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## Political Pulsations

### LG Polls And Disturbances

The Action Congress (AC) recently issued a press statement calling for the cancellation of local government polls across the country. The party noted, as reasons for its position, the violence and turbulence that have so far marked the polls.

More than 100 persons died in Kano State alone, and in Oyo State the convoy of the deputy governor was attacked on account of the conduct of local government elections in that state. In many instances across the country, the offices or vehicles of State Electoral Commissioners were torched or damaged.

~~Many Nigerians would agree with~~ the AC over its concern at the recidivism of election-associated crimes in the country, but they might equally feel uncomfortable with any arbitrary cancellations which might affect areas where the polls were significantly successful.

The Nigerian political terrain has never been less than perverse even during national elections, which receive more attention and material support. The point then is that suspending the elections until government had fully probed the April elections would prolong the undemocratic option of propping up Caretaker Committees in the third tier of government. Considering the importance of local councils, there is need to facilitate the enthronement of democracy in their administration.

Besides the contradiction inherent in them, caretaker committees are ad hoc arrangements which lack the commitment and tenure assurance that inevitably go with elected local governments. Therefore, we have to stick to political expedience and constitutional validity of completing the democratic process across the three tiers of government.

Embarking on a probe of the last elections as the AC has suggested is a worthwhile proposition, but something of this nature appears to be going on already in the form of elections petitions. This is why it may not be immediately necessary for government to institute a separate probe, wait for the results, and punish offenders before filling vacant positions in council administrations.

It is necessary to avoid a convulsion of electoral exercises at this time.