

Lessons from the crises in cote d'ivoire



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Lessons from the crises in Cote D'Ivoire Cote D'Ivoire or Ivory Coast is an African country and like other African countries it also faces the problems of dictatorship, internal conflicts, political insecurity and poor economic growth. No other Sub Saharan African country can claim the former economic growth, political stability and development in Africa. But now the situation in Ivory Coast is really pathetic.

Unlike other African countries, in Ivory Coast, there is an atmosphere of economic development but now the political instability hinders the full fledged growth of the economy. Due to the investment policies of foreign countries the Industrial sector shows high growth rate . Other fast growing sectors are automotives, food and beverages, infrastructure, oil and gas, medical, telecommunications and IT. But now the country is facing the problem of underdevelopment and financial crisis. In 1979, Ivory Coast rated one of the highest rates of economic growth among the developing countries and it was considered as an economic hotspot with limited state intervention in economy.

To identify the cause of the crisis in Ivory Coast, one must go back to the socio-political settings. Arthur B. Dennis observes that, " The crisis in Ivory Coast is a drama of political leaders playing the xenophobia card to divide the tribes and rule." (Dennis 2007). The greed of the political leaders resulted in the civil war and to the division of the country into two. In 1843, Ivory Coast became a French settlement and its history is closely related to colonization. Ivory Coast became a Republic in 1958 and in 1960 the leader of the Democratic Party of Ivory Coast (PDCI), Felix Huaphonet Boigny became the President. Here begins the era of single party system in Ivory Coast and this party ruled till 1993. Moreover, the authoritarian rule under <https://assignbuster.com/lessons-from-the-crises-in-cote-divoire/>

Felix Huaphonet Boigny resulted in large scale protest from the side of the people.

Foreign interest and economic dependency of the rulers, political greed of leaders and the rebellious groups also act as the main factors of the crisis. A. Ekissi points out the severe ness of the civil war, “ Beginning on Thursday November 4, 2004, the war resumed with aerial bombardments carried out by the loyalist army on the rebel-controlled zones” (Ekissi 2004) which describes the involvement of foreign forces in the affairs of the country. The key issue of the conflict is the question of national identity among the foreigners who had settled in Ivory Coast.

The policies of the government resulted in economic depression and other problems like the drop in the price of Cocoa & Coffee also helped to culminate into political and social tensions. There were conflicts among the immigrants and tribal people in various parts of the country. To add further tension, new rebel organisations like (Movement for Justice and Peace, MJP) and (Ivorian Peoples Movement of Grand West, MPIGO) became active in other parts of the country. Lansana Gberie reports that, “ Ivory Coasts army was an ill-equipped and ill-prepared force. It was created in 1960 with little prospect that it could one day get involved in armed combat.” (Gberie 2004). This reveals the non competency of Ivory Coasts army to tackle the well equipped rebels.

The political greed among the rebel groups affected the economic growth and development of the country. The former president appointed his relatives and members of his party in all policy making Boards. Again, to repay his supporters, the president developed economic policies to liberalize foreign investment. Economic dependency upon France and their presence

in Africa as A western force in Africa also added fuel to the situation.

The fate of this country to be a battle field for rival rebel groups fighting for political benefit proves the fact that there must be a strong ruler for every country to attain development. Lydia Polgreen says about the posh life of supporters and leaders of the president as, “ Previously penniless youth leaders suddenly have expensive four-wheel-drive trucks and own gas stations, a popular investment among government supporters.” (Polgreen 2005). The wide gap between the political leaders and the people became wider than ever. From 1960 to 1993, political power was under a single party and it resulted in development. When Felix Huaphonet Boigny passed away, the political power was transferred to weaker hands and this resulted in the civil war which broke out in September, 2002.

The story of Ivory Coast as a former economic power in Sub Saharan Africa is really thrilling but future has to prove the survival of the country from the situation that the country is facing now. By concluding, let us hope that Ivory Coast will emerge once more as an economically well built and unified nation.

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