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Class 9 History Notes

The French Revolution



Key Notes and Important Questions with Answers

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CHAPTER- 1

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

POINTS TO REMEMBER :-

- During 18th century French society was divided into ***Three Estates***.
    I. **First estate** comprised of clergy or priests of churches.
    II. **Second estate** comprised of nobility which includes high rank officials and feudal lords.
    III. **The third estate** comprised of rest 90% of population of France which includes peasants, workers, artisans, lower rank court officials, lawyers, landless labour, servants etc.
- All the taxes were to be paid by third estate while other two enjoyed various privileges and has full authority to impose taxes.
- In 1774 **Louis XVI** ascended the throne of France.
    I. He belongs to the ***BOURBON*** family of kings of France.
    II. He was married to Marie Antoinette of Austria.
    III. **Empty treasury** due to prolong war's debt and extravagant lifestyles of his ancestors along with the cost of support to American war of Independence forced him to increase tax to meet the demand.
    IV. **Subsistence crisis**, occurred frequently during old regime, added the discontentment among masses.
- ***Middle class,*** which included- lawyer, teachers, philosophers etc, were educated and questioned the privilege by birth.
    I. They dreamt of a society based on equality and proposed their ideas through speeches, books, pamphlets and journals'.
    II. In France of old regime king could impose new taxes only in a political body- Estates General where three estates send their representatives.
    III. Voting was done on Estate wise, rather than individual members.

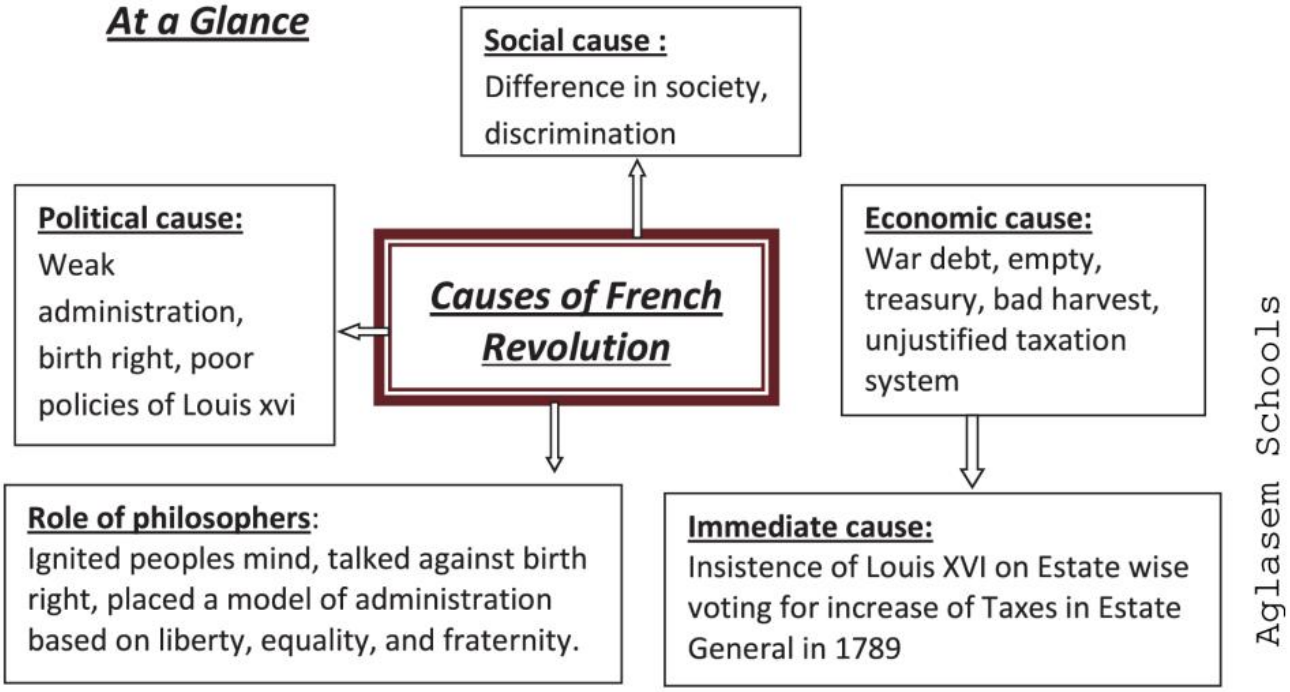
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- On 5th May 1789 Louis XVI called together the meeting of ***Estates General*** to pass new taxes.
    I. This time third estates members demanded person-wise voting in place of estate-wise voting.
    II. King rejected this demand and third estate members walked out the assembly in protest.
    III. On 20th June 1789 they gathered in the hall of an indoor tennis court in the grounds of Versailles.
    IV. **Bad harvest** due to severe cold along with **king's order** of troops to move into Paris only fuelled the situation.
- On 14th July 1789 the agitated crowd stormed the **Fort of Bastille, a symbol of *tyranny*** of old regime, and destroyed it.
    I. This triggered the **chain of revolt** across the country.
    II. Faced with power of revolting subjects, Louis XVI accorded recognition to the ***National assembly*** and agreed to give up his power.
    III. On 4th August 1789 all the ***feudal system*** of obligation and taxes were abolished by a decree.
    IV. Churches' properties were confiscated and clergy too had to give up all the privileges.
    V. ***The National Assembly*** drafted the constitution in 1791 and distributed the power in- legislature, executive and judiciary along with one person one vote principle.
- However voting was restricted to ***ACTIVE CITIZEN*** only.
- Only men above 25 years of age who paid taxes equal to at least 3 days of a labourer's wage were given the status of active citizen.
- Remaining men and all women were cleaned as panive citizen who did not have any political right.
- On 10th August 1792 **Jacobins** planned an insurrection and imprisoned the royal family.
- On 21st September 1792 it declared France a ***Republic.***

