

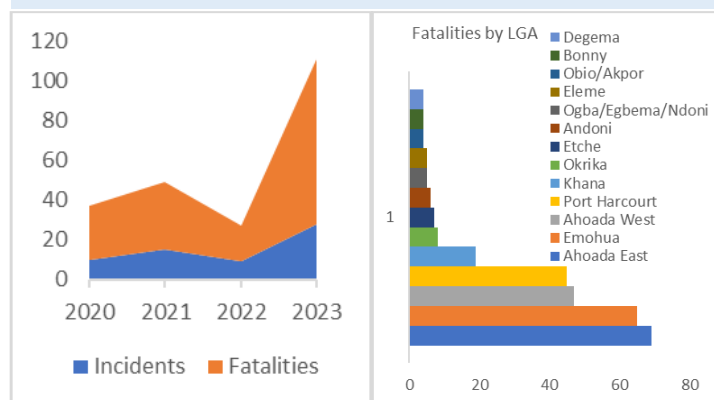
Niger Delta Weekly: Preventing a Resurgence of Cult Gang-Related Killings in Rivers State

October 20-26, 2024

Background

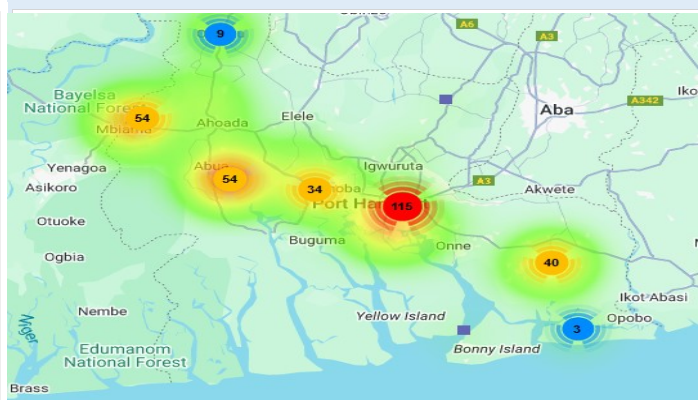
This week's update spotlights the ongoing issue of organized criminal violence in the Niger Delta, focusing on cult gang-related killings in Rivers State. The persistent struggle for supremacy and territorial control among rival cult gangs continues to be a significant driver of lethal violence and insecurity in the state. According to available data (see map below), cult gang-related violence resulted in over 310 fatalities in Rivers State between January 2021 and September 2024. The most recent incidents indicate a resurgence in cult-related violence and killings in the State. For instance, in July 2024, gunmen suspected to be members of a cult gang reportedly abducted a 47-year-old man from his boat and killed him in Bakana community, Degema Local Government Area (LGA). On October 20, 2024, gunmen believed to be members of the Iceland cult group allegedly invaded Edeoha community in Ahoada East LGA, killing four residents. Most recently, on October 21, 2024, suspected cult members continued their violent activities, reportedly killing two youths at Odiokwu Junction in Ula-Ehuda community, also in Ahoada East LGA.

Key Facts and Figures: Trends and Dynamics of Cult Gang Related Violence in Rivers State



Data shows that Ahoada East and Emohua LGAs had the highest fatalities caused by cult gang related violence during the period. Sources: ACLED and Nigeria Watch data formatted on P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Fatalities Heat Map of Cult and Gang Related Violence and Killings in Rivers State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows geographical concentration of fatalities caused by cult gang violence in Rivers State from January 2021 - September 2024. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Why it Matters

The ongoing spate of targeted killings by rival cult gangs has the potential to escalate and intensify lethal violence and insecurity in the state. This could trigger a cycle of reprisal violence and killings between rival cult gangs. If not deescalated, the situation may spiral into prolonged battles for supremacy and territorial control. Additionally, the current wave of violence and killings could intersect with criminality, political instability, and communal tensions, further complicating the dynamics of conflict and insecurity in the state.

Anticipated Trends and Dynamics

Based on recent trends and historical data, the current wave of cult gang violence could escalate, intersecting with criminal activity, political instability, and communal tensions. Stakeholders, including civil society organizations (CSOs), should work with government security agencies and local vigilantes to strengthen ongoing anti-cultism efforts. CSOs should partner with the State government and community leaders to establish peace clubs in schools, promoting peace education and discouraging youth from joining cult groups.

Contact Us

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Please report any verified incident of conflict to the IPDU SMS early warning system: Text report to **080 9936 2222/0912 233 4455**

Incident Details: Kindly include the State, LGA, Town, Date, and brief incident description.



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