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.

Nigerian Constitution - Basic Structure, Structure of Nigerian Government & Key Federal Agencies

This term focuses on the foundational legal and governmental framework of Nigeria.

1. Nigerian Constitution - Basic Structure

- **Definition of Constitution:** A set of fundamental principles or established precedents according to which a state or other organization is governed. It is the supreme law of the land.
- **Supremacy of the Constitution:**
    - It is the highest law; all other laws must conform to it.
    - Any law inconsistent with the Constitution is null and void.
    - It binds all persons and authorities in Nigeria.
- **Key Features of the Nigerian Constitution (e.g., 1999 Constitution as amended):**
    - **Written Constitution:** It is codified in a single document.
    - **Federal System:** It establishes a federal system with powers divided between federal, state, and local governments.
    - **Presidential System:** It adopts a presidential system of government (separation of powers).
    - **Rigid:** It is difficult to amend, requiring special procedures.
    - **Supremacy:** Declares itself as the supreme law.
    - **Chapter II (Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy):** Outlines the social, economic, educational, foreign policy, and environmental objectives of the state. These are non-justiciable (cannot be enforced in court).
    - **Chapter IV (Fundamental Human Rights):** Guarantees civil and political rights (e.g., right to life, dignity, personal liberty, fair hearing, freedom of expression, religion, movement, assembly). These are justiciable (can be enforced in court).
    - **Separation of Powers:** Divides governmental powers into three distinct arms (Legislature, Executive, Judiciary).
    - **Checks and Balances:** Mechanisms to prevent any one arm from becoming too powerful.

2. Structure of Nigerian Government (Federal, State, Local)

Nigeria operates a three-tier system of government: Federal, State, and Local Government.

- **A. Federal Government:**
  - **The Executive (President, Vice-President, Ministers):**
    - **Head:** President (Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces).
    - **Functions:** Implements laws, directs government policy, oversees ministries and agencies, conducts foreign policy, maintains law and order.
  - **The Legislature (National Assembly):**
    - **Bicameral:** Composed of two chambers:
      - **Senate:** Upper chamber, 109 members (3 per state, 1 for FCT). Functions: law-making, oversight, confirmation of appointments, ratification of treaties, impeachment.
      - **House of Representatives:** Lower chamber, 360 members (based on population and constituencies). Functions: law-making, oversight, budget approval.
    - **Functions:** Makes laws for the federation, approves national budget, oversights the executive, confirms appointments.
  - **The Judiciary (Supreme Court, Court of Appeal, Federal High Court, etc.):**
    - **Highest Court:** Supreme Court of Nigeria.
    - **Functions:** Interprets laws, administers justice, resolves disputes, acts as a guardian of the Constitution.
- **B. State Government:**
  - **The Executive (Governor, Deputy Governor, Commissioners):**
    - **Head:** Governor (Chief Executive of the State).
    - **Functions:** Implements state laws, directs state policy, oversees state ministries and agencies.
  - **The Legislature (State House of Assembly):**
    - **Unicameral:** Single chamber (members from state constituencies).
    - **Functions:** Makes laws for the state, approves state budget, oversights the state executive.
  - **The Judiciary (State High Court, Customary Court of Appeal, Sharia Court of Appeal):**
    - **Highest Court:** State High Court.
    - **Functions:** Interprets state laws, administers justice at the state level.
- **C. Local Government:**
  - **The Executive (Local Government Chairman, Councillors):**
    - **Head:** Local Government Chairman.
    - **Functions:** Implements local government policies, manages local affairs.
  - **The Legislature (Legislative Council/Councillors):**
    - **Functions:** Makes bye-laws for the local government area, approves local budget.
  - **Functions of Local Government (e.g., according to the 4th Schedule of the 1999 Constitution):** Collection of rates, licensing, establishment of markets, roads, parks, provision of health services, primary education, sanitation, etc.

3. Key Federal Agencies

These are important bodies established by the Federal Government to perform specific functions and implement policies.

- **Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC):**
  - **Function:** Organizes, conducts, and supervises all elections in Nigeria (presidential, governorship, legislative), registers political parties, conducts voter registration.
- **Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) Limited:**
  - **Function:** Manages Nigeria's vast oil and gas resources, involved in exploration, production, refining, and marketing. Now a commercial entity.
- **Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN):**
  - **Function:** Controls monetary policy, issues currency, regulates banks, manages foreign exchange reserves, acts as banker to the federal government.
- **Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS):**
  - **Function:** Assesses, collects, and accounts for taxes and revenues accruing to the Federal Government (e.g., Company Income Tax, VAT).
- **Nigeria Police Force (NPF):**
  - **Function:** Maintains law and order, prevents and detects crime, protects lives and property.
- **National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC):**
  - **Function:** Regulates and controls the manufacture, importation, exportation, advertisement, distribution, sale, and use of food, drugs, cosmetics, medical devices, chemicals, and packaged water.
- **Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC):**
  - **Function:** Investigates financial crimes such as advance fee fraud (419) and money laundering, combats corruption.
- **Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC):**
  - **Function:** Investigates and prosecutes corruption, bribery, fraud, and other related offences.
- **Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB):**
  - **Function:** Conducts examinations for admission into tertiary institutions (universities, polytechnics, colleges of education) in Nigeria.
- **National Youth Service Corps (NYSC):**
  - **Function:** A one-year mandatory national service scheme for Nigerian graduates, aimed at fostering national unity and integration.
- **Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC):**
  - **Function:** Ensures safety on Nigerian roads, regulates traffic, enforces traffic laws, educates road users.
- **Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA):**
  - **Function:** Manages and operates all the seaports in Nigeria.
- **Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA):**
  - **Function:** Regulates civil aviation in Nigeria, ensures safety and security standards in the aviation industry.