

council in a purported election held in Makurdi, Benue State capital. According to a communiqué signed and made available to journalists by chairman and secretary of the forum Mr. Abduljalal Dauda and Temple Chika, respectively, the forum said the state chairmen declared the election illegal, unconstitutional and undemocratic.

Atiku Congratulates TUC President

Former Vice-President, Atiku Abubakar, has urged the newly elected President of the Trade Union Congress (TUC), Mr. Bobboi Kaigama, to focus seriously on the urgent challenges of improving productivity of members of the organised labour for a faster economic growth. In a statement in Abuja at the weekend congratulating the new TUC leader, the former vice-president said productivity was one of the factors that boost a country's gross domestic product (GDP). According to him, productivity is the best argument that workers can put forward to seek better wages.

Guard Kills Suspected Thief

A suspected thief at the weekend met his Waterloo at the High School Area of Akure, the Ondo State capital, as he was shot dead by a night guard, Mr. Awe Oladele, who was guiding the area. The suspect, who was said to be a teenager but whose identity could not be ascertained as at the time of filing this report was said to have been shot while trying to escape with the items he stole from a truck packed in the area.

INEC to Conduct By-election in Sokoto

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has fixed July 6, for the conduct of by-election to fill the vacancy for Gada West constituency, following the death of member representing the constituency in the Sokoto State House of Assembly, Alhaji Murtala Attahiru Wauru. It also concluded arrangements for the recruitment of 300 ad hoc staff for the exercise. The deceased lawmaker was killed by unknown gunmen at Mabera area of Sokoto metropolis three weeks ago. Speaking at a stakeholders' forum at Sokoto Guest Inn at the weekend, Resident Electoral Commissioner in the state, Alhaji Hussaini Mahuta, said the action was in line with the provisions of the 2010 electoral act.

Group Flays Critics of Amosun's Govt

A non-governmental pressure group, Ogun Young Professionals (OYP), yesterday flayed critics of the Ogun State Governor, Ibikunle Amosun-led administration in the state, claiming the government had lifted the state to another level in 25 months in power. The body, which comprises both white collar and blue collar professionals, maintained that what the opposition was doing could best be likened to 'politics of bitterness', which, they argued, would lead the state to nowhere. In a statement jointly signed by its Chairman, Mr. Olamide Agboola and Secretary, Miss Doyin Bajomo, the group noted that what the state required was "for all hands to be on deck to ensure that the people of our dear state benefit maximally from the dividend of democracy and not politics of bitterness as some people are doing now."

Catholic Doctors' Host Paley on Challenges

Catholic doctors, scientists and experts in different fields of medicine and science are expected to brainstorm on the challenges in the nation's health sector during an international conference slated for July 4 in Abuja. The conference is being organised by the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) chapter of the Association of Catholic Medical Practitioners of Nigeria (ACMPN). According to a statement issued by head of the local organising committee (LOC), Dr. Francis Alu, and made available to THISDAY in Kaduna yesterday, the conference will focus on "Comprehensive Medical Care and the attainment of the MDG 6 - Combating AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and others."

105 Sokoto Teachers Depart for Uganda

The first batch of 105 teachers sponsored by the Sokoto State Government to study Post-graduate Diploma (PGD) in Education at the Islamic University in Uganda has departed the state. The teachers left Sultan Abubakar International Airport, Sokoto around 8.p.m. on Saturday night aboard an Arik Air chartered aircraft. Addressing the students before their departure, the state Governor, Alhaji Aliyu Wamakko, urged them to be good ambassadors of the state and Nigeria in general.

NDLEA Accuses Youths of Sabotage

The Commandant of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) in Cross River State, Mr. Kayode Adeniyi, has accused youths of the state of working against its war against drug trafficking as they always alert drug dealers and patrons whenever raids are carried out. Adeniyi, who spoke at the World Drug Free Day at the weekend, said: "The people of the Central senatorial district of the state have always thwarted the agency's effort in its quest to get rid of all sorts of risky habits, including addiction to narcotic drugs."