

Theatre of the Absurd, Pre-Election Matters and the Future of Democracy in Nigeria: Reflections on APC V Machina

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Abstract

The practice of theatre of the absurd is more present and popular with politicians in Africa than with playwrights. Particularly in Nigeria, the grotesque images and ridiculousness in the utterances of those saddled with the responsibilities of governance can only be viewed as characters in any known absurdist play. Nigeria is a nascent democracy, and the 2023 general elections are fraught with inadequacies right from the moment of selection of party candidates through the election proper. Candidates, political parties executives and the court have engineered these inadequacies. The concern of court being the last hope of common man, is on the administration of justice as perceived by parties involved in a case and the society. Therefore, a flawed judgment can only serve to dampen the peoples' belief in the sanctity of the judiciary. On 28th May 2022, Bashir Machina contested and won the All Progressive Congress's Yobe North Senatorial primary election unopposed, and in June the same year, the political party submitted the name of Ahmad Lawan to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) as its candidate for the main election into the Senate. In the ensuing litigation, both lower court and court of appeal affirmed the authentic candidacy of Machina, however, the Supreme Court in its judgment, affirmed Ahmad Lawan as the APC candidate for the election to the Senate. It is against this background that this study examines APC v Machina and argued that in this particular case, justice has been perceived not to have been done by the large segment of the society based on the peoples reaction in the media. We conclude that the five justices of the Supreme Court with divided resolution of three against two, and other participants in the litigation, merely represent different characters of an absurd drama fit only for the stage.

Keywords: Absurdism, Theatre, Pre- Election Matters, Democracy, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

In Esslin's (1961) *The Theatre of the Absurd*, one continues to find the link between the sanity and insanity, sense and senselessness with the seriousness in what is ridiculous. According to Esslin, "Theatre of the Absurd forms part of the unceasing endeavor of the true artists of our time to breach this dead wall of complacency and automatism" (1961, 22). This simply explains the fact that an action is a reaction to an initial occurrence. Cornwell, on the other hand, while attempting to find the difference between what is considered ridiculous and absurd, argues that "The basic difference may be that pointlessness as the point of nonsense is essentially non-serious; pointlessness as the point of the absurd, however, is altogether more serious" (Cornwell 2006, 5). This draws us to look at what is serious in the theatre of the absurd and in African democracies characterized by corrupt electoral practices and unjust legal proceedings, especially in the run-off to the 2023 General Election.

Before any general election in Nigeria, political parties are by law required to choose their candidates through a primary election conducted based on the party's constitution. In this case, primaries are the main method of selecting party flag-bearers in major elections recognized by the Electoral Act, 2022. This process is, more often than not, undermined by party elites who often deploy money to influence the selection process to serve their

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personal advantage. This, in turn, hinders the emergence of credible candidates and usually gives rise to squabbles, infighting, and litigations within the parties. Whereas, when these pre-election conflicts are not handled with the required neutrality, the election suffers enormously from a credibility crisis and ultimately, democracy as a mechanism for national development integration is in jeopardy. Nigeria returned to democracy in 1999, after a prolonged military regime that spanned December 31, 1983 - May 29, 1999. This marked the third time that the nation entered into civilian rule since it attained independence from Great Britain on October 1, 1960. The first attempt was from 1960 – 1966; the second attempt spanned 4 years from 1979 – 1983. Ever since the nation returned to democracy in 1999, general elections have been conducted in Nigeria for political offices that include the president, the Senate, the Federal House of Representatives, the State Governor, and the State House of Assembly every four years. The body entrusted with the powers to conduct elections in Nigeria is the Independent Electoral Commission (INEC).

In all electoral processes, political parties are critical stakeholders, and are the main intermediaries between people and power, and are imperative in the organization of modern democratic polity. As there is no provision in the nation's constitution and the electoral act for independent candidacy, thus, political parties remain the only platform for democratically elected leaders to emerge. In Nigeria, political parties are lawfully required to choose their candidates before every general election, and primary elections are the most common method of selecting these party flag-bearers. However, research has shown that party primaries and conventions are mere platforms of voice affirmation of the elite's consensus, which most times renders the candidate selection process less credible (Babalola and Abba 2017). The processes through which candidates emerge are often fraught with controversies, which repeatedly lead to violence and litigation. As studies have shown, a greater percentage of those that emerge from party primaries are, most of the time, products of imposition, consensus and compromise. According to Babalola and Abba (2017):

Within the structures of the parties surveyed, power lies with the godfathers instead of the party executives. Godfathers manipulate primordial sentiments, as well as use money to maintain their dominion over other party members. They render party organs impotent, especially during party primaries, conventions and congresses. Party constitutions and other extant laws regulating candidate selections are also rendered ineffectual (126).

As a result of the foregoing, electoral contests often arise and eventually shift from the polling centres to the courts, thereby making the judiciary an important institution for correcting the anomalies associated with such pre-electoral matters. During trials, sometimes, the grounds for determination may be based on the merit of the case at hand, at other times, it may be based on legal technicalities. Although the facts of a case may remain the same, the outcome after a court trial is not bound to be the same because of factors such as whether the court considered the matter on technical ground or on merit. Most times there are lots of reactions to court judgments. However, judgments of the courts are not evaluated based on sentiments. Judgments are also not based on public opinion. They are decided on the issues raised by the parties before the court. A person who sues in an action must prove his case first before the person defending defends his case. If he cannot prove his case, the court is not allowed to do his case for him. Even if a party has a good case but employs the services of inexperienced lawyers, the good case may be thrown out.

Pre-election Matters: A Conceptual Discussion

Before every general election is conducted in Nigeria, the political parties are required by law to conduct internal primary elections to nominate candidates who will represent them at the election. This is in line with the Electoral Act, Parties' Constitutions and Electoral Guidelines. In conducting internal primary elections, disputes often arise from issues of qualification, disqualification, nomination, substitution, the conduct of primaries and sponsorship of candidates for the election. These are pre-election matters, as they are matters bordering on noncompliance with the law in the selection or nomination of party's candidate for the general election.

Primarily, pre-election matters are governed by the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (CFRN), 1999 (as amended) and the Electoral Act, 2022. Section 285(14) of the CFRN, defines pre-election matters and recognises three different types of pre-election matters under paragraphs (a) – (c) Section 285(14) of the CFRN.

The said provision of section 285(14) of the CFRN has been judicially considered by the Supreme Court of Nigeria in has been judicially considered by the Supreme Court of Nigeria in several cases (APC v Umar (2019) 8 NWLR (PT. 1675) 564, Kusamotu v APC 2019, 7 NWLR (PT.1670) 51). There Supreme Court decision of APC v Dele Moses & ORS (2021) 14 NWLR (PT 1796) 278 @ 319 PARAS E-G, Per Augie J.S.C., where the Apex court summarised the meaning of pre-election matters under Section 285(14)(a) -(c) of the CFRN. The first type of pre-election matters encompasses complaint by an aspirant directed at his political party. The second relates to a complaint by an aspirant directed at the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), and the third bothers a complaint by a political party directed at INEC. Paragraph (a) Section 285 (14) of the CFRN which provides for complaint by an aspirant directed at his political party deals with the party's failure to comply with the Electoral Act, party constitution or party guidelines in the conduct of the party's primary election, in respect of selection and nomination of candidates for the said primary election. The Court has held that in the conduct of its primaries, it will never allow a political party to act arbitrarily. A party must obey its own constitution (Uzodinma v Izunaso (No.2) 2011, 17 NWLR (PT. 1275) 30, APC v Lere (supra).

Paragraph (b) Section 285(14) of the CFRN of the Electoral Act, provides for complaint by an aspirant, directed at INEC. This includes actions, decisions or activities of INEC that did not comply with the Electoral Act or complaints that the provisions of the Electoral Act or any Act of the National Assembly pertaining to the selection or nomination of candidates and participation in an election that the electoral body has not complied with. In other words, this covers complaints about INEC not complying with the provisions of the CFRN and the Electoral Act, pertaining to selection or nomination of candidates and participation in an election. It deals with aspirants who challenge actions, decisions or activities of INEC in respect of their participation in an election. Thus, an aspirant can rightfully seek redress in court for any of the above infractions by INEC. Typical examples are registration of voters, delineation of constituencies, formation of political parties, updating of voters' register, regulation of the conduct of political parties, etc.

The provisions of paragraph (c) center on complaint by a political party directed at INEC and deals with cases by a political party (directed at INEC) for its administrative decisions or actions regarding a party's candidate's nomination or disqualification. It includes suits by a political party in connection with an election timetable, registration of voters and other activities of INEC regarding preparation for an election. In other words, paragraph (c), deals with political parties that challenge actions, decisions or activities of INEC in respect of nominations of candidates for an election, the timetable for an election, registration of voters and other activities in respect of preparation for an election (APC v Dele Moses & Ors). In this connection, the Supreme Court in Peter obi v INEC (2007, 11 NWLR (PT. 1046) 565) defines pre-election matter to mean any suit by:

an aspirant who complains that any of the provisions of the Electoral Act or any Act of the National Assembly regulating the conduct of primaries of political parties and the provisions of party primaries has not been complied with by a political party in respect of the selection or nomination of candidates for an election;

an aspirant challenging the actions, decisions or activities of the Independent National Election Commission or who complains that the provisions of the Electoral Act or any Act of the National Assembly regulating elections in Nigeria has not been complied with by INEC in respect of the selection or nomination of candidates and participation in an election; and

a political party challenging the actions, decisions and activities of the INEC disqualifying its candidate from participating in an election or complaining that the provisions of the Electoral Act or any other applicable law have not been complied with by the INEC in respect of the nomination of candidates of political parties for an election, timetable for an election, registration of voters and other activities of the Commission in respect of preparation for an election.

In the same vein, the Supreme Court in APC & Anor v Engr Suleman Aliyu Lere (2019, 5-6 pt. II) defines pre-election matters as matters that occurred before the election proper. The apex court stated that they are live issues that must be heard and a judgment delivered and that they occur from preparations for the general election (Per Rhodes-Vivour J.S.C. in A.P.C. v Lere (2020) 1 NWLR (PT. 1705) 254 @ 279). In other words, pre-election matters are matters arising from disputes which arise before the general election, such as (i) nomination of a candidate, (ii) double nomination of a candidate, (iii) disqualification of a candidate, (iv)

wrongful substitution of a successful candidate's name by the Electoral Body (v) wrongful omission of a successful candidate's name by the Electoral Body (vi) complaints about the conduct of primaries (vii) false declaration on oath about particulars of a candidate and the likes (APC v Lere (Supra), Modibo v Usman 2020, 3 NWLR (PT. 1712) 470 @ 500 – 515, Gbileve V Addingi 2014). The importance of pre-election matters can, thus, not be over-emphasised, as they are live issues which must be determined by the court and judgment delivered. In this connection, the Supreme Court in Shuaibu v PDP & Ors (2017, 6-7 S.C (PT. II) 18; Uzodinma v Izunaso 2011, 17 NWLR (PT.1275). held that a political party is obligated not only to comply with the Electoral Act, but also to comply with its own constitution and its guidelines for the nomination of candidate. The court further held that the court is empowered to intervene where a Party has acted arbitrary and with impunity. This is corroborated by what transpired after the 2019 General elections when a Governor was ousted before the swearing-in ceremony, some Senators and Members of the House of Representatives also were ousted by the Supreme Court, on account of pre-election matters after taking the oath of allegiance and after the inauguration ceremony (PDP v Degi-Ereymienyo & ORS (2020) 1 -2 SC (PT. 1), A.P.C V. Lere (supra) and Modibo V Usman (supra)).

It should be noted that the provisions of Section 285(14) of the CFRN in defining a pre-election matter, are not exhaustive. Pre-election matters can also emanate from other sources in law. This is now contained in section 29(5) of the new Electoral Act 2022 (EA) which provides:

Any aspirant who participated in the primaries of his political party, who has reasonable grounds to believe that any information given by his political party's candidate in the affidavit or any document submitted given by that candidate in relation to his constitutional requirements to contest the election is false, may file a suit at the Federal High Court against that candidate seeking a declaration that the information contained in the affidavit is false.

The order that the court will make is provided for in section 29(6) of the EA. Similarly, section 84 (14) of the EA provides: "Notwithstanding the provisions of this Act or rules of a political party, an aspirant who complains that any of the provisions of this Act and the guidelines of a political party have not been complied with in the selection or nomination of a candidate of a political party for election, may apply to the Federal High Court for redress." Accordingly, these provisions create another species of a pre-election matter, which now only clothes any aspirant who participated in the primaries of his political party with the requisite locus standi (capacity to sue) to challenge the information supplied by a candidate of his political party and to challenge the conduct of the primary election of his political party before the election. By the current position of the law, only aspirants are conferred with the requisite locus standi to institute pre-election matters in court under sections 29 (5) and 84(14) of the EA. Thus, any aspirant who participated in the primaries of his political party and believes that his political party's candidate has furnished false information in his affidavit on oath or any document, inclusive of his nomination form to INEC, may institute an action against him (candidate) only in the Federal High Court. The EA has the limited institution of such pre-election matters only to the Federal High Court.

Timelines for Pre-Election Cases

In providing for the different types of pre-election matters, the law also provides for the applicable time limit for each stage of the trial. This is because in all election matters, whether pre or post-election matters, time is of the essence and every step in respect of election proceedings is governed by strict time limitation regimes to the end that, in most cases, application for extension of time are ruled out. Section 285 (5) of the 1999 Constitution (as amended) and Paragraph 18 of the First Schedule to the Electoral Act, 2010 (as amended) stipulates that failure to file processes within the limited time attracts fatal consequences. More so, election matters are sui generis (of its own kind), and as such, they are not subject to the rules that guide civil proceedings generally, although pre-election matters are civil in nature. The timelines for pre-election cases in Nigeria cover three main stages: (i) limitation of time for commencement of action, (ii) limitation of time for determination of action, and (iii) limitation of time for determination of appeals. With regard to the first category, the 1999 Constitution provides for the limitation of time for the commencement of pre-election matters under section 285(9). The said section provides, "Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this Constitution, any pre-

election matter shall be filed not later than 14 days from the date of the occurrence of the event, decision or action complained in the suit.” This means that as soon as a cause of action arises in the pre-election process, the aggrieved party has within 14 days to institute his case. If, after 14 days, the aggrieved party attempts to institute the case, it will be struck out. This provision has come up for consideration before the Supreme Court in a plethora of cases (*Garba v APC (2020) 2 NWLR (PT.1708) 345 @ 360*). The application of the above constitutional provision has resulted in the dismissal or striking out of many cases in court for being statute-barred, (even though there is a reasonable, genuine and compassionate cause of action), where the matters are filed outside the prescribed time limit of 14 days. Hence, it is very critical for pre-election matters to be filed within 14 days of the accrual of the cause of action, otherwise, no matter how compelling or compassionate the case of the litigant is, the matter will be statute barred and struck out by the Court.

The second timeline is enshrined under section 285(10) of the Constitution. The provision bothers on the limitation of time within which courts are to hear and determine pre-election matters. This is the time within which the case must be heard and judgment delivered. In this respect, section 285(10) of the CFRN stipulates, “A court in every pre-election matter shall deliver its judgment in writing within 180 days from the date of filing of the suit.” The importance of this provision cannot be overemphasized. No matter how compelling a pre-election matter may be the lifespan of its trial is not later than 180 days. In the past, cases in contravention of this provision have also been struck out or dismissed by the appellate courts as the cases were heard and determined outside the prescribed time limit of 180 days (*Usman Abubakar Tuggar v Adamu Muhammad Bulica Chuwa & Ors (2019) LPELR 47883*).

Thirdly, there are constitutional provisions on the limitation of time for filing, hearing and determination of appeals in pre-election matters. Hence, Section 285(11) of the CFRN provides,

“An appeal from a decision in a pre-election matter shall be filed within 14 days from the date of delivery of the judgment appealed against.” Also, Section 285(12) of the CFRN provides, “An appeal from a decision of a court in a pre-election matter shall be heard and disposed of within 60 days from the date of filing of the appeal” Hence, the above two constitutional provisions govern the limitation of time regarding filing, hearing and determination of appeals in pre-election matters. Accordingly, pre-election matters have been struck out by the appellate courts on the ground that the appeal was not filed within the stipulated period of 14 days or was not heard and determined within 60 days (*Toyin v Musa (2019) 9 NWLR (PT. 1676) 22*).

Analysis of APC v Machina: Facts of the Case and Discussion

Facts of the Case

On 28th May, 2022, the All Progressives Congress (APC) conducted the party’s primary election to produce its senatorial aspirant for the Yobe North senatorial district. Two candidates, Hon. Bashir Sheriff Machina and the incumbent Senate President, Ahmed Lawan showed interest, but the Senate President in a letter to APC, voluntarily withdrew his participation in the May 28 primary election in order to contest the presidential primary. Thus, the Senate President did not participate in the primary for National Assembly elections, as he was at the time a presidential aspirant and contested for the ticket of APC- the ruling party - held on June 8, 2022. The Senate President eventually lost the APC presidential primary to a former Lagos governor, Asiwaju Bola Tinubu (1999-2007), who later emerged as the APC presidential candidate (Salau 2023). APC clandestinely conducted another Yobe North senatorial primary election on 9th June 2023 for Ahmad Lawan without the participation of Bashir S. Machina and the national electoral body. Accordingly, APC forwarded Lawan’s name to INEC as its candidate. The move infuriated Machina, who instituted an action at the Federal High Court, Damaturu, challenging the actions of his party and seeking the order declaring him as the party’s authentic senatorial aspirant for the Yobe North Senatorial District for the 2023 National Assembly election.

In the suit against APC, which was commenced by Originating Summons, and in Machina’s affidavit, allegations of criminality and forgery were raised against the APC. Originating Summons is appropriate the mode of commencement of action when a party seeks interpretation of law and actions and sets questions for the court to determine or answer. It is used when the facts are not contentious and supported by an affidavit, which sets out the facts. At both the Federal High Court and Court of Appeal, Machina won the case. APC therefore

proceeded on appeal to the Supreme Court. Before the Supreme Court, the question was whether Machina's case was properly commenced at the trial court in Damaturu, considering that allegations of criminality was raised in the grounds of the Originating Summons and facts establishing criminality were adduced by Machina in the accompanying affidavit.

On February 6, 2023, the Supreme Court, with a split judgment of three to two, voided Machina's victory and ruled that Lawan was the All APC senatorial candidate for Yobe North. The ground of voiding the two earlier judgments by the Supreme Court was that Machina adopted Originating Summons to invoke his case at the Federal High Court. Justice Centus Chima Nweze, who delivered the majority judgment of the Supreme Court, held that Machina ought to commence his case at the Federal High Court with a Writ of Summons in view of grievous allegations in his suit against the defendants. Justice Nweze said that hostile issues were involved in Machina's matter that could not be resolved through Originating Summons. However, Justices Adamu Jauro and Emmanuel Agim disagreed with the majority judgment and held that both the Federal High Court and the Court of Appeal were correct in their findings in declaring Machina as APC's Senatorial candidate for Yobe North. According to the latter two Judges, Lawan never participated in the APC primary held on 28th May 2022, as he withdrew voluntarily to participate in the presidential primary held on June 8. The minority decision held that the conduct of another primary on June 9, where Lawan emerged, was in breach of Section 84(5) of the Electoral Act and Section 285 of the 1999 Constitution because APC never cancelled the earlier primary held on 28th May 2022, before organising another one barely ten days after. Both Justices Jauro and Agim held that Lawan had, in an undisputed letter to APC, voluntarily withdrew his participation in the primary election in order to participate in the presidential primary. They contended that INEC was specific that it witnessed the 28th May 2022 primary that produced Machina but did not witness that of June 9, because there was no notification from APC to that effect. They, therefore, dismissed the appeal by APC for being incompetent and unmeritorious.

DISCUSSION

The grouse of Bashir S. Machina deals with fraud and should have been instituted through Writ of Summons and not Originating Summons. Although the Federal High Court practice direction says that pre-election matters be instituted by way of Originating Summons, the Supreme Court has held in a plethora of authorities that the rules of the court supersede a practice direction. Also, by the rules of the court, an allegation of fraud should be brought by way of a Writ of Summons. Machina commenced his action by an Originating Summons contrary to Order 3 Rules 2(b) of The Federal High Court (Civil Procedure) Rules, 2019, which provides that a writ of summons shall be the form of commencing any proceedings where the claim is based on or includes an allegation of fraud. In this wise, the Judge of the Federal High Court ought to have directed that Machina's case be properly filed by Writ of Summon without entering into judgment if the technicality of the case is so fundamental.

At this point, it is appropriate to ask if the irregularity relating to Originating Summons and Writ of Summons is so fundamental that it impacts negatively on the merit of the case. The view of these authors is that the irregularity is not so fundamental and should not have impacted negatively on the merit of the case. This is as the facts of the case shows that Ahmad Lawan was not properly elected as the party's candidate at the legally held primary. Also, the decision of APC to hold another primary election on 9th June 2022 without canceling the earlier one of 28th May 2022 election, which was not monitored by INEC, clearly violated Section 84(5) of the Election Act.

