Current Affairs: Staying Informed about Our World

Current Affairs is the study of significant events happening at the local, state, national, and international levels. It helps us understand the world we live in, its challenges, and its developments.

Key Historical Events & 36 States and Zones

This term broadens the scope to significant national historical events and the geographical-political structure of Nigeria.

1. Key Historical Events (Nigerian History)

This section will outline important historical milestones in Nigeria's journey, providing context for current affairs. Students should have a basic understanding of these events and their significance.

- **Pre-Colonial Era (Brief Mention):**
  - Existence of ancient empires and kingdoms (e.g., Nok, Benin, Oyo, Kanem-Bornu, Sokoto Caliphate) with complex political and social structures.
  - Trans-Saharan Trade and its impact.
  - Arrival of Islam and Christianity.
- **The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade:**
  - **Period:** Roughly 16th to 19th centuries.
  - **Impact:** Devastating effects on human population, social structures, economic development, and increased inter-communal conflicts.
- **European Exploration and Colonization:**
  - **Arrival of Europeans:** Early explorers and traders along the coast.
  - **British Involvement:** Establishment of trading companies (e.g., Royal Niger Company).
  - **Partition of Africa (Berlin Conference, 1884-1885):** European powers divided Africa among themselves, leading to the creation of artificial boundaries like Nigeria's.
  - **Establishment of Protectorates:** Northern and Southern Protectorates.
- **The Amalgamation of 1914:**
  - **Event:** The merging of the Northern and Southern Protectorates by Lord Lugard.
  - **Significance:** Formed the single geographical entity known as Nigeria, but also laid foundations for regional and ethnic differences.

- **Colonial Rule (1914-1960):**
    - **Features:** Direct and Indirect Rule, establishment of colonial administration, exploitation of resources, introduction of Western education and infrastructure.
    - **Impact:** Creation of modern cities, new legal systems, but also suppression of indigenous cultures and economic exploitation.
- **Rise of Nationalism and Nationalist Movements:**
    - **Reasons:** Colonial oppression, desire for self-rule, influence of education and international events (e.g., WWII).
    - **Key Figures:** Herbert Macaulay, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Obafemi Awolowo, Ahmadu Bello, Anthony Enahoro, etc.
    - **Methods:** Political parties, protests, constitutional reforms.
- **Attainment of Independence (October 1, 1960):**
    - **Event:** Nigeria gained political independence from Britain.
    - **Significance:** A new era of self-governance and national aspirations.
- **The First Republic (1960-1966):**
    - **Features:** Parliamentary system of government.
    - **Challenges:** Political instability, regional rivalries, ethnic tensions, census controversies.
- **Military Coups and Civil War (1966-1970):**
    - **1966 Coups:** First military coup (January), counter-coup (July).
    - **Nigerian Civil War (Biafran War):** Conflict resulting from ethnic tensions and the declaration of Biafra.
    - **Impact:** Millions of lives lost, deep societal wounds, and the prolonged presence of military rule.
- **Periods of Military Rule:**
    - Successive military governments (e.g., Gowon, Murtala/Obasanjo, Buhari, Babangida, Abacha, Abubakar) and their policies.
    - Introduction of structural adjustment programs (SAP).
    - Transition programs to civilian rule.
- **Return to Civilian Rule (1979-1983 - Second Republic):** Brief period of civilian rule under President Shehu Shagari.
- **Return to Civilian Rule (1999 - Fourth Republic):**
    - **Event:** End of long military rule, start of sustained democratic governance.
    - **Significance:** New hope for stability, democracy, and development.
- **Recent Events (e.g., 2011, 2015, 2019, 2023 General Elections):**
    - Peaceful transitions of power.
    - Ongoing challenges like insecurity (Boko Haram, banditry), economic recession, youth unemployment, corruption.
    - Efforts towards economic diversification and development.

2. The 36 States and Zones of Nigeria

- **The Federal Structure:** Nigeria is a federal republic, divided into states, which are further divided into local government areas.
- **Number of States:** Currently, Nigeria has **36 states** and one Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja.

- **Listing of States and Their Capitals (Students should be able to list them):**
    - Abia (Umuahia)
    - Adamawa (Yola)
    - Akwa Ibom (Uyo)
    - Anambra (Awka)
    - Bauchi (Bauchi)
    - Bayelsa (Yenagoa)
    - Benue (Makurdi)
    - Borno (Maiduguri)
    - Cross River (Calabar)
    - Delta (Asaba)
    - Ebonyi (Abakaliki)
    - Edo (Benin City)
    - Ekiti (Ado Ekiti)
    - Enugu (Enugu)
    - **Gombe (Gombe)**
    - Imo (Owerri)
    - Jigawa (Dutse)
    - Kaduna (Kaduna)
    - Kano (Kano)
    - Katsina (Katsina)
    - Kebbi (Birnin Kebbi)
    - Kogi (Lokoja)
    - Kwara (Ilorin)
    - Lagos (Ikeja)
    - Nasarawa (Lafia)
    - Niger (Minna)
    - Ogun (Abeokuta)
    - Ondo (Akure)
    - Osun (Oshogbo)
    - Oyo (Ibadan)
    - Plateau (Jos)
    - Rivers (Port Harcourt)
    - Sokoto (Sokoto)
    - Taraba (Jalingo)
    - Yobe (Damaturu)
    - Zamfara (Gusau)
    - **Federal Capital Territory (FCT):** Abuja
- **Geo-Political Zones:** Nigeria is informally divided into six geo-political zones for administrative and political convenience, facilitating equitable distribution of resources and political offices.
    - **North Central:** Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau, FCT
    - **North East:** Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, **Gombe**, Taraba, Yobe
    - **North West:** Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto, Zamfara
    - **South East:** Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo
    - **South South:** Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Rivers
    - **South West:** Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Oyo

- **Significance of States and Zones:**
    - Administrative divisions for governance and resource allocation.
    - Reflect Nigeria's diverse ethnic and cultural composition.
    - Influence political calculations and power-sharing.
    - Important for understanding the distribution of population and resources.