

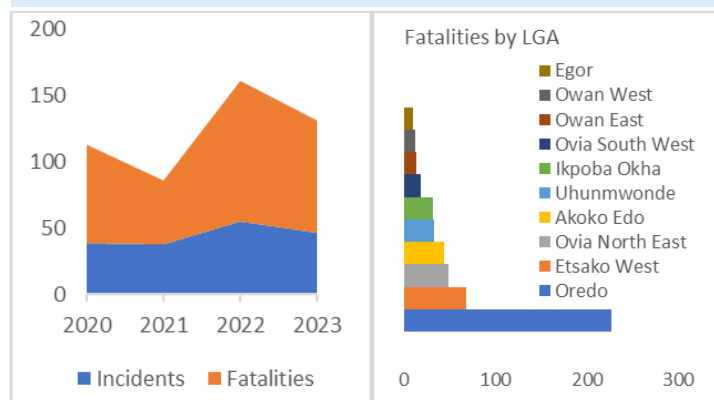
Niger Delta Weekly: De-escalating Political Tensions and Criminal Violence in Edo State

July 21-27, 2024

Background

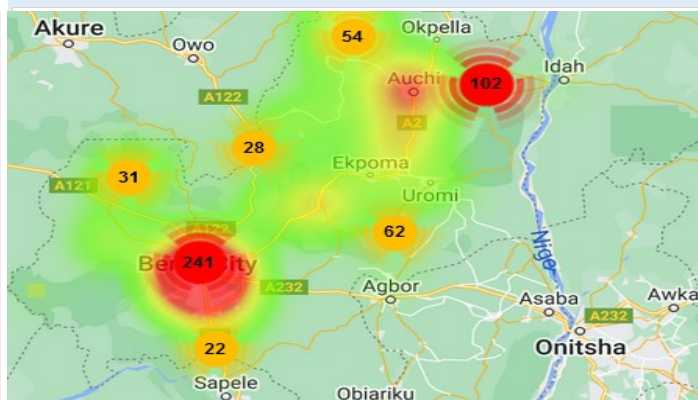
This weekly update spotlights organized criminality in the Niger Delta with a focus on rising political tensions and criminal violence in Edo State. Historically, elections in Edo State are high stake affairs, highly competitive and often characterized by lethal violence. According to data (see map below), political and criminal violence, including clashes between cult gangs, caused over 300 fatalities in Edo State between January 2020 and May 2024. In the lead-up to the forthcoming September 2024 governorship election, political tension has intensified with several reported incidents of violence in the State. In April 2024, for instance, the governorship candidate of a political party was allegedly attacked by hoodlums during a meeting at a University in Benin City, the state capital. In May, a student was reportedly injured during a clash between supporters of two political parties at a voter registration center in Benin City. More recently, on July 18, 2024, a police inspector attached to the governorship candidate of a political party was reportedly killed during a clash between supporters of rival political parties in Benin City, the state capital.

Key Facts and Figures: Trends and Dynamics of Political and Criminal Violence in Edo State



Data shows that Oredo LGA had the highest number of fatalities caused by political violence and organized criminality. Sources: Nigeria Watch and ACLED data formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Fatalities Heat Map of Organized Criminality and Political Violence in Edo State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows the concentration of fatalities caused by political violence and criminality in Edo State from January 2020 - May 2024. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Why it Matters

The level of violence that characterizes ongoing election campaigns underscores an urgent need for measures to mitigate the situation ahead of the forthcoming September 2024 governorship election. If not appropriately de-escalated, the situation could trigger a series of criminal violence and politically motivated killings that could negatively impact the dynamics of conflict and insecurity. This could also cause significant socio-economic and political disruptions that could undermine the legitimacy of the electoral process in the State.

Anticipated Trends and Dynamics

The current political situation in Edo State is highly charged with the potential to escalate in ways that could intensify lethal violence before and during the September 2024 governorship election and beyond. Stakeholders should continue to advocate for non-violent electioneering process through popular media outfits and forums. Stakeholders should also create relevant infrastructure for peace messaging, grassroots peace advocacy, and facilitation of peace pacts between key actors to defuse political tensions in the State.

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 2222/0912 233 4455**

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



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