

## **UNIT 7: SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT AND CHALLENGES IN AFRICA SINCE INDEPENDENCE.**

### **THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO.**

#### ***Political developments in Democratic Republic of Congo since independence***

The Belgians relinquished their political dominion of Congo by granting them autonomy on 30th June 1960. Patrice Lumumba (Prime Minister) of Congolese National Movement Party and Joseph Kasavubu of Abako Party (Head of State) formed a fragile coalition government. The two leaders differed ideologically.

The period between 1960 and 1964 witnessed power struggle between Kasavubu and Lumumba on one side and Secessionist Moise Tsonbe of Katanga and Albert Kalonji of Kasai on the other side

In 1961, Patrice Lumumba was assassinated. This led to withdrawal of his supporters from government.

In 1961, the UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld perished in a plane crash in the Congo while attempting to bring a peaceful political solution to the Congo crisis.

In 1964, a new constitution was formulated as a way of solving the political problems that plagued Zaire soon after independence. Zaire became a federal state with a federal president and separate assemblies for each state.

On 23rd November 1965, Joseph Desire Mobutu organized a bloodless military coup, which removed the civilian government of president Kasavubu and Prime Minister Sylvester Kimba.

In November 1965, Mobutu took over power after a bloodless coup.

In the same year, Mobutu banned all political parties. He suspended the constitution and parliament. He abolished the federal system and local assemblies and reduced the number of provinces to eight.

In 1967, He formed the Peoples' Revolution Movement (MPR), which became the only legal party in Congo. He in effect-replaced democracy with one-party dictatorship leaned to the west during the cold war.

In 1970, Mobutu declared himself the life president of Congo, after winning the presidential election.

In 1971, he outlawed the use of European names for people, places and physical features as a way of removing colonial legacy. The country was renamed Zaire. His own name changed to Mobutu Sese Seko. Leopoldville was renamed Kinshasa.

In 1973, Mobutu announced the nationalization of all foreign enterprises.

In 1977-1978, the Shaba Rebellion broke out mainly after an attack by the Congolese National Liberation Front from their base in Angola. The Belgian troops were called to silence the rebels.

In 1990 and 1991, multiparty activists stepped up pressure for change. In September 1991, dissatisfied soldiers and civilians held demonstrations, which led to death of 117 people.

In 1997, **Laurent Kabila** successfully ousted Mobutu, assisted by Rwanda and Uganda. Mobutu fled to exile in Morocco where he died.

In January 2001, Laurent Kabila was assassinated in mysterious circumstances. His son took over power.

In April 2002, through a power-sharing agreement presided over by Thabo Mbeki and a UN envoy, Mustapha Niasse, a government of national unity was formed.

#### **Economic developments in DRC since independence.**

The political chaos in DRC up to 1965 did not favour any economic progress. During the reign of the Belgians in Congo, no viable economic development was initiated. Little development was done in infrastructure in order to facilitate transportation of raw materials to the ports of Matadi etc.

At independence, the country was faced with the problems of shortage of manpower, skills and entrepreneurship.

When Mobutu took over, there was some slight economic progress. Transport and communication improved as more roads and railway were constructed to link major towns of Matadi, Kinshasa, Lubumbashi and Kisangani.

Navigation on the river Congo was improved, which led to expansion of mining and agricultural sectors.

Mining of diamonds resumed after the turbulent years and resulted in reduced inflation. Mobutu encouraged foreign investment in the mining sector.

However, the fall of world copper prices in 1970s again began to derail the economic growth in DRC.

In the 70s, the government nationalized foreign firms employed inexperienced people to control them.

In 1977, Mobutu enacted a law that placed state finances and expenditure under him, thus reducing the flow of capital to the provinces.

In 1976, he encouraged mutual cooperation between private firms and the government in the extraction of minerals such as copper, oil, diamond, cobalt and manganese in a bid to create employment opportunities.

He also emphasized on diversification of the economy which greatly boosted food production.

The entertainment industry has also grown to become an invisible export through repatriation of profits back home by the foreign based musicians.

Energy supply has been increased through the construction of the Luga hydro-electric power station.

### ***Social developments and challenges in DRC since independence.***

Between 1961 and 1965, there was little improvement in the field of health and education in DRC due to constant power struggles and civil strife.

When Mobutu took over in 1965, he strived to expand schools and universities. For example, by 1970, he had established three universities. He also improved on the provision of health facilities. He banned religious education in schools

In 1971, attempted to revive indigenous culture through the Authenticity programme that involved renaming places that had foreign names.

In the 1970's, in an effort to improve the welfare of citizens, a national insurance programme was established.

Mobutu also gave prominence to music as part of the Congolese curriculum.

The independent government supported sporting activities through construction of stadium and other sporting facilities.

However, living standards in Zaire continued to fall as health services, water and sanitation continued to be inadequate.

The steady rise in population was without a commensurate growth of social services.

In summary, the common challenges socially were illiteracy, extreme poverty, famine and diseases caused by civil strife, massive unemployment, refugee problem and religious persecutions by Mobutu.