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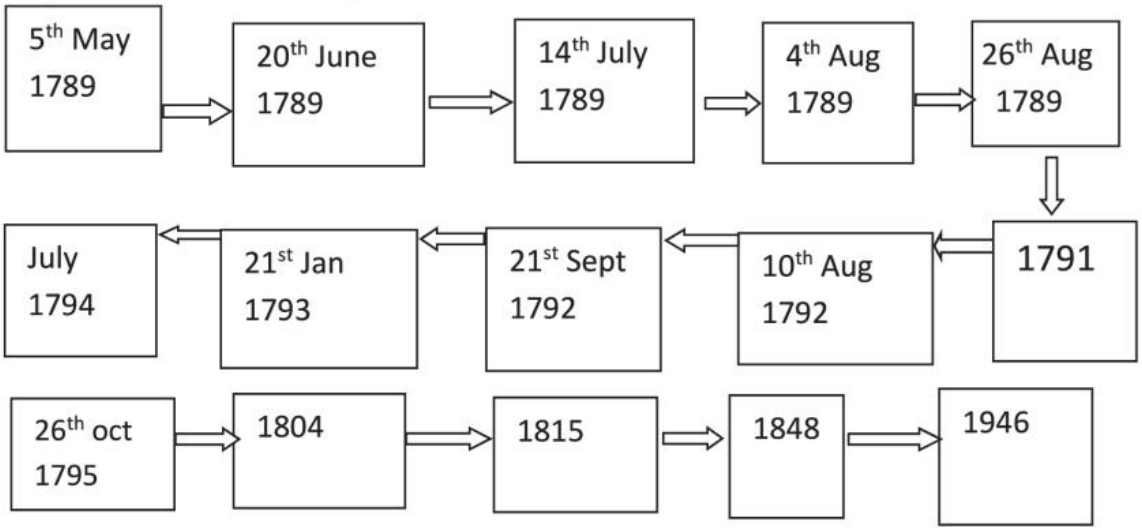
- Louis XVI was sentenced to death on charge of ***'Treason'*** and was publically executed on 21st January 1793.
- The Jacobin leader **Robespierre** ruled ruthlessly from 1793 to 1794 and his reign was known as "Reign of Terror".
- In July 1794 Robespierre was convicted of excessivism and executed on ***Guillotine.***
- The fall of Jacobin allowed the wealthier middle class to seize the power and ruled through an Executive, made up of five members, called ***DIRECTORY*** from 26th October 1795.
- However the frequent clash of directors with legislative council led to **political instability**.
- This paved the way for the rise of military dictatorship under ***Napoleon Bonaparte*** who ended directory in 1799 and became the 'First Council and later crowned himself as–The Emperor of France in 1804.
- Napoleon was defeated in the battle of ***Waterloo*** in 1815.
- The legacy of ***freedom, equality and fraternity that*** emerged out of French revolution remained the inspiring ideals of the following world.
- Slavery was finally abolished in 1848 from all the colonies of France.
- Women fought their own way to get right to vote in 1946 in France.

At a Glance



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➢ ***Recall Important dates and associate the events in connection to French Revolution:***



1 Mark Questions

(1) Who was the king of France during French Revolution?
(2) In how many Estates French society was divided in 18th century?
(3) Who were nobles?
(4) Which Estate of France paid all the taxes?
(5) Who wrote the Book –"The Social Contract"?
(6) Louis XVI was related to which family of French dynasty?
(7) Who wrote the French national anthem – Marsiellaise?
(8) What was Guillotine?
(9) What was Estate General?
(10) Name the currency of France which was used till 1794?
(11) Name the tax which was levied by the Church and was 1/10th of produce?
(12) What was Estate?
(13) What was the work of Priest or clergy?
(14) Name the tax which was paid directly to the state?
(15) What is the situation called in which there is a danger of survival?
(16) When did the abolition of slavery take place in French colonies?
(17) When did Napoleon Bonaparte become the Emperor of France?

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(18) When did Napoleon fight the"Battle of Waterloo"?

(19) Why was the reign of Robespierre called –"reign of terror"?

(20) How France became republic?

3/5 Marks Question

(1) What was condition of France when Louis XVI ascended the throne?

(2) Explain- 'Third Estate'

(3) What law was passed by National Assembly in France on 4th august 1789?

(4) Describe the condition of women in 18th century French society? Does French revolution change any of it?

