

Niger Delta Weekly: Highlighting the Resurgence of Piracy and Sea Robbery in Rivers State

March 07-13, 2021

Description

This edition of the weekly update highlights maritime crimes in the Niger Delta with a focus on piracy and sea robbery in Rivers State. According to data (see map below), piracy and sea robbery reportedly caused over 50 fatalities in Rivers State between 2016 and 2020. Recent data indicates a resurgence of piracy, robbery and kidnapping at sea in the State. In January, 2021, for instance, sea robbers reportedly attacked two boats, killed two passengers and forced others to jump into the sea along Aru-Gbanaama and Polokiri communities in Bonny LGA. In February, pirates reportedly hijacked a passenger boat and kidnapped 12 persons including the boat skipper along the Bonny-Bille waterways in Bonny LGA. In a recent incident, on March 06, 2021, 10 expatriate fishermen who were reportedly abducted by pirates off the Atlantic coast in Gabon were rescued by Nigerian security forces in Rivers State. The expatriates were reportedly abducted in February and released in March after a ransom was allegedly paid. The rising threat of piracy and maritime crime recently triggered a series of protests by some residents of the State.

Why it Matters

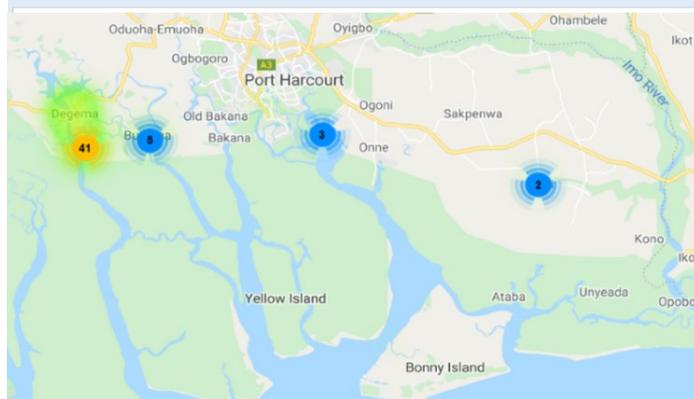
An escalation of piracy and sea robbery could undermine maritime safety and intensify insecurity in the State, especially considering that maritime insecurity affects security on land. This could disrupt maritime trade and water transportation with far-reaching socio-economic and political implications for the State and the Niger Delta.

Social: The growing intensity of piracy and sea robbery could be socially disrupting. It could reinforce other organized criminal activities including militancy, illegal oil bunkering as well as drugs and arms trafficking. This could cause social tensions and intensify insecurity in coastal communities. The prevalence of piracy and sea robbery could also endanger livelihoods and cause occupational disruptions in ways that could adversely impact the health and wellbeing of residents.

Economic: Maritime insecurity could destabilize the local economy. As a coastal state, sea robbery could hinder the transportation of persons, goods and services between upland and riverine communities. This could increase the cost of waterborne transport, disrupt artisanal fishing and endanger the livelihoods of coastal communities. Piratical attacks could also disrupt oil and gas production and reduce the State government revenue from taxation and federal allocations.

Political: The continuing prevalence of piracy and sea robbery could weaken state-society relations by eroding citizens' trust in the capacity of government security agencies to protect lives and property. This could trigger a spiral of violent protests and civil unrest which could fuel political instability and destabilize the State government.

Fatalities Heat Map of Piracy and Sea Robbery in Rivers State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows concentration of reported fatalities caused by sea robbery and piracy in Rivers State from January 2016 - December 2020. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org.

Prognosis

Piracy is increasingly becoming dynamic, crosscutting and prevalent in Rivers State. It overlaps with militancy, oil bunkering, kidnapping, arms trafficking, armed robbery, gang violence and communal tensions. Peace actors should collaborate with the state government and security agencies to intensify ongoing efforts to mitigate maritime crimes in the State. Stakeholders should also develop a more inclusive counter-piracy strategy with a stronger inter-agency security coordination to reduce piratical attacks in the waterways.

Contact Us

Inquiries: Afeno Super Odomovo, Research Coordinator

Telephone: 08172401595

Email: afeno@pindfoundation.org

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.



FOUNDATION FOR PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES IN THE NIGER DELTA



FOUNDATION FOR NIGER DELTA PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE