

Q French revolution was an extraordinary event of 18th century. Deliberate in detail the causes and consequences of French revolution.

Introduction:

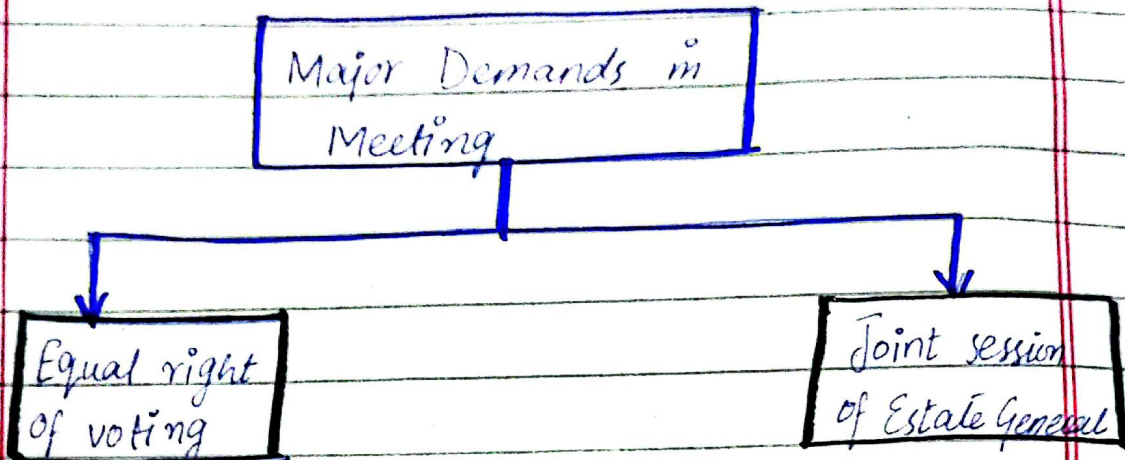
French revolution was the greatest event happened in France in 18th century. This was caused by a series of events including Hierarchy in a system, inequality in privileges, intellectual thoughts and financial crisis of France. The revolution set a landmark for other states of Europe under monarchy by the consequences it showed. Those results of revolution were end of social divide, elimination of monarchy, establishment of democracy, subordination of church and abolishing feudal system.

Timeline for French revolution:

- (a) The meeting of Estate general (1789)
- (b) The Revolution (1789-1792)
- (c) The Declaration of Rights of Man (1789)
- (d) The Reign of Terror (1793-1795)
- (e) End of French Revolution (1795)

Stages of French Revolution 2

The Meeting of Estate Generale (1789)



Demands were not accepted:

Louis XVI rejected their demands and warned them to use force against them.

Declaration of National Assembly:

Third estate declared their national assembly on 10th June 1789 and invited first and second estate to join them.

The Tennis Court Oath:

The king locked the people in the hall, while they refused to disperse until their demands were fulfilled and they formed their democratic constitution.

The Revolution (1789-1792)

This period is known as the "Period of Great Fear".

accepted and non joining who did not accept they were punished. He introduced **Law of Suspect**, where the king was brought under trial and arrested in 1792 and executed. After 9 months his wife Marie Antoinette was also guillotined. This punishment was for every who went against revolution.

"The 'terror' of French revolution lasted for ten years. The terror that preceded and led to it lasted for a thousand years"

(Edward Abbey)

End of French Revolution: (1795)

The French revolution came to an end when Robespierre was guillotined in July 1794. Then, the system of directory took place which was introduced by Jacobins consisting of 5 directors. The protests against this system arose which were crushed by Napoleon. So, that was start of rise of Napoleon.

MONARCHY → CONVENTION → DIRECTORY → CONSULATE



The Declaration of Rights of Man: (1789)

The National Assembly declared a charter regarding the Rights of Man in **Aug 1789**.

The charter was based on democratic principles and on the philosophy of J.J. Rousseau. Then, they came up with their constitution in **Sep 1791** based on the separation of power.

