

Niger Delta Weekly: Mitigating the Risk of Kidnapping in Delta State

November 22-28, 2020

Description

This weekly update highlights kidnapping in the Niger Delta with a focus on the growing risk of kidnapping for ransom in Delta State. Kidnapping for ransom has evolved into a prevalent security threat in the State. According to data (see map below), over 130 incidents of kidnapping were reported in Delta State between January 2016 and September 2020. Recent data shows an increase in the scope and frequency of kidnapping in the State. In September 2020, for instance, a 54-year old clergyman and three others were reportedly kidnapped by gunmen in Issele-Azagba community, Aniocha North LGA. In October, gunmen reportedly waylaid about 5 vehicles, including a commercial bus belonging to a popular transport company, and abducted over 15 passengers along the Ughelli-Warri section of the East-West Road in Uvwianmuge-Agbarho town, Ughelli North LGA. About 5 passengers were reportedly shot during the incident. Recently, on November 15, 2020, a 36-year old former Nigerian international footballer was reportedly ambushed and abducted by gunmen along Refinery Road in Ekpan community, Uvwie LGA.

Why it Matters

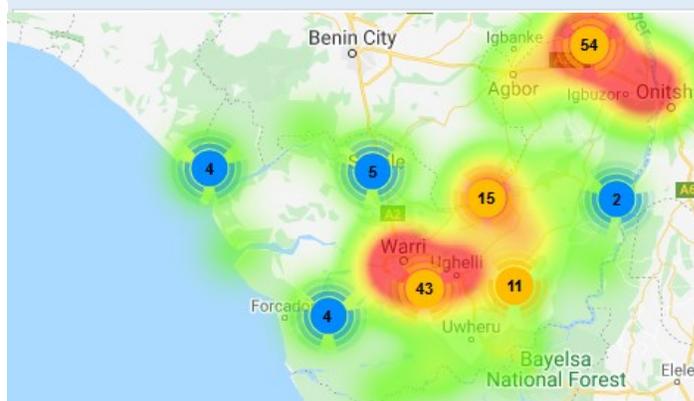
Kidnapping in Delta State is becoming increasingly recurrent and intense, including mass abduction of residents and commuters. It is one of the greatest security challenges currently faced by individuals, businesses and organizations in the State. If the growing risk of kidnapping is not mitigated it could cause serious socio-economic and political instability in the State, especially against the backdrop of civil unrest and hooliganism in the aftermath of the 'EndSARS' protests.

Social: Kidnapping and the fear it engenders could be socially devastating. The fear of being kidnapped could cause mistrust and a general feeling of insecurity among residents. Recurrent cases of kidnapping could also disrupt social activities and endanger communal stability. This could compel residents to adopt aggressive coping strategies and self-help measures including vigilantism and mob violence.

Economic: Recurrent incidents of kidnapping could create an environment of insecurity that could be hostile to economic development. Kidnapping could cause significant economic distortions, increase the cost of doing business, and scare away investors. Payment of ransoms could also impose heavy financial burdens on individuals and businesses, and cause serious economic hardship for families.

Political: Rising cases of kidnapping could present additional security challenges for the State and thus increase government spending on public security. It could also cause public dissatisfaction with government efforts to provide security for residents, especially against the backdrop of civil unrest in the wake of the 'EndSARS' protests.

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



Heat Map shows the geographical concentration of reported incidents of kidnapping in Delta State from January 2016 - September 2020. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org.

Prognosis

Kidnapping remains intense and recurrent in Delta State. Kidnapping for ransom could intensify, especially against the backdrop of the current economic situation and as the Christmas season approaches. Stakeholders should work with security agencies and the State government to intensify ongoing efforts to mitigate the risk of kidnapping in the State. Stakeholders should also ensure that the proposed Delta State's security outfit, 'Operation Delta Hawk', is structured to effectively deal with the threat of kidnapping.

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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