

Bayelsa by-election: Five policemen feared dead in boat mishap

By Julius Osahon,
Yenagoa

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No fewer than five yet-to-be-identified personnel of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) reportedly drowned in a boat mishap on their way to Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of Bayelsa State for the rescheduled Senatorial by-election, which took place, yesterday, in two senatorial districts.

The Guardian gathered that the drowned policemen, whose bodies are yet to be recovered, were said to be on their way to the place of assignment, when the boat capsized.

The Bayelsa State Police Command's spokesperson, SP Asinim Butswat, confirmed the incident. Aside the sad incident, the election in the five Local Government areas, which make up the two senatorial districts, was generally peaceful, with low turnout of voters in some areas.

However, there were minor skirmishes in some parts of Yenagoa and Southern Ijaw Local Government, where thugs attempted to snatch ballot boxes. As early as 7am, roads blocks were mounted on many roads to prevent movements of person with men of the Nigeria Police and the Army taking over strategic positions to ensure security for the few voters that turned up.

The Peoples Democratic Party's (PDP) candidate and former Governor of the state, Seriake Dickson, voted in his country home of Toru-Orua.

The former governor, who voted in company of his wife, said preliminary reports indicated an impressive turnout of voters.

Chief Dickson commended the electoral officers and security agencies for the impressive level of conduct and urged them to sustain their vigilance, until a winner is returned at the end of the election.

In Ammsaoma, where the candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Abel Ebifemowei, voted, there was a fairly large turnout, with heavy security mounted by security agencies.

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