(5) Describe the rise of Jacobin club in France?

(6) What legacy was left behind by the French revolution for the world?

(7) Explain the rise of Napoleon?

(8) What was subsistence crisis in France? How it triggered the French Revolution?

(9) Which rights were described as the "Natural and inalienable" by the French constitution of 1791?

(10) "French Revolution didn't fulfil the aspiration of all the sections of society." Explain your answer with suitable argument.

Answers

1 Mark questions

(1) Louis XVI

(2) Three estates

(3) Wealthy and high rank officials were called nobles.

(4) The Third Estates paid all the taxes.

(5) Jean Jacques Rousseau

(6) Bourbon family

(7) Roget de L'Isle

(8) The Guillotine was a device consisting of the two poles and blade with which a person was beheaded.

(9) Estate General was a political organisation in France prior to 1789 revolution in which all the Estates sent their representatives.

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(10) Livares

(11) Tithe

(12) The social division in French society till late 18th century were called Estate.

(13) To do the prayer as well as special works of church.

(14) Taille

(15) Subsistence crisis

(16) 1848

(17) 1804

(18) 1815

(19) Due to Robespierre's policy of severe control and punishment during 1793 to 1794, it was called "reign of terror".

(20) On 21st September 1792 newly elected assembly,'Convention', abolished the monarchy and declared France as republic.

3/5 Mark Questions

(1) (i) Empty treasury,

(ii) Destruction of economic resources due to war,

(iii) Extravagant cost of living by the kings.

(iv) A debt of more than ten billion livres,

(v) A demand of interest by the lenders

(2) (i)The Third Estate was comprised of peasants, landless labours, teachers, lawyers etc.

(ii) It was the lowest strata of the French society,

(iii) They didn't have any political rights,

(iv) All the taxes imposed by state or church were to be paid by them only.

(v) During French revolution they fought against birth rights and feudal privileges'

(3) (i)End of feudal system of obligation and taxes,

(ii) Forced priestly class to give up their privileges'

(iii) End of religious taxes like "tithe",

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(iv) Confiscation of church property.

(4) (i) Worked for subsistence,

(ii) They didn't have access to education or job training,

(iii)They worked as laundresses, sold flower or even worked as domestic servant,

(iv)Their wages were lower than men,

(v)Though after French revolution their condition improved a bit yet they were eluded by general political right to vote till 1946.

(5) (i) The revolutionary wars brought losses and economic hardship to the people,

(ii) Political clubs became an important rallying point for people to discuss government policies and their own course of action,

(iii) The most successful of these club was the Jacobin, whose members belong mainly - small shopkeeper, shoemaker, servants, daily-wage workers etc

(iv) Their leader was Maxmillian Robespierre who adopted red cap (a symbol of liberty) along with a trouser without knee breaches as worn by the dockyard labourer.

(v) All this was done to show themselves apart from the wealthier class and nobility and to show solidarity with lower class which made them favourite.

(6) The legacy left behind by the French revolution were –

(i) End of feudal privileges

(ii) The ideal of liberty

(iii) The principal of equality

(iv) The sense of brotherhood

(v) The idea of democracy

(7) (i) After the fall of Jacobin govt, wealthier middle class once again got an opportunity to seize power,

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(ii) A new constitution denied the vote to non-propertied sections of society and has provisions for two legislative council, a safeguard against concentration of power in one hand,

(iii) This then appoint a five member executive, known as Directory.

(iv) However the Directors often clash with the legislative councils, who then sought to dismiss them

(v) This political instability of directory paved the way for the rise of military dictator, Napoleon who between 1793 to 1796 conquered most of the central Europe and defeated Austria, Prussia and Russia to become national Hero.

(8) (i) The production of food grain didn't keep pace with the rapid increase in population, so the price of bread rose rapidly.

(ii) As wages were fixed for the workers, the rising price of bread got out of their reach,

(iii) Situation worsen whenever there was drought or hail and thus an extreme situation prevailed where the basic means of livelihood were endangered-called subsistence crisis

(iv) This situation triggers the bell of French Revolution as angry women stormed into the bakery shop after spending hours in long queues as cold winter had destroyed the harvest,

(v) They marched towards the kings palace asking for bread, while their men were striking in tennis court for justice. This led to a chain of events which culminated in French Revolution.

(9) (i) In 1791 the National Assembly completed the draft of the constitution.

(ii) The constitution began with a declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen,

(iii) Rights such as right to life, freedom of speech, freedom of opinion, equality before law were established as natural and inalienable rights.

(iv) These rights were considered as a right by birth which cannot be taken away

(v) It was the duty of state to protect each citizen's natural rights.

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(10) (i) French Revolution was fought by all unprivileged sections of the French society like-merchants, peasants, landless-labourers, women etc.

(ii) All have their own believes and aspiration from French Revolution

(iii) They aspire for a better life in terms of food and work,

(iv) However it didn't fulfil those aspirations, like political rights was reserved for wealthy class, women had to fight for almost two century before they got voting rights in 1946.

(v) Actually its very own principles of liberty and equality were violated when they denied the rights to its poor citizen, women and slaves who got emancipated ultimately in 1848.

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