### ***Political challenges that the democratic republic of Congo has faced since independence.***

a) There was general lack of preparedness of the people for independence. Foreigners controlled even the army and the police.

b) The assassination of Patrice Lumumba in 1961, which plunged the country into the Congo crisis.

c) Political instability/military coup d'état. In November 1965, Mobutu organized a military coup. In 1997, Kabila ousted Mobutu

d) Ethnic differences/tribal clashes/civil wars, which split the country into two parts at independence. One controlled by Lumumba and another controlled by Kasavubu.

e) The problem of Secession. Secessionist movement of the Katanga region (Shaba) led by Tsombe and Kasai under Kilonji seceded.

f) Foreign interference/intrigues. Belgium constantly interfered and intervened in Zaire's internal matters. France and Britain also began to interfere from 1977 during the cold war period.

g) Mutinies in the army were common.

### ***Economic challenges that Democratic Republic Of Congo (D.R.C) faced in 1970's.***

a) Corruption and mismanagement of the economy. Mobutu was the richest president in the world while Zairians became the poorest people in the world.

b) Inflation due to power struggle and corruption. By 1980, the country's currency was not worthy the paper on which it was printed.

c) There was also a problem of heavy foreign debt. The country was unable to service her debts. By 1980, Zaire had become the world's third biggest debtor nation.

d) There was a standstill in the economic activities and disruption of railway transport due to civil wars in the country and neighbouring Angola.

e) The period also witnessed fall in world copper prices and increase in oil prices f) Lack of a sound economic policy

## **TANZANIA.**

***Political developments in Tanzania since independence.*** At the time of independence, Tanzania comprised of two countries. I.e. Tanganyika and Zanzibar. Tanzania became independent in 1961 under Julius Nyerere while Zanzibar became independent in 1963 under the Sultan Seyyid Abdullah. In 1962, Tanzania became a one-party state with a republican constitution and an executive president. Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) became the sole political party. On 22nd April 1964, Julius Nyerere and Sheikh Abeid Karume signed a *union document*. Nyerere became the executive head of state and government while Karume as the first vice-president. In 1967, president Nyerere adopted the ideology of African Socialism through the Arusha Declaration In 1972, the first Vice-president, Sheikh Abeid Karume, was assassinated. Aboud Jumbe succeeded him as Zanzibar's president and the vice-president of Tanzania. In 1973, the capital of Tanzania was transferred from Dar-es-Salam to Dodoma. In 1967, the ruling party in the Mainland Tanganyika-TANU and Afro-Shirazi Party in Zanzibar

merged to form Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM). Nyerere became the party chairman. In 1978-1979, president Idi Amin invaded Tanzania to annex the Kagera Province, which he claimed, was a Ugandan territory. Nyerere swiftly repulsed Ugandan soldiers. In 1985, Nyerere retired as president and was replaced by Ali Hassan Mwinyi who had succeeded Jumbe as head of Zanzibar and Tanzania's first vice president. In May 1992, Tanzania adopted multi-partism after the 8th constitutional Amendment Act. In 1995, Tanzania conducted the first multi-party election, where Benjamin Mkapa was elected president.

**Social developments in Tanzania since independence.** The major highlight in the social development of an independent Tanzania was an attempt to create a classless society with a reduced gap, between the rich and the poor. Through the Ujamaa policy, president Nyerere tried to turn Tanzania into a country that had political and economic policies based on African traditions and aspirations. Under the policy, communal farms were created. Primary education was made free in 1977 and became compulsory in 1978. At present, Tanzania boasts of the highest number of literate persons in eastern Africa. Up to late 1980s, government provided free health services, until the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programmes by the Donor community. Kiswahili was adopted as a national language and a major medium of instruction in schools.

***Economic developments in Tanzania since independence.***

The main landmark in Tanzania's economic the launch of Ujamaa as a development policy in 1967 during the Arusha declaration..

Ujamaa was meant to transform production in rural areas and to increase labour productivity and even allow specialization introduction.

The government nationalized all the major means of production and essential services in order to empower people economically.

The Tanzam railway was constructed with the help of china and was completed in 1975. In 1976, cooperative societies were abolished and replaced with centralized corporations owned by the government.

The period between 1979 and 1985 witnessed economic stagnation in Tanzania as investors pulled out of the country.

The collapse of the East African Community also affected the economy of the country.

After 1985, Nyerere's economic policies began to be challenged openly by scholars and economists

When president Mwinyi took over, he undertook to reform the economy of Tanzania.

a) There was an Army mutiny in Tanzania 1964, which threatened her political stability.

b) The socialism policy (The Arusha Declaration) received stiff opposition from many both internally and externally. People favoured capitalism.

c) The assassination of Abeid Karume in 1972 and the resignation of Aboud Jumbe in 1984 appeared to threaten the unity of the two members of the Union Declaration.

d) The invasion of Tanzania by Uganda in 1978 and the consequent war with Uganda was costly to the country. It also threatened her cooperation with neighbours.

e) There was an escalation of corruption among leading members of Tanzania's political elite, including claims that President Hassan Mwinyi and his family capitalized on liberalization to amass a lot of wealth.

f) The re-introduction of multiparty democracy tended to awaken tribalism and regionalism although this problem was contained.

