Daniel Precious Funmilola

19/MHS06/008

Medical Laboratory Science

GST 203

Political parties are essential institutions of democracy. By competing in elections parties offer citizens a choice in governance, and while in opposition they can hold governments accountable. When citizens join political parties, volunteer their time, donate money and vote for their leaders, they are exercising their basic democratic rights. Participation of citizens in political parties offers unique benefits, including opportunities to influence policy choices, choose and engage political leaders, and run for office.The country which is regarded as the first modern democracy is the United states of America. The democratic party which is the oldest political party in world was established in 1820s when the parties was well organised. In the 1920s, following the growth of nationalist consciousness and sentiments and nationalists' movements political parties in Nigeria was developed.

**Conceptual clarification of the Idea of Political Party**

Political parties have so many definitions as the political thinkers. According to R. G. Gettel, a political party is “a group of citizens more or less organised, who act as a political unit and who by the use of their political power aim at controlling the government and carrying out its general policies.” Herman Finer defined it as “an organised body with voluntary membership, its concerted energy being employed in the pursuit of political power.” For Edmund Burke, it is “a body of men united for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed.” Joseph LaPalombara defined political party as "a formal organization whose self conscious, primary purpose is to place and maintain in public office person who will control alone or on coalition, the machinery of government." According to Agbaje(199), 'a political party is a group of persons bonded in policy and opinion in support of a general political ccause, which essentially is the pursuit, capture and retention, for as long as democratically feasible, of government and its offices.

**Characteristics of Political Party**

(i) A political party has members who agree on some policies and programmes for the society with a view to promote common good.

(ii) It seeks to implement the policies by winning popular support through elections.

(iii) A political party has three components: the leaders, the active members and the followers.

(iv) A political party is a group of people who come together to contest elections and hold power in the government.

(v) Political parties try to control what happens in Parliament by securing a majority of seats (Members of Parliament).

(vi) Usually, when a political party wants to change Laws and Regulations they have to put their idea to all the Members of Parliament.