

Kwara picks PDP scribe slot, Mantu loses out

By Umoru Henry

ABUJA—KWARA State in the North Central zone of the country yesterday picked the form for the National Secretary slot of the ruling Peoples Democratic party for the December 8 National convention.

The pendulum, which appears to be swinging towards Kwara State, became noticeable after intense politicking and scheming from the North Central Zone where the party in the present dispensation zoned the position of National Secretary by the National Executive Committee.

With yesterday's development at the Wadata Plaza, National Secretariat of the party, indications are rife that the former Deputy Senate President, Senator Ibrahim Mantu, who was also interested in the position may have crashed out again, having lost in his bid to return to the Senate in the April general election.

Speaking with journalists yesterday after picking his nomination form at the party's Secretariat, the former permanent secretary in the Office of

the Kwara state Governor, Alhaji Abubakar Kawu Baraje, said he was the candidate of the entire North Central that was magnanimous enough to concede the slot to his state, Kwara.

As at press time yesterday, he was the only aspirant who had collected a nomination form for the post of the party's scribe who may be returned unopposed if no one else does, as the sale of forms closes today (Thursday).

The aspirant, who was a member of the 2005 National Political Reform Conference and PDP presidential Campaign organisation, declared that he would bring his experience as a seasoned technocrat and political leader to bear "in the re-engineering of the PDP".

However, Alhaji Baraje's candidature may suffer a set back if the Guidelines for the PDP convention were to be followed to the letter, just as he confirmed that he retired from public service only in December 2006 which makes him less than one year as a member of the party.