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CHAPTER 7.

A REVIEW ON THE POLITICAL PATIES IN NIGERIA

What is a political party? This is an organized group pf people who have the same ideology or who have the same political position who field candidates for election, in an attempt to get them elected and implement their agenda. The political parties are very important both in the democratic and autocratic system of government. They help to keep the governments accountable to government opinions and help the government to maintain its hold on power respectively. The political party helps to link the government and the people. And they are political agency. The political party was invented in the 19th century to help like-minded friends get elected. But they were other function that they had, which made them a ubiquitous feature of the recent politics. A political party is a group of officials or would be officials who are linked with a sizeable group of citizens into an organization. A party group is formally organized.

The political parties have characteristics of which the major one is to capture governmental power through constitutional means and it must be peaceful and lawful, political parties must always have a broad principles of public policies adopted by its organization (party ideology). Also the parties must take into consideration the interest of the nation. The parties should and must be organized. They have manifestos which guide their conduct during and after winning election. And lastly the parties are guided by their constitution which direct their officials, members and outside government.

There are types of political parties which are the Elitist/Cadre party; they draw their members from the highest echelon of social hierarchy like lawyers etc. Also we have the mass party they draw their members from all sections of the society and have wide membership and they help to alleviate the suffering of masses like the peoples’ party. We also have the ideology parties which consist of political benefits which forms the bases of the party. We also the brokers parties which consist of the high and low people of the society they help to unite the rich and poor. They carry out social justices. Lastly we have the charismatic party which is formed by people with charisma. The political parties have functions and here are a few listed, Political education, Political representation, Political aggregation, Political stability, Goal formation, Organization of government etc.

Political parties in Nigeria developed following the growth of the nationalist consciousness, sentiments and movements. Nationalist agitators formed groups and association to organize against colonial misrule and because of this the National Congress of British West Africa territories was formed in 1920, West Africa student union in 1925 and the Lagos youth movement in 1934. Obafemi Awolowo and others were prosecutors of political parties in Nigeria and fore front of political activities and party formation in 1920 and after.

The Clifford Constitution provided four elective seat in its legislative council while Richard maintained it and added regional assemblies. Then the Macpherson’s Constitution established regional executive council and made way for indirect election. The Nigerian national development party was the first party that was formed in 1923 and it was led by Herbert Macaulay and he was the father of Nigerian nationalism this party was in Lagos it won all the three seat from 1923 to 1933 this party the campaign was aided by a newspaper called Lagos daily news. Another party that was formed was Nigerian new movement in 1934 by Enrnest Ikoli and others they promoted Nigerian unity and Nigerian consciousness they contested and won election to the Nigerian legislative council and Lagos town council in 1938 also the national council of Nigeria and Cameroon later renamed as the national convention of Nigerian citizen they were the first to be organized to seek total independence in Nigeria.

According to Ikelegbe two major political parties immerged during 1950 and 1951 which are the action group and the northern people’s congress they immerged from cultural association. The main aim of the action group was to provide leadership to and capture political power in the western region while the northern peoples progress was combatting ignorance, idleness, injustice in the northern region and control the government of the north. The Nigerian multi-party system of 1st republic gave rise to other political parties. Some parties arose because of disagreement within other parties. There were problems associated with pre-independence political parties which are they were without national outlook, they placed emphasis on personalities rather than issues, inter and intra party conflicts split them and political party defection weakened and led to collapses of the party.

In the second republic the political association were up to 53 and then 5 of them were registered by the Federal Electoral commission. The national party of Nigeria, the unity party, the Nigerians peoples party, the great Nigerian people, the people’s redemption and the Nigerians advance party, the unity party was an offshoot of the Action Union and their aim was free education, health, employment in full.

The political parties in the third republic general Babangida promulgated the transition to civil rule decree through which two political parties were registered. This two parties their constitutions, objectives, programs and policies were guided by the military. These two parties where Social Democratic party and the National Republican Convention.

The political parties in the fourth Republic was registered in preparation towards the fourth republic in 1998 by the independent National Electoral Commission among several political organizations that struggled for it. The names of the registered parties are the Alliance for Democracy, all people’s party but changed name in the year 2002 to all Nigerians people’s party and the people’s democratic party. This parties are administered at the ward local government area state local and national levels and have registered offices at all levels. 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. The all peoples party won nine elections in the middle belt and north west. It aligned with AD to present a joint candidate during the 1999 presidential election. After the inception of the fourth Republic, however other political parties have been registered by INEC. So, Nigeria now have over 60 political parties and here are some of them youth party(YP), All progressive congress (APC), Grassroots Development party of Nigeria (GDPN), Fresh Democratic party (FRESH), Labor Party (LP), Better Nigeria Progressive party (BNPP), People Democratic Party (PDP), Reform and Advancement Party (RAP), Kowa party (KP), Change Nigeria Party (CNP), Democratic People’s Congress (DPC), Freedom and Justice Party (FJP), Hope Democratic Party (HDP), Mass Action Joint Alliance (MAJA), National Interest party (NIP). ETC.