

Niger Delta Weekly: Mitigating Targeted Attacks on Election Facilities in Imo State

December 04-10, 2022

Description

This weekly update spotlights vandalism of electoral facilities in the Niger Delta of Nigeria with a focus on targeted attacks on offices of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in Imo State. According to data (see map below), more than 30 facilities of the electoral commission were reportedly attacked and vandalized in the Niger Delta between January 2019 and October 2022. Recent incidents indicate a resurgence of targeted attacks on INEC offices and facilities in Imo State. In April 2022, for instance, separatist militias reportedly attacked a voter registration center and killed a staff of the electoral commission in Amakohia community, Ihitte Uboma LGA. In December, the office of the electoral commission was reportedly vandalized and set ablaze by hoodlums in Orlu LGA. More recently, on December 04, 2022, hoodlums reportedly attacked another office of the electoral commission in Oru West LGA. The hoodlums allegedly destroyed several office furniture and fittings during the incident. Since January, more than seven facilities of the electoral commission have reportedly been attacked across Nigeria.

Why it Matters

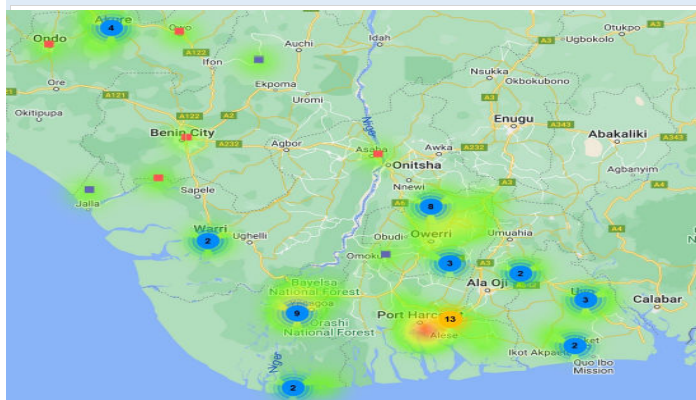
The recent wave of targeted attack and vandalism of offices and other critical facilities of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has the potential to escalate in ways that could cause voter apathy and undermine the capacity of the electoral commission to organize free and fair elections in the affected areas, and eventually undermine the credibility of the upcoming 2023 general elections in the region. This could cause political instability with serious social and economic consequences at the state, regional and national levels.

Social: The current spate of vandalism and arson targeting election facilities could have far-reaching adverse impact on human security. The situation could evolve into indiscriminate destruction of public infrastructure and targeted killing of public officials, voters and political aspirants. This could trigger widespread civil unrest and a break down of law and order which could bring about serious psychosocial, security, and health consequences for communities and residents.

Economic: Vandalism of election facilities could impose huge financial burden on the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and the government at the local, state and national levels. Recurrent attacks on election facilities and other public infrastructure could also create anxiety and insecurity which could disrupt commercial activities and impose huge economic costs on individuals and businesses.

Political: Targeted attacks on election facilities could threaten electoral activities including voter registration and preparations for upcoming elections. It could also weaken citizens' trust in the electoral system, increase voter apathy and undermine the electoral process.

Incidents Heat Map of Attacks on Election Facilities in the Niger Delta of Nigeria



Heat Map shows concentration of reported incidents of attacks on election facilities in the Niger Delta from January 2019—October 2022. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Prognosis

The current wave of attacks on election facilities and infrastructure in Imo and other states in the South-East region has the potential to intensify and spread to neighbouring states in the Niger Delta. Peace actors should work with INEC, the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES), and the national and state governments to devise appropriate strategies to mitigate the current wave of attacks on election facilities and enhance the safety and security of election materials and infrastructure in the region.

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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