

# MODULE 1

## HISTORY

### Chapter 1 FRENCH REVOLUTION

#### Introduction

- The Revolution started on 14<sup>th</sup> July 1789.
- As fortress-prison, the Bastille was stormed which was hated by all because it stood for the despotic power of the king.
- Common man was having huge revolt against monarchy and the feeling for which was increasing.
- The fortress was demolished.
- Three ideas were propagating- Equality, Fraternity and Liberty
- These were ideas which people were trying to spread.
- It led to end of Monarchy in France.

#### French Society During the Late Eighteenth Century

- French Revolution started with the Bourbon family.
- Bourbon family had king known as Louis XVI.
- In 1774- Louis XVI of Bourbon family ascended to throne (20 yrs. old) and married to Marie Antoinette.
- When he came to throne, he found that the treasure was empty and even to maintain expenses of palace of Versailles, there was no money to spend.
- He helped 13 American Colonies gain independence from Britain. There were various colonies in America which has been held by France to get liberated from Britain.
- War added to debt- about 2 billion livres (French currency) The war which was going on behalf of France, added to the debt. France treasure which was already empty was getting further empty by the debt that was growing through the war.
- Due to which government started borrowing money from lenders.
- These lenders were charging high interest rate of around 10%.
- This increased the expense of government and the treasure was empty.

