

CHAPTER 6

AMALGAMATION OF NIGERIA AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

Objectives

After studying this chapter, students should be able to:

- examine the background to the amalgamation.
- discuss the factors which encouraged the merging of various administrative units under one political control.
- describe the administrative arrangements that went with the amalgamation.
- examine the significance of the amalgamation of Nigeria.

Introduction

This chapter sets to study the amalgamation of different parts of Nigeria which led to the formation of Nigerian entity and its significance on the Nigerian societies.

6.1 Background to the Amalgamation of Nigeria

Amalgamation means the act of bringing different administrative entities of Nigeria to form one single unit. Before the amalgamation of Nigeria what existed was component parts that were administered independently of one another. The amalgamation started even before 1914 when Northern and Southern Nigeria were joined together. The British joined together different parts of the country for administrative convenience.

6.2 Reasons for the Amalgamation

Reasons for the amalgamation of Nigeria include:

- **Political reason:** The British engaged in the amalgamation of Nigeria in order to establish their central control over all societies in Nigeria and at the same time remove all opposition to their rule.
- **Administrative convenience:** The British joined different parts of Nigeria together for administrative convenience. It was easier for them to administer a single entity rather than governing separate units.
- **Shortage of Staff:** Shortage of British staff who administers separate areas was the reason for the amalgamation of Nigeria.
- **Economic reason:** The British amalgamated different parts of Nigeria in order to have access to resources of the area which they used for administration of the country while the

surplus was taken to Europe. It was done in order to introduce monetary policies into the country.

6.3 Nature of the Amalgamation

In 1898, an area called Niger territory was amalgamated. In May 1906, Lagos Colony and Protectorate was amalgamated with Southern Protectorate to form the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria. The amalgamation was done in order to provide financial assistance to Lagos. Also in January 1914, the British amalgamated Southern and Northern Nigeria to form the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria. Lord Lugard was the chief architect of the amalgamation in Nigeria. The amalgamation was done so that Southern Nigeria would financially support Northern Nigeria. The amalgamation was done without seeking views of Nigerians before carrying out the task.

6.4 Significance of the Amalgamation

The significance of the amalgamation of Nigeria include:

- The amalgamation made Southern and Northern Nigeria to have a single head who administered the territory. Also some major departments were amalgamated to have central bodies. Education, police and prisons department joined together in the 1920s while railway department was amalgamated in 1914.
- The amalgamation made the British to establish their authority and rule over all societies in the Nigerian area and at the same time, contained all resistance against their rule. They contained resistance in Jos, Plateau, Igboland, etc.
- It led to generation of economic resources which the British exported abroad.
- It led to the introduction of British monetary, taxation and labour policies throughout the country. These were colonial policies that led to the exploitation of people of Nigeria.
- The amalgamation of Nigeria made the country to support the British with funds and staff during the World War I. Thus, people were recruited to fight the war, and resources of Nigeria were used by the British.

Summary

- Amalgamation of Nigeria started in 1898 with the joining together of Niger territories.
- Amalgamation was carried out for administrative and economic reasons.
- The amalgamation of Southern and Northern Nigeria was carried out in 1914.
- The amalgamation was done without seeking the views of Nigerians before carrying out that task.
- The amalgamation made Southern and Northern Nigeria to become a single nation called Nigeria.
- The British established firm control over Nigeria following the amalgamation.

Revision Questions

Objectives

1. The act of bringing different administrative entities in Nigeria to form one single unit is called
 - A. Separation
 - B. Locating
 - C. Governance
 - D. Amalgamation
2. Niger territories were formed in _____.
 - A. 1914
 - B. 1960
 - C. 1920
 - D. 1898
3. _____ was the architect of the amalgamation of Nigeria.
 - A. Margery Perham
 - B. Temple
 - C. Churcil
 - D. Lord Lugard
4. In 1914, Northern _____ were joined together to form Nigeria.
 - A. Lagos Colony
 - B. Cameron area
 - C. Niger territory
 - D. Southern Nigeria
5. In 1906, Lagos Colony was amalgamated with Southern colony to form the Colony and protectorate of _____.
 - A. Northern Nigeria
 - B. Eastern Nigeria
 - C. Southern Nigeria
 - D. Western Nigeria
6. The following are reasons for the amalgamation of Nigeria except:
 - A. economic reasons
 - B. administrative convenience
 - C. shortage of staff
 - D. good governance
7. Before the _____ of Nigeria, what existed was separate and independent units.
 - A. amalgamation
 - B. foundation

- C. establishment
 - D. idea
8. The amalgamation of Nigeria was done without seeking the _____.
- A. views of Nigerians
 - B. permission of Nigerians
 - C. assistance of Nigerians
 - D. help of Nigerians
9. The following are significance of amalgamation except:
- A. It made the British to establish firm control over Nigeria.
 - B. It led to the establishment of a single entity.
 - C. It led to the introduction of monetary policies.
 - D. It led to good governance.
10. Shortage of staff was a reason for _____.
- A. governance of Nigeria
 - B. administration of Nigeria
 - C. creation of Nigeria
 - D. amalgamation of Nigeria

Essay Questions

1. What is the meaning of amalgamation?
2. Discuss the background to the amalgamation of Nigeria.
3. Examine the reason for the amalgamation of Nigeria.
4. Discuss the nature of the amalgamation of Nigeria.
5. Examine the significance of the amalgamation of Nigeria.