"The French revolution taught us the rights of Man" (Inomus Sankara)

The Reign of Terror: (1793-1795)

Robespierre who was leading this whole process and introduced a constitution known as "Convention" according to which Church was sub-ordinated to State. The joining who aligned with convention were

Causes of French Revolution

There are different causes of French revolution which are discussed as:

1. Social Causes:

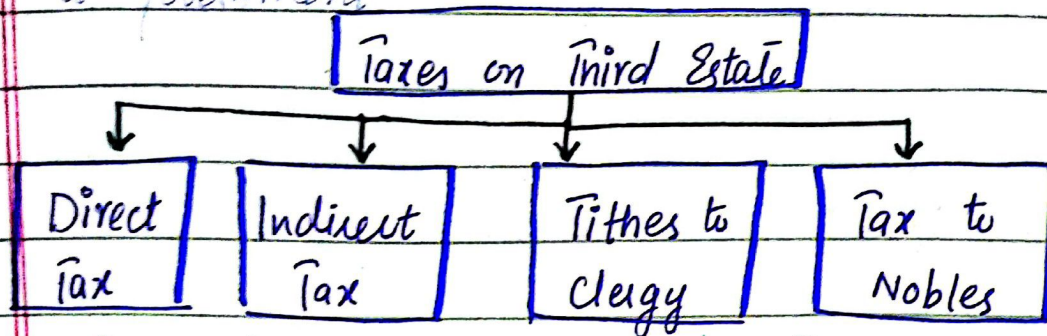
Class division:

The major reason of French revolution was the hierarchy which existed in a system. The King which had "divine right to rule" then clergy who owned the lands and Churches and made people realize that it is the divine right of the king to rule over. Then, the nobles who enjoyed the privileged life by imposing tax on poor. Then, there was Bourgeoisie who were educated class but were imposed triple taxes. Then the peasants who were poor and uneducated farmers, who were exploited by the elite.

The privileges of Clergy and Nobles:

The Clergy and Nobles enjoyed the most privileged lives with tax exemption and exercised their influence on third state by taking

taxes excluding the tax they were paying to government



Cruel behaviour of Nobles to Peasants:

The nobles were exploiting the Peasants by imposing taxes (additional) to them and by taking their services on their lands free of costs. They used to destroy their crops by taking horses through their lands during hunting or other activities.

Rise of Revolutionary sentiment in middle class:

The middle class of France started enlightened due to the reasons including The Revolution of America in 1793. They also wanted a democratic state and get rid of the cruel monarch system.

2- Political Causes:

Incompetent monarchy:

The Kings of France badly drained the

money by fulfilling their way of lives.

Louis
XIV
1638-1715

- ◆ He was fond of participating in wars, so he wasted money of France in wars.

Louis
XV
1715-1774

- ◆ He also wasted money in wars.

Louis
XVI
1774-1792

- ◆ He was fond of living a lavish life and his wife was queen of Austria, so, he spent money on her as well.

Lack of National Representative Institute :

This is one of the major reasons that France did not have a national representative institute, they had one Estate General but not functional for 174 years. This was the vacuum which led the French revolution. In fact, the meeting of Estate General, there was a discrimination because Nobles and clergies were voted separately and third estate called separately.

Administrative Confusion :

The peasants or third estate used to give triple taxation, but there was loophole as well because Nobles used to implement

taxes in different areas. So, this administrative vacuum also led to French revolution.

Centralized Government:

All powers were under monarch, there was no decentralization of power which was the big issue faced by commoners. They had no representative through which their issues or voices could be heard.

Impact of American Revolution:

In 1783, when America revolution against Britain held, it was the time which arose the sentiment in French people to get independence.

3 Intellectual Causes:

Voltaire

- Gave the concept of Deism, that there is no "divine right to rule"
- Manipulation of peoples' religious sentiments.

Montesquieu

- Separation of power
 - Executive
 - legislature
 - Judicature
- Inspired by UK system.

J.J Rousseau

- Introduced the concept of "General Will"
- People contract with King and they can bring contract back due to lack of deliverance.

4- Financial Causes.

