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Political parties are an essential feature of political in the modern age of mass participation. In liberal democratic system they help to keep governments accountable to public opinion. The political party crops up in all aspects of politics. It is an invention that first developed in the nineteenth century in response to the appearance of elections involving large numbers of voters. The first modern electoral democracy was the united state of America, and it was here that the first parties developed. By the 1820s, there well organised parties, and the democratic party, which can trace its roots back to the time is the oldest political party in the world.

TYPES OF POLITICAL PARTIES

Elitist/cadre parties: this is a political party that draws its membership from the highest echelon of social hierarchy in a country.

Mass parties: this is political party that draws its membership from all sections of the society and have wide membership.

Ideological party: this is a political party formed with political benefits.

Broker party: this is political party formed with its member draw from upper and lower classes of the society.

FUNCTION OF POLITICAL PARTY

Political mobilisation

Political education

Political representation

Interest aggregation

Political stability

Conceptual clarification of the idea of political party

There are as many definitions of political parties as the political thinkers. According to R.G Gettel, political party is a group of citizen more or less organised, who act as a political unit and who by the use of political power aim at controlling the government and carrying out its general policies.

A political party is a group of officials or would be officials who are linked with a sizable group of citizens into an organisation: a chief object of this organisation is to ensure that is officials attain power . finally a party joins people together in formally organised structure.

Political parties in the third republic Nigeria

Nigeria had a constitutional two party system. The constitution objectives polices and programme of the two parties were set up by the military government. The two parties the social democratic party and national republican convention were establish by the government officials were elected afterward local government and state congress and national convention were directed by government officials. The party had registered offices at the federal capital territory every state capital and local government headquarters. The party programmes favoured more private initiatives and more state regulations.

Political parties in the fourth republic

Alliance for democracy sponsored and contested elections throughout Nigeria during 1998 and 1999 general election. It gained political power in six states of the south west of the federation between 1999 and 2003 by winning the governorship elections. Also won several state assembly seats and local government elections.

The All people party[APP] won nine gubernatorial elections the north west and middle belt zones during the 1999 elections. It won several state assembly and national assembly seats. The third party the people democratic party[PDP] has its major aim maintaining and preserving the integrity, unity and sovereignty of Nigeria as one indivisible political entity PDP won the presidential election in 1999 and maintained its stronghold on the presidency for sixteen years.