

Coping with insecurity: An analysis of the phenomenon of kidnapping and hostage taking in Benin city, Edo state Nigeria

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The phenomenon of kidnapping has taken an alarming dimension in Nigeria, such that it has become a big business. Kidnapping, known only in the Niger Delta, is now a daily occurrence in other part of the country. Also, the spread of kidnapping to other parts of the country is believed to be the fallout of the military confrontation between the militants and the Federal Government. The militants, who were dislodged from their Niger Delta bases, were forced to relocate to other areas where they have continued their trade of kidnapping as a means of survival. Human hostage taking and kidnapping in Edo/Delta state of Nigeria has gone beyond Niger delta youths trying to make their voice heard and force the Federal government to treat them as they truly deserve, by giving their community a fair share of the economy's return as their land produce most of the country's natural resources. Kidnapping is now a major national security challenge in Nigeria. For an already crestfallen nation, the added burden of insecurity created by ongoing kidnappings transcend subliminal trauma. For most Nigerians, the fear of being a kidnap victim is real and palpable. This paper examines the factors responsible for hostage taking and kidnapping, including mechanisms/strategies adopted by the hostage takers and kidnapers. The profile and general characteristics of victims of hostage takers are also identified. Recommendations on how to curb the incidence of kidnapping in Benin City, Nigeria are accordingly advanced. Two theories are used namely: Relative deprivation and frustration/aggression theory.

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