***Social problems, which Tanzania faced since independence.***

a) Famine and shortage of health services as the government adopted the Structural Adjustment Policies of IMF.

b) Poverty and a general drop in living standards as production dropped due to socialism.

c) Lack of social amenities, like clean water in rural areas.

d) High illiteracy level.

e) Unemployment. In Tanzania, industries closed after the Arusha declaration.

f) Population explosion which outstripped the country's resources

g) Terrorism. Tanzania was under terrorist attacks in 1997 targeting the American embassy.

h) Environmental pollution.

i) Over-crowding in urban areas.

***Economic challenges.***

a) In the early years of independence, the proliferation of African enterprises led to the widening of the gap between the rich and the poor.

b) Under the ujamaa policy, the forced villagization programme did not satisfy communities in areas with favourable climate. They therefore strongly resisted it.

- c) There was rampant rural-urban migration affecting mainly able-bodied men who felt exploited by the new system of production.
- d) The abolition of cooperatives was met with stiff resistance with many farmers cutting down their production. Other producers reverted to the black market.
- e) The Tanzanian shilling became unstable due to price fluctuations of some commodities.
- f) There was shortage of donor funds caused by the nationalization programme that was opposed by many donor countries.
- g) The collapse of the East African Community in 1977 denied Tanzania a large common market for her goods

### **SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CHALLENGES IN AFRICA IN GENERAL.**

- a) The political systems that were inherited from the colonial governments seemed to be unworkable in many independent African states.
- b) Sharp ideological difference arose among the pioneer leaders of African states. Such differences internally exploded into civil strife in countries like Mozambique, Angola and DRC.
- c) The cold war had diverstating effects on Africa. it left many African nations divided and locked in border conflicts that continue up to date.
- d) Political instability was quite common in African states. Coups d'tat and military takeover was witnessed in Somalia, Zaire, Nigeria, Chad etc Human rights were violated with the rise of dictatorship.
- e) There were strained relations between African leaders caused by personal and ideological differences. Some ended in border closure, which greatly undermined international cooperation.
- f) Many national interests in Africa countries have been in conflict with global and continental interests. Nigeria and Zimbabwe, for example had to be expelled from the Commonwealth of Nations for alleged disregard of human rights and personal property.
- g) Neo-colonialism. Most countries retain the colonial structures of parliament although they have difficulties in sustaining them. Multinational peacekeeping forces are still common in Africa, many African leaders inherited the divide and rule colonial strategy that precipitates anarchy.
- h) The existence of different ethnic groups has contributed to ethnic wars as witnessed in Rwanda, Burundi, Sudan, Nigeria and Kenya.
- i) Most African government seemed ill prepared and in experienced in administration. This resulted in rise of rebel movements, as was the case of Mozambique and Angola.

### ***Economic challenges facing independent African states today.***

- a) Unemployment and socio-economic inequalities both among individuals and between regions are common in many African nations.
- b) Overdependence on primary exports. The African economy is an extractive one rather than a manufacturing economy. Many countries depend on agriculture and foreign nations for manufactured goods.
- c) World trade terms are not fair for African nations. Africa countries find themselves trading with former colonial powers that give low prices for raw material from Africa and charge high process for the manufactured goods.
- d) There has been the problem of unfavourable climatic conditions. This has curtailed food production, particularly among agricultural communities.
- e) Population pressure has led to overstretching of social services. There is a high dependency ratio since the population is largely youthful and unemployed.
- f) Poor economic planning. Some economic policies have destabilized the economies. For the Ujamaa policy in Tanzania, the expelling of foreign investors in Uganda and the massive printing of money in Zaire.
- g) The tough conditions given by donor agencies have sometimes led to deterioration of social welfare. Retrenchment for example was a key prescription of the Structural Adjustment Programme.
- h) Corruption and embezzlement of public funds is common in African countries. There is also general lack of transparency among many leaders.

### ***Social challenges that have faced African states since independence***

- a) *Inaccessibility to clean water by majority of the people.* Most African peoples rely on water fetched from sometimes contaminated streams across long distances.
- b) *The challenge of HIV/AIDS pandemic.* This has had a toll on productive members of the society.
- c) *Poor housing facilities.* in urban areas, majority of the population live in slums without sanitation facilities.
- d) *The challenge of high population growth rate.* This affects the quality of the services provided by governments.

- e) *Language problem.* Language development and use has been a challenge in Africa. In many countries, conflict tends to arise over the language to adopt- local or the inherited one.
- f) *Religious differences.* This challenge has been the main cause of the splitting of the once largest country in Africa-Sudan in 2011. The predominantly Christian southern Sudan has become the youngest African state thanks to religious differences.
- g) *Absence of practical systems of education.* Many countries rely on theoretical education with little emphasis in technical skills.