Participation in wars:

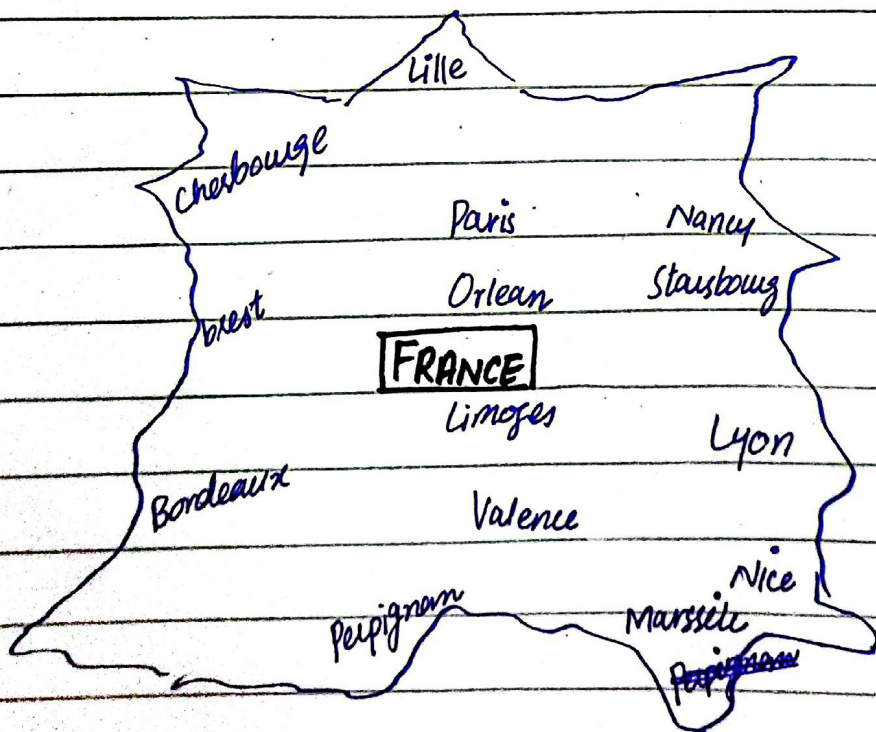
Louis XIV and Louis XV were very fond of taking part in wars and they wasted a lot of money in that. While Louis XVI was fond of living a lavish life and his wife Marie Antoinette was queen of Austria. So, they wanted money in fulfilling their desires.

Court expenditures:

There was no cut down of court expenditures and no one was accountable for that.

No tax on Nobles and Clergy:

There was a great tax exemption to Nobles and clergy while all the financial pressure was faced by peasants and farmers.



Consequences of French Revolution

1. End of Social divide:

As a result of French revolution, the social hierarchy which was existing came to an end and all people became equal.

2. Declaration of Rights of Man:

This was the one of the stages, which led French revolution, all men should be given the due rights by government and every one is equal regardless of financial status.

3. Revolutionary ideas:

French revolution impacted globally because all the states in vicinity to France started their struggle towards democracy.

4. Parliamentary system:

Parliamentary system was introduced, unicameral where decisions would be taken on consensus.

5. Rise of Political parties:

After French revolution, different political parties started arising and led the way towards a pure democratic system.

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6- End of Monarchy:

Monarchy came to an end at Louis XVI and absolute system prevailed.

7- Landownership by commoners:

All the commoners were given the right to own their own lands.

8- Abolishing of Feudal system:

Feudal system was abolished as a result of elimination of Hierarchy system.

9- Separation/Decentralization of power:

Power from single monarch shifted to the parliament where decisions were made on consensus.

10- Subordination of Church:

Church was subordinated under the government rather than clergy.

11- Constitution and ^{Rule of} law:

Under constitution every one is equal and any one could come under rule of law in case of committing any crime.

12- Establishment of National guard:

National guard was established rather than a royal guard which was present at time of monarch.

Conclusion:

The French revolution was an incident that had eliminated hierarchical division and royal guards, promoted equality.

All the causes of French revolution paved the way towards democracy and prevalence of rule of law. Its legacy survives in today's principles of governance and human rights.
