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Assignment:

Chapter 7: Political Parties In Nigeria

Introduction:

Political parties are an essential feature of politics in the modern age of mass participation. They help keep governments accountable to public opinion in liberal-democratic systems. In the autocratic system of government, they help the government maintain its hold on power. The first modern electoral democracy was the United States of America.

Conceptual Clarification of the Idea of Political Party

There are many definitions of political parties. According to R. G. Gettel, "Political party is a group of citizens 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 performs so many tasks in the political process that it is difficult to establish a single definition, but from all the definition of political parties given by scholars we can infer that a political party is a group of citizens, more or less organised, having some agreement in broad principles of national policies with an effort to capture political power by some constitutional means.

Characteristics of Political Parties

Political parties capture governmental power through constitutional means in a peaceful and lawful way. Political parties always have broad principles of public policy adopted by its organisation which serves as the bases for classifying parties as either leftist, rightist, liberal, communist, e.t.c. Political parties must be national-minded. A political party should be an organised body. Political parties have party manifestoes which guide their conduct during and after winning elections. They are guided by party constitutions which direct the conduct of party officials and members.

Types of Political Parties

- ① Elitist / Cadre Parties:- These are political parties that draw its membership from the highest echelon of social hierarchy in a country.
- ② Mass Parties:- These are political parties that draw its membership from all sections of the society and have wide membership.
- ③ Ideological Parties:- These political parties are formed with political ideology or benefits which form the bases of the party.
- ④ Broker Parties:- These political parties are formed with its members drawn from upper and lower classes of the society.
- ⑤ Charismatic or Personality Parties:- These political parties are formed or led by individuals with Charisma.

Functions of Political Parties

Political parties ensure political mobilisation and recruitment. They ensure political education, political representation, political stability. They also help in conflict management and political integration.

Political Parties in Nigeria

Early Political Parties (1920 - 1950)

The Nigerian National Development Party (NNDP) was the first political party formed in Nigeria in 1923 and was led by Herbert Macaulay. The Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM) which was formed in 1934. The National Council of Nigerian and Cameroon (NCNC) was formed in 1944 and was renamed later to National Convention of Nigerian Citizens in 1960.

Political Parties in Nigeria between 1950 - 1966 were the Action Group (AG) Northern People's Congress (NPC)

Political Parties in the Second Republic in Nigeria

They include The National Party of Nigeria (NPN), The Nigerian People's Party (NPP), The Great Nigeria Peoples Party (GNPP), The Peoples Redemption Party, ~~The Nigerian People's Party~~. Political Parties in the Third Republic Nigeria and The Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN).

Political Parties in the Third Republic Nigeria

They include The Social Democratic Party (SDP) and The National Republican Convention (NRC)

Political Parties in the Fourth Republic

They include The Alliance for Democracy (AD), All Nigerian People's Party (ANPP) and The People's Democratic Party (PDP).