fatalities in Imo State between January 2019 and June 2022. Recent data indicates a rise in criminal insurgency in the State including targeted killing of civilians and government security personnel. In August 2022, for instance, hoodlums reportedly attacked a Divisional Police Headquarters with petrol bombs and other improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and killed four police officers in Agwa community, Oguta LGA. Separately, in August, gunmen reportedly attacked a market and killed a commercial motorcyclist in Ogbaku community, Mbaitoli LGA. Also, in August, gunmen allegedly killed seven local security guards at different locations in Orogwe community, Owerri West LGA. Recently, on August 25, 2022, gunmen reportedly went on rampage, shot sporadically and burned several properties including houses, shops, and vehicles in Izombe community, Oguta LGA.

Why it Matters

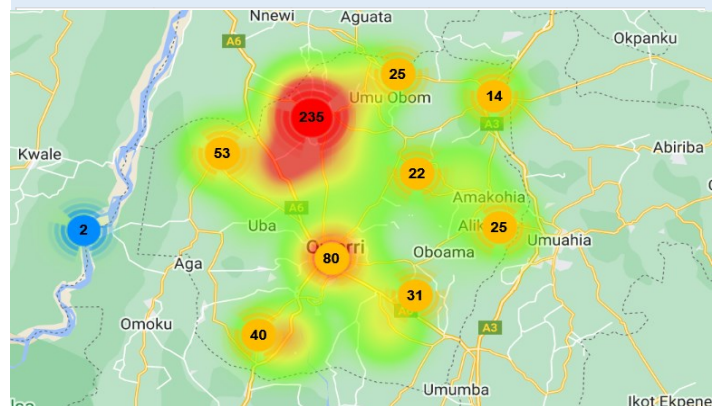
The growing prevalence of criminal insurgency could adversely affect the peace and conflict dynamics in the State, especially against the backdrop of upsurge in separatist agitation and vigilante violence in the State. If not appropriately mitigated, the situation could degenerate into widespread hooliganism, lawlessness, and the deployment of repressive security countermeasures. This could cause socio-political disruptions which could destabilize the local and regional economy.

Social: Criminal insurgency could have far-reaching devastating impact on the social wellbeing of residents. It could create wider feelings of insecurity that could undermine social capital by diminishing social relations and civic cooperation. This could embolden residents to adopt aggressive self-help measures including vigilante and mob violence, and the deployment of security strategies that could be viewed by residents as human rights violations. This could create tensions which could undermine the social wellbeing of residents.

Economic: Criminal insurgency including targeted killing of civilians and security personnel could create an environment of insecurity that could be hostile to economic development. It could bring about economic instability by causing loss of livelihoods, discouraging investment, undercutting government revenue from taxation, and consequently restricting residents' access to vital resources for survival.

Political: The prevalence of criminal insurgency could cause serious challenges for law enforcement, governance and politics in the State. It could force residents to adopt aggressive coping mechanisms and self-help strategies that could result in lawlessness and civil disorder.

Fatalities Heat Map of Criminal Insurgency in Imo State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows geographical concentration of fatalities caused by criminal insurgency in Imo state from January 2019 - June 2022. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Prognosis

The current wave of criminal insurgency has the potential to escalate in ways that could adversely impact the security situation in the State, especially within the context of the ongoing separatist agitation in the South-East region. Stakeholders should collaborate with the State government and the relevant security agencies to deploy appropriate security measures to de-escalate the situation. Peace actors should also work with reputable community leaders to address the underlying drivers of the current wave of violence.

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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