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**17/SMS10/007**

**PCS 316**

**ASSIGNMENT**

Using specific case study in the South, discuss how democracy have led to development and conflict.

**ANSWER**

Development is the act, process, or result of developing. It’s the state of being developed. The act or process of growing or causing something to grow or become larger or more advanced. The act or process of creating something over a period of time. The state of being created or made more advanced.

Conflict is an active disagreement between people with opposing opinions or principles. A conflict is a struggle between people within one person, or they can involve several people or groups. Conflicts arise because there are needs, values or ideas that are seen to be different, and there is no means to reconcile the dispute.

Democracy is popularly defined as the government of the people by the people for the people. In other words, it is a peoples' government informed by the majority for the interest of the greatest number in society. Such a government must therefore aspire to improve the welfare of the greatest number in society to remain relevant. Nigerians clamored for the return to democratic governance for a long time and that clamor was not without conflicts and injuries. However, since 1999, democracy has been in the country and currently is about 13 years old.

Using Rivers- State as a case study, the current governor of Rivers-state is Ezenwo Nyesom Wike, he has been on sit since 2015. Rivers state occupies a land mass of twelve thousand, two hundred and forty (12,240) square kilometers. The state is divided into mainland and riverine communities (and local government areas). The riverine areas define those local governments whose access is exclusively by river, streams or other water sources and their economic activities are largely aqua related. The bulk of the terrains in these areas are swamps, creeks, rivulets and a limited fragile or marshy habitable land space.

The question is: are the expectations being realized? This compares the pre-democratic and democratic dispensations in Rivers State using the unbalanced growth theory. It observed that the cost of democracy in Nigeria at this time is relatively high compared to the military era. There is a need for more efficiency in governance in Nigeria now. The nascent democratic experience in Nigeria is now about 13 years (since 1999). The experiment has come along with it several challenges. These include the current Boko-haram bombings, seemingly resolved militancy in the Niger Delta and intrigues or confusion arising from court verdicts sacking political office holders at short notices. For instance, the lower court ruled in favor of elongating the tenure of 5 governors in the country. However, on the 27th January, 2012, the Supreme Court ruling set aside the earlier Judgments after these governors have fully enjoyed the elongated tenures. Under such circumstances what happens? Do the Governors refund what they earned while in office beyond their legal mandates? Within the democratic era, the country has witness several strikes, yet many seem to reckon with democracy in Nigeria. In fact, on February 12, 2011 twenty Nigerians lost their lives at the Goodluck Jonathan campaign rally in Port-Harcourt due to stampede at the Liberation Stadium venue of the rally (Akasike, 2011). According to the Governor of Delta State as cited in Adelakun (2011), the victims died for democracy. Is democracy in Nigeria at this stage worth dying for in this way? This is the point of departure in this discourse. People may die for a worthy cause, but does democracy in Nigeria (at this stage) pass for such a cause? Is democracy in Nigeria yielding the desired benefits in terms of Development in Nigeria?

This work documents developmental efforts of the state (Rivers State) from 1967-2010. However, this is further split into two, namely 1967-1999 and 1999-2010. This is because the period 1967-1999 represent an era of military governance of the state and 1999-2010 to-date coincide with the period of continuous democratic governance in the state. Development generally has to do with dynamics. Hence, the focus of this discourse is economic development. The meaning of economic development had really not been fixed and consistent over time. Between the 1940s and the 1960s, development was seen as synonymous with economic growth. Many theorists as Rostow (1952), Harrod and Dormar (1957), among others proposed models of development, generally identifying structural changes, savings and investments as the sources of economic development and growth. It was assumed that as the economy grows and output increases, there will be more happiness and improved welfare arising from the higher volume of resources which if well distributed would have generally improved the wellbeing of the masses. The basic assumption was that in so much as the economy grows, trickledown effect, will at least lead to improvement for everybody in the economy and standard of living would generally improve. The 1960s was declared by the United Nations as the decade of Development. Growth targets of 5 – 7% were set and achieved in several countries. To the consternation of these theorists, sometimes referred to as high development theorists (Krugman, 1992:15), it was discovered that misery, poverty, unemployment etc., grew worse vis-a-vis economic growth. This prompted a redefinition of development to mean a growing economy in addition to even distribution of resources and reduction in poverty, unemployment, inflation among other social undesirables. In the 1970s capacity became a key determinant in the definition of development. At this time the ability to understand nature and transform it to meet human needs became the focus of the definition. In other words, a developed economy was one that possesses a high capacity to transform nature and its inter-human environment to meet the needs of man. Development connotes a high ability to exploit nature for the greatest good of the greatest number in society. In recent times intergenerational consideration has become part of that definition with the introduction of the adjective ‘sustainable’ to development. Sustainable development defines development of today (the present) that does not compromise the development of tomorrow (the next generation). Development connotes a higher capacity of a people to meet their needs. This work is based on the unbalanced growth theory. According to the Theory as given by Hirschmann, cited in Jhinghan (2007), a developing country should concentrate its resources in the provision of the necessary infrastructures or key investments in selected sectors capable of promoting rapid development. According to Hirschmann Social Overheads provide a key example of such sectors which is needed in developing countries. He advocated the need for a state to invest in basic social infrastructure referred to as Social Overheads. The essence in this work is to assess the availability of Social Overheads and other facilities that would promote social welfare in Rivers state. This is more so, because a key essence of governance is the judicious utilization of resources towards meeting the needs of the greatest number in society.

Summarily, there have been massive development projects in the state within the period under review especially since 2007, but one sore point is the greater Port Harcourt Project which is ongoing. It is feared that administrators of the project intend acquiring lands from owners including lands which were bought from natives (by non-natives) at tokens. These lands will thereafter be repackaged and sold to ‘the people’. Given the level of corruption in the public sector, the original owners may lose out except the government gives the opportunity of first choice to these displaced people before selling to others. This is not likely if there is no specific directive by government. The government also needs to review the situation in the state’s tertiary institutions which had been on strike for some time. These institutions train mainly indigenes of the state. So, the state and these students will lose out if these strikes continue. The effect of the strike in the long run will be negative to the state. More than anything else, peace is a priceless asset everybody that every community craves for. From 1999 to date peace has been elusive in the state. In many communities, the fear of kidnapping or other violent crimes is real. Before 2007, reports of entire communities being sacked on account of minor differences were common. Places like Abua, Okrika, and Etche provide good examples of such situations. Something needs to be done to return the state to its pre 1999 tranquility; a state free of kidnapping and low in other crimes. There is also a high rate of unemployment and poverty in the state. With the traditional sources of livelihood negatively affected by the activities of the oil companies, many people in the rural areas are actually in despair. Government should rise to the occasion. It is also true that the volume of resource inflow to the state in the Ameachi era is massive. This may explain the number of projects he has initiated but many of these projects especially roads need to be better supervised. Many of these roads are still uncompleted and constitute a source of traffic congestion in the state capital. More so, it appears the planning process was defective especially with respect to the critical path analysis of road projects. These projects are not enough to warrant the loss of lives. It appears the number of deaths in the civilian era surpass the coup related deaths in the military era. Yet the tranquility, and volume of social services in the military era far outweigh what politicians have put in place. Moreover, merit was a major factor in appointments up to the Babangida era. Politicians need to do more to justify their being in power.