

# Niger Delta Weekly: **Spotlighting the Prevalence of Mob Violence in the Niger Delta**

July 23-29, 2023

## Description

This special edition of the weekly update spotlights the growing prevalence of vigilante justice and mob violence in the Niger Delta. According to data (see map below), vigilante and mob violence caused over 350 fatalities in the Niger Delta between January 2021 and May 2023. Recent incidents indicate the growing prevalence of vigilante violence and mob lynching in the region. In April 2023, for instance, a 22-year-old male robbery suspect was reportedly set ablaze by a mob in Atimbo community in Calabar Municipal LGA, Cross River State. In June, a middle-aged woman was reportedly burned to death by a mob over alleged witchcraft practices at Old Netim community in Akamkpa LGA, Cross River. In July, a mob reportedly burned a 32-year-old man to death for allegedly stealing a loaf of bread from a bakery in Tombia community in Yenagoa LGA, Bayelsa State. Separately, in July, a criminal suspect was allegedly set ablaze by a mob in Itam community in Itu LGA, Akwa Ibom State. More recently, on July 22, 2023, a robbery suspect was reportedly burned to death by a mob in Agbor community in Ika South LGA, Delta State.

## Why it Matters

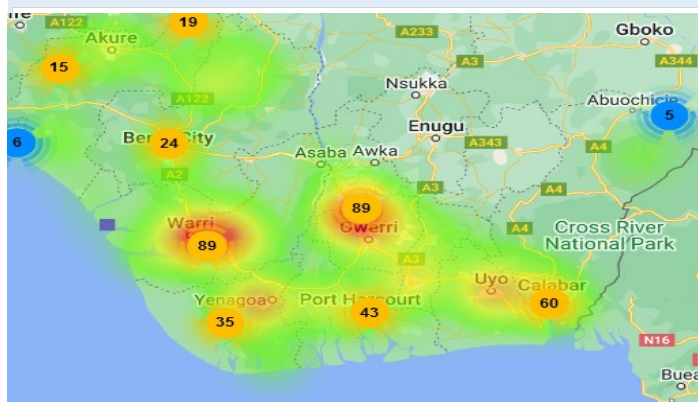
The growing prevalence of vigilante justice and mob violence is a serious threat to public safety and human security in the Niger Delta. The tendency of residents to summarily dispense justice without recourse to legal procedures is a dangerous threat to the rule of law. The situation has the potential to undermine law enforcement processes and the judicial and penal systems in ways that could cause severe socio-economic, political and security challenges in the region.

**Social:** Mob lynching could have serious psychosocial and health impacts on residents. The cruel and horrific nature of mob lynching - stripping and burning of victims - could bring about a lack of respect for human life and a relapse of moral standards in society. The horrid experience of mob lynching could cause post-traumatic stress disorder among residents. The prevalence of mob violence could cause lawlessness and human rights violations including arbitrary killings.

**Economic:** The prevalence of mob violence could create a climate of fear, lawlessness and insecurity that is detrimental to economic development. Incidents of mob violence could degenerate into protests, unrest and hooliganism which could result in arson, looting and vandalism. This could disrupt businesses, cause loss of livelihoods, and consequently undermine the economic wellbeing of residents.

**Political:** The prevalence of mob justice is a serious threat to law enforcement and the criminal justice system. The situation could create a domino effect where mob lynching becomes the new normal in law enforcement and criminal justice. This could cause security, administrative and political challenges for government in the region.

## Fatalities Heat Map of Mob Violence in the Niger Delta of Nigeria



Heat Map shows the geographical concentration of fatalities caused by mob violence in the Niger Delta from January 2021 - May 2023. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map [www.p4p-nigerdelta.org](http://www.p4p-nigerdelta.org)

## Prognosis

Mob violence is a prevalent threat to communal stability, public health and security in the Niger Delta, driven mainly by public distrust in the judicial and penal systems and a seemingly policing vacuum amidst rising criminality. The situation has the potential to escalate and adversely affect the security landscape, especially given the proliferation of vigilante groups in the region. Stakeholders should work with the state governments, security agencies and community leaders to devise strategies to mitigate the situation.

## 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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