

Niger Delta Weekly: Highlighting the Prevalence of Mob Violence in the Niger Delta

July 03-09, 2022

Description

This weekly update highlights the growing prevalence of mob violence and vigilante related killings in the Niger Delta. According to data (see map below), mob lynching and vigilante related violence caused over 300 fatalities in the Niger Delta between January 2019 and March 2022. Recent data shows an upsurge in mob lynching and vigilante related killings throughout the region, driven mainly by rising cases of criminality including robbery, kidnapping for ransom and rituals, and a lack of citizen's trust in the law enforcement agencies and the penal system in the country. In April 2022, for instance, two robbery suspects were reportedly burned to death by a mob in Ikot Ansa community in Calabar, the Cross River state capital. In May, a teenage robbery suspect was reportedly killed by a mob in Auchi town in Etsako West LGA, Edo state. In June, a suspected member of a cult gang who doubles as a robber was reportedly killed by a mob in Uyo, the Akwa Ibom state capital. More recently, on July 03, 2022, three robbery suspects were reportedly killed by a mob in Abayi community in Isiala-Ngwa North LGA, Abia state.

Why it Matters

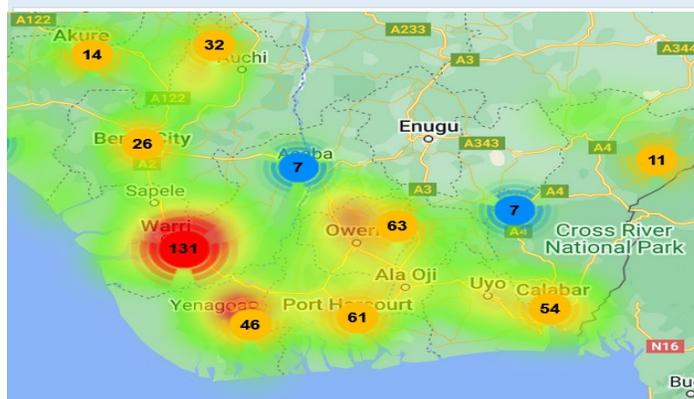
Mob violence is a major conflict risk and security issue in the Niger Delta. It is increasingly becoming prevalent, mainly driven by public distrust of the judicial and penal system, and a perceived policing vacuum amidst rising insecurity. The tendency of residents to summarily dispense justice without recourse to legal procedures is a serious threat to the rule of law and public safety. The prevailing situation could cause serious socio-economic and political disruptions.

Social: Mob violence could have serious psychosocial and health impacts on residents. Its horrific nature - stripping, lynching and burning of victims - could bring about a lack of respect for human life and a relapse of moral standards in society. The experience of mob lynching could cause post-traumatic stress disorder among residents. Mob justice could also evolve into spontaneous acts of human rights violations including criminal victimization and arbitrary killings.

Economic: The growing prevalence of mob violence could create an atmosphere of lawlessness and insecurity that is detrimental to economic development. Incidents of mob lynching could degenerate into public unrest and hooliganism which could result in looting and vandalism. This could disrupt businesses and other economic activities, and consequently undermine the economic wellbeing of residents.

Political: Mob justice is a threat to law enforcement and criminal justice system. It could create a domino effect whereby mob lynching becomes the dominant form of law enforcement. This could cause serious administrative, security and political challenges 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 2019 - March 2022. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Prognosis

The prevalence of mob violence is a serious threat to public health, security and communal stability in the Niger Delta. The current wave of mob lynching has the potential to escalate and adversely impact the regional 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 address the underlying drivers, and devise appropriate punitive and remedial strategies to mitigate mob violence in the region.

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**

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



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