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CHAPTER 7

POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA

Political party is a group of organized citizens having same agreement in broad principles of national policy with an effort to capture political power by some constitutional means. They serve as an important link between the government and the people. In the political process of a given political system, the party is an essential political agency. Politicians developed the idea of political party at first to be a device to help themselves and like-minded friends to get elected but the party proved to have many other uses as well and went on to become a common feature of modern politics.

CHARACTERISTICS OF POLITICAL PARTIES

1. They capture governmental power by constitutional means
2. They always have a broad principle of public policy adopted by its organization
3. They should be an organized body
4. Every political party must be national minded
5. They have party manifestoes which guide their conduct during and after winning elections
6. They are guided by party constitution

TYPES OF POLITICAL PARTIES

The five types of political parties are:

Elitist or cadre parties, Mass parties, Ideological party, Broker party and charismatic or personality party.

FUNCTIONS OF POLITICAL PARTY

1. They ensure there is political education, political mobilization and recruitment, political stability, political representation.
2. Interest aggregation
3. Conflict management and political integration
4. Organization of government

POLITICAL PARTIES IN NIGERIA

Political parties in Nigeria developed following the growth of the nationalist consciousness, sentiments and movements. They were formed to organize against colonial misrule.

PROBLEMS THAT CONFRONTED PRE INDEPENDENCE POLITICAL PARTIES

- The political parties were without national outlook
- They placed more emphasis on personalities rather than issues
- The parties split into factions due intra and inter party conflicts
- The political party defection led to the collapse of political parties during this era.

POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE SECOND REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

During this era, five associations were registered by the federal electoral commission. They were; national party of Nigeria (NPN), The Nigerian people's party (NPP), the great Nigeria people's party (GNPP), the peoples redemption party (PRP), and the Unity party of Nigeria (UPN) and later, a sixth party was registered and the name was the Nigerian advance party (NAP).

POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE THIRD REPUBLIC NIGERIA

General Ibrahim Babangida allowed the transition to civil rule decree through which two political parties were registered [they were; the social democratic party (SDP) and the national republican convention (NRC)] in accordance with the constitution of federal republic of Nigeria, 1989.

POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE FOURTH REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Three parties were registered in preparation towards the fourth republic in 1998 by the independent national electoral commission (INEC). They were; the alliance for democracy (AD), all peoples party (APP) and the people's Democratic Party (PDP)

Furthermore, since the inception of the fourth republic, other numerous parties have been registered by INEC. Examples are; Action alliance (AA), all progressive congress (APC), Zenith labour party (ZLP), and many others.