

## **Politics is our biggest problem!**

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I am not saying that that we should trash politics from our governance. (Of course we can't, politics are the very activities that are connected to governance) I am saying the deep-seated divisive partisan politics in our nation is our biggest problem.

A few months ago, our law firm tried to hire an administrative secretary. We received more than 30 applications great we thought, we would certainly secure a proficient employee from the crop. At interview, the task assigned to each of them was simple, to type out two duties of a secretary at a law firm, using the font Times New Roman, with size 13 and double-spaced, within 3 minutes. That was how we ended up with no one.

But just put out a call for party agents or polling agents and you would get them in droves. Ones whose eyes won't blink for 24 hours while manning ballot boxes.

Nowadays, competent, blue-collared employees are hard to come by. The plumbers, cooks, mechanics, domestics, masons have all gone into politics. One would think they have gone there to fix our water pipes or our electric lines or to fix our homes. No, they have gone there to take the shortcut to wealth. The gravitation is simple. Their friend who couldn't finish his schooling or degree and left for party politics is now building a house or driving a big car. So, the message is clear: join politics "the accelerated route to wealth". There is no need to wait any longer, because merit has been exiled. It's now mostly about whom you know or if your party is in power. This is why it's easier for one to find party branches and chapters all over the country, instead of cooperatives and partnerships.

Party politics instead of competence appears to be the concern into which a lot of our viable young energy is poured. It seems and it is the case that in this business the dividends are high with low risk. Entrepreneurship is uncertain and too arduous a road. Most of our young and vibrant have abandoned creativity for the perks of politics and are prepared to be used as tools to perpetuate any exploit for their political group. The young man appointed to run an office he knows nothing about, knows that it is his loyalty that gets him the job and it is his loyalty that would secure his job.

Few weeks ago, a video was circulated on social media with some APC bigwigs dancing to a song with lyrics labelling their rivals as "baster-pikin" (bastards). Till date, there has been no condemnation of that song by the leadership of the APC or any attempt to

dissuade their membership from using the song at their party functions. Earlier this month some serving ministers abandoned national duties for by-elections in Kabala. One APC stalwart's newly constructed house was pounded with stones but it seems only APC supporters have been rounded up and held in detention for more ten days. Certainly, APC supporters won't be stoning their own.

But this is the politics we have. This is what has held back our progress and development more than anything.

You know I have been approached many times by folks who ask, "why you nor join politics?" "When you dey join politics?" As a young man (worse if you're making progress in your career), everybody thinks you should be in politics. Don't get me wrong, I love politics. I am a rule of law enthusiast and governance activist. I told myself I won't join politics until I have made a life for myself. Politics won't be a means of survival for me. It would be a place of service. Sadly, for many people it is the means of their survival. And that exactly is the problem.

Wherever divisive party politics rather than progress festers, it is the nation that suffers.