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CHAPTER 7

POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA

Political polities are important feature in our country of politics in the new age of mass participation. In a liberal democractic syestem, they help keep the government responsible to the opinion of the public even in autocratic system, they help government maintain its hold on power. Either in each case,political parties is the link between the government and its people . they develop the idea the that help themselves and the people, they involve themselves in all the activities of election, it is the link between her people and the government.

The first newly electoral democracy was in the united states of america and it was there when the parties were developed.In 1820s there are well organized political parties

Conceptual clarification of the idea of political party

According to R.G Gettel “political party is a group of people who are less or more organized 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 . herman finer on his part defined political party as an organised body with voluntary membership which its connected energy being employed in the pursuit of the political power. Joseph lapalombara defined political party as a formal organisation whose conscious, primary purpose is to place and maintain in public office person who controls it alone or in coalition. Agbaje in 1999 said that a political party is a group of people bonded in politics and opinion in support of a general political cause. Hughes in 1972 also stated that political party as an association formally organized with the explit and declare purpose of acquiringand maintaining legal control either singly or in cooperation with other similar association

Characteristics of political party

1. Political parties has party manifestos which guide their conduct during and after winning elections
2. Every political party must be national-minded that its aim and function is to take into consideration of the interest of the nation
3. Political parties should be an organized body because it can only derive strength from an effective organisational structure.
4. It should always have a broad way principle of public policy adopted by its organisation.
5. It must be guided by party constitution which direct the conduct

TYPES OF POLITICAL PARTIES

1. Elitist/cadre: this is a political party that draws its membership from the highest echelon of social hierarchy in our country. The party boast of members who are intellectuals like doctors, lawyers, lectures
2. Mass parties: this is political parties that draws its membership. It includes peoples party,labour party, workers party.
3. Idealogical party: this is a political party formed with political idealogy or benefits which form the bases of the party.
4. Broker party: this is political party formed with his members drawn from upper and lower classes of our society . the basic aim of this type of political party is to reconcile the conflict between them
5. Charismatic or personality party: this is formed or led by individuals with charisma. It helps about bringing the qualities of a leader.

FUNCTIONS OF POLITICAL PARTY

1. Political moblisation are recruitment
2. Political education
3. Political representation
4. Interest aggregation
5. Political stability
6. Conflict management and political integration
7. Organisatiion of governmentGoal formation
8. Electoral competition and goverance

POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA

The ban on polities was lifted in september,1978,five of these association were registered by federal electoral comission ,these were the nigeria peoples party(NPP) ,thegreat nigeria peoples party(GNPP), The people redemption party (PRP) and the unity party of nigeria(UPN).

As things stand now,nigeria’s political parties face some challenges. First there is an extremely high level of corruption which has made politics a competitive business. Second, the regulatory frame work for the establishment of parties should be changed so the new parties do not forget coalition of the wealthy as a basis for their registration . moreover, the aim of a political project of most nigerian parties has been developing the national system for sharing out the national cake as a system of patronage . this is why the parties are established as coalitions of various factors of regional and economic rent-seeker. Most political parties leaders see their political party activity as a means to further their business interests. There is need to arrest this trend and make political parties to be directed to fostering cohesion among nigerians and engendering the development of nigeria.