

WEEK 7

Features of Military Rule in Nigeria

The features of military rule in Nigeria include the following:

1. The suspension and modification of some section of constitution to be in line with the military rule.
2. Dictatorial form of government.
3. A highly centralized system of government
4. Rule with decrees.
5. Absence of all forms of opposition.
6. Fusion of the legislative and the executive arms of government.
7. Inclusion of civilians in the administration.
8. The use of coercion in the implementation of policies.
9. Absence of elections.
10. Closure of the country borders, seas and airports when military first come to power.
11. Imposition of dusk to dawn curfew whenever the military take over power in a country.

Causes of Military Rule in Nigeria or Reasons for Military Intervention in Nigeria Politics

Since Nigeria became independent on October 1, 1960 till date, she had five successful military coup and avalanche of unsuccessful ones. Military came to power as a result of the following:

1. Tribal loyalty: This is a problem facing Nigeria as a nation. Tribal loyalty takes precedence over loyalty to the central government.
2. Regional differences: Differences among the regions were so acute as to precipitate crises leading to direct assumption of power.
3. Regional/State Based political Parties: Political parties of the First Republic were all regional political parties. In fact, no one of them commanded a nation-wide support. For example, NPC was for the North, NCNC was for the East and AG was for the West.
4. Politicalization of the Army: The army or military of the first Republic maintained her status quo and thereafter became politicalized. Appointments and promotions were based on tribal and political sentiments, not on seniority or merits.
5. Dispute over Census Result: Another reason for military involvement in politics in Nigeria was because of the 1962 and 1963 census result.
6. General Election Crises of 1964: The election was held in 1964 but the result was seriously disputed. There was alleged massive rigging in the election. Nigeria was on the verge of anarchy and reign of terror and so the military has to come in to forestall such/peace

7. The Action Group crises of 1962: The crises came as a result of serious conflict within the party and differences of opinion and personality clash between Obafemi Awolowo, the party leader and his deputy, Cief S.L. Afolabi.
8. Western Nigeria Election Crises of 1965: this was another election crisis that drew the attention of the military into the political process.
9. Allegation of Corruption, Nepotism, Sectionalism: This led to the military intervention in Nigeria. Many were involved in spending the nation's wealth with reckless abandon. Many politicians were so rich that they were making a public display of their wealth. Nepotism and sectionalism played major roles in appointments, promotion, etc.
10. Absence of Honest and Reliable Leadership: This had eluded the country even since independence. Many of the rulers were dishonest and not reliable.

How to Prevent Military Intervention in Government

The military can be discouraged or prevented from intervening in government through the following:

1. The rulers and the ruled should comply with the provisions of the constitution.
2. There should be peaceful resistance to any attempt at imposing any form of military administration on the people.
3. Military rule should be outlawed in the constitution.
4. All elected officials should display the attributes of good leadership.
5. Political education should be carried out to sensitise the masses and the armed forces on the merits of democracy.
6. The judiciary should be independent, courageous, free and fair in the performance of their duties.
7. Bribery, corruption and financial mismanagement should be eliminated from public service and offenders should be exposed and punished according to the law.
8. Politicians should not interfere with the affairs of the military, and members of the armed forces should not openly or secretly belong to political parties.
9. Civilians should reject political appointment from the military.
10. Politicians should be accountable to the electorate and act in a noble manner.
11. Politicians should play the game of politics according to the laid down rules and regulations.
12. Politicians should accept defeat during elections.
13. Politicians should implement their electioneering promises to the people.

ASSIGNMENT

1. State and draw, to identify all the ranks in the military.