

Niger Delta Weekly: Preventing a Resurgence of Ritual Killings in Delta State

October 04-10, 2020

Description

This weekly update spotlights ritualistic crimes in the Niger Delta with a focus on ritual-related killings in Delta State. According to data (see map below), over 55 incidents of ritual-related killings were reported in Delta State between January 2016 and July 2020. Recent data shows a rise in ritual killings in the State, driven, anecdotally, by the emergence of a new generation of cyber criminals (Yahoo-Boys) who use human body parts for occult rituals to achieve success in their internet scams. In March 2020, for instance, 7-year old twin boys were reportedly killed by an 18-year old man who removed their body parts for money-making ritual in Oko-Ogbele community, Oshimili South LGA. In July, a woman was reportedly murdered for rituals in Ibusa community, Oshimili North LGA. Her womb was reportedly removed. In August, a 67-year old man was reportedly killed for ritual purposes by a traditional healer in Orhoakpor community, Ethiope East LGA. Recently, on September 27, 2020, a young girl was reportedly killed for ritual purposes in Obiaruku community, Ukwuani LGA. Some of her body parts were reportedly removed.

Why it Matters

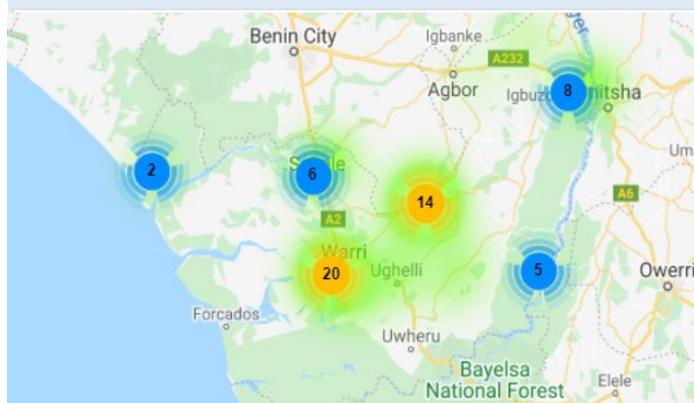
Ritual killing of humans - mostly committed to harvest blood and body parts for ritualistic purposes - is a serious threat to human rights and human security. The prevalence of ritual killings in Delta State could threaten communal peace and intensify human insecurity with worrying socio-economic and political consequences for the State.

Social: Ritual killings could have serious psychosocial ramifications for residents. Because of its horrific nature, ritual killings could bring about post-traumatic stress disorder among residents. The traumatic memories of ritual killings could cause panic and a general sense of insecurity among residents. This could jeopardize communal wellbeing. The prevalence of ritual killings could also cause lack of respect for human life and relapse of ethical and moral standards in society.

Economic: Growing incidents of ritual killings could cause insecurity which could inhibit economic activities such as farming in rural communities. This could bring about food insecurity and loss of livelihoods. Ritual killings could also result in the emergence of a thriving 'Black Market' for human body parts. As a result of its covert nature, dealings in human body parts could distort the local economy by diverting human and financial resources from legitimate businesses.

Political: Ritual killing is a gross violation of human rights and a serious threat to human security. Ritual killings could evoke the failure of governance and stereotypical perception of residents as barbaric. The prevalence of ritual-related killings could therefore present additional human security and development challenges for the State.

Fatalities Heat Map of Ritual-Related Killings in Delta State, Nigeria



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

Prognosis

Ritual killing is a major threat to peace and security in Delta State, driven mainly by the quest for wealth and spiritual powers embedded in superstitious beliefs. Stakeholders should develop relevant policies to mitigate the situation, including punitive measures to prevent ritualists from asking clients for human body parts. Stakeholders should also engage with the relevant government agencies and media outfit to sensitize the public about the implications of ritual killings and promote values that discourage ritualistic crimes.

Contact Us

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Incident Details: Kindly include the State, LGA, Town, Date, and Brief Incident Description.



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