In analyzing the case at hand, it should be borne in mind that although strict adherence to legal rules and procedures is necessary to ensure consistency and predictability in the administration of justice. On the other hand, strict adherence to legal rules and procedures can result in unjust outcomes, particularly in cases where the law is rigid and inflexible. In this case, *Akeredolu v Abraham & Ors* ((2018) LPELR- 44067 (SC)) is illustrative. It is important to state that the Supreme Court held that "Technicality in the administration of justice shuts out Justice." A man denied justice on any ground, much less a technical ground, grudges the administration of justice, it is, therefore, better to have a case heard and determined on merit than to leave the Court with a shield of 'victory' obtained on mere technicalities. Also, In *Josiah v The State* ([1985]1 NWLR (Pt.

1) 125) his Lordship, Oputa JSC (as he then was) held, “Justice is not a one-way traffic. It is not for the appellant alone. Justice is not even a two-way traffic. It is really three-way traffic.” The court should see that parties to the case at hand and the society at large should be made to perceive that justice has been done and still maintain their faith in the court as the last hope of the common man. To this end, it is the view, most respectfully, shared by this paper that a court of law must be seen to be interested in doing justice to parties or the issues before it rather than being an advocate of injustice.

In the instant case, there was clearly a strict adherence to legal rules and procedures and this has resulted in unjust outcome. It is expedient for judicial officers to constantly reflect on whether their decisions produce just and fair outcomes, particularly, the Supreme Court being the final arbiter of justice. More so, the Judge, as the head of his court, has the authority and discretion to lawfully change any rule of procedure that might obstruct justice (*Nishizawa Limited v Jethwani* (1984) 12 SC 234; *Broadbank of Nigeria v Olayiwola & Sons* (2005) 1 SCM 65). This is not to say that the courts should completely shun the procedures or the rules of court and focus strictly on substantive justice. It is important, in the interest of justice, for courts to prioritize substantive justice over technical justice except where such technicalities will amount to injustice on the other party.

CONCLUSION

The Supreme Court is the final stop in any legal case within the country has entrenched in the constitution of Nigeria. Though all the justices sitting on a case may differ in their judgment, nevertheless, the outcome of the any case rests on majority ruling. In this vein, Jibrin Okutepe summation on the role of the Supreme Court is apt,

The powers of the Supreme Court and its jurisdiction were donated to check the excesses or errors of both the trial court and the Court of Appeal. That is the majesty of the Supreme Court. It is the apex court of the land. See sections 233 and 235 of the Constitution. Whilst section 233 empowers the Supreme Court to adjudicate over decisions of the Court of Appeal, section 235 of the Constitution makes the decisions of the Supreme Court final. Final in the sense of finality (Okutepe 2023).

The majority decision of the Supreme Court in *APC v Machina*, although, lawful in that it preserves the principle of technical justice, however, it betrays the course of substantive justice. The core objective of electoral justice is to bring peace to the society. Justice, therefore, ought to aim at discovering the truth and have the courage to pronounce on that truth without fear or favour. There should be a conscious effort to build on peoples’ confidence in the judiciary. Therefore, its important to state that judiciary being a major stakeholder in the sustenance of any democracy should play its role with thirst and hunger for enthronement of justice, probity, integrity and credibility in the electoral process for the sake of conscience, respect for the Constitution and societal peace. When five justices of the Supreme Court sing discordant tune on serious matters of democracy, by sacrificing justice on the ground of technicality that is far from the case under review, then, judiciary has lost its meaning and seriousness for justice to embrace absurdity. The seriousness that remains may be in the attention we pay to our existence and survival, even when we seem trapped in finding meaning to this existence itself. Here, Eugene Ionesco’s *The Chairs*, Wole Soyinka’s caricature of African despotic leaders in *Play of Giants*, with the senselessness, inhumanity and human degradedness associated with war, raised by the mendicants in *Madmen and Specialist*, and Femi Osofisan’s humorous presentation of the ludicrousness associated with members of parliaments, religious leader, and teacher in *Midnight Hotel* readily come to mind. The Supreme Court verdict in the case of *APC v Machina*, negate the hypothesis of court, as the last hope of the common man justice must be seen done in any case in order to sustain the peoples’ faith.

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