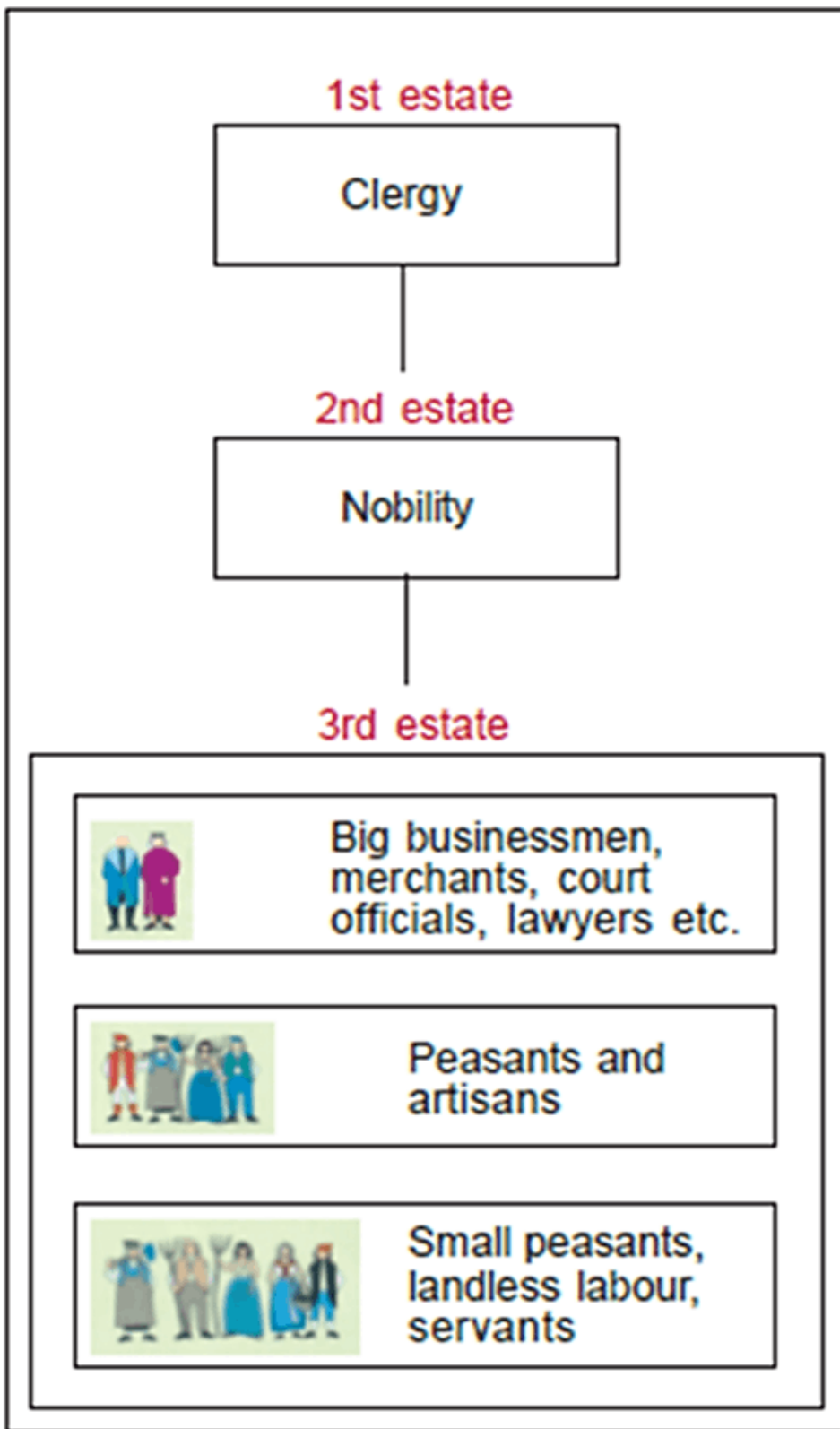


Figure: A Society of Estates

- The system of France was divided into 3-
  - Clergy
  - Nobility
  - Third Estate
- ❖ CLERGY: Group of Leaders to perform religious activities in Church
- However, the whole and sole responsibility of paying taxes was with the Third Estate not the First and Second Estate, the Clergy and Nobility were not liable to pay any taxes.
- All the taxes that had to be paid were given by members of 3<sup>rd</sup> estate.
- They were paying 3 types of taxes:
  - 1<sup>st</sup>- to the feudal or noble
  - 2<sup>nd</sup>- Direct tax to govt.
  - 3<sup>rd</sup>- Indirect tax- paid to the Church

#### Types of taxes-

- **Tithe**- It was the tax collected by church as 1/10<sup>th</sup> of agricultural produce.
- **Taille**- it was the Direct Tax paid to government.

Peasants- 90% population, very less land.

Nobles, Church and Rich- Owned 60% land.

Clergy and Nobility- enjoyed privileges by births

Only 3<sup>rd</sup> estate- to pay taxes

Nobles- feudal dues from peasants (was obliged to work in his house and fields)

- The 3<sup>rd</sup> estate was mainly comprised of peasants and workers.
- These peasants and workers were not much literate and could not raise their voice but slowly and gradually there were members like teachers, lawyers getting into power. So, all those who were literate were trying to raise voice.
- Once, these educated sections started to raise voice there was a kind of shift in the philosophy that existed in France which later formed basis for French Revolution.

## 14<sup>th</sup> July 1789

- King ordered troops to move into city.
- People formed militia and broke in govt buildings in search of arms and marched till Bastille (fortress prison).
- Bastille was demolished and fragments sold in market as souvenir of destruction.
- Population increased from 23 million in 1715 to 28 million in 1789.
- Production could not meet the demand.
- Rich and Poor Gap widened.
- People protested against price rise of bread- lead to Subsistence Crisis. (Food riots, scarcity of grains, higher deaths, increased prices and weaker bodies)

❖ **SUBSISTENCE CRISIS:** is a crisis caused by economic factors (generally high food prices), which maybe caused by either natural or man-made factors.

### Growing Middle Class- New Wave

- Peasants and workers lacked idea to bring social change.
- 18<sup>th</sup> century law emergence of social groups (middle class)- Expansion of trade, professionals like lawyers and administrative officials- who were educated

### IMPORTANT SCHOLARS

#### **SCHOLARS**

#### **BOOK**

John Locke:	Two Treaties of Government
Rousseau:	Social Contract
Montesquieu:	The Spirit of the Laws

**Belief:** No group should be privileged by birth but by merit.

- Montesquieu- Division of power between Judiciary, Executive and Legislative.

## Timeline

- **1774:** Louis XVI becomes king of France, faces empty treasury and growing discontent within society of the Old Regime.
- **1789:** Convocation of Estates General, Third Estate forms National Assembly, the Bastille is stormed, peasant revolts in the countryside.
- **1791:** A constitution is framed to limit the powers of the king and to guarantee basic rights to all human beings.
- **1792-93:** France becomes a republic, the king is beheaded. Overthrow of the Jacobin republic, a Directory rules France.
- **1804:** Napoleon becomes emperor of France, annexes large parts of Europe.
- **1815:** Napoleon defeated at Waterloo.
- **1830:** July Revolution

✓ Jacobin Club was the important club which was formed at that time.

❖ Jacobin Clubs- where liberal ideas or liberal movements were flowing

## Outbreak of Revolution

- Old Regime- taxes imposed to be decided by meeting of Estate General (had representatives from three estates)
- Monarch could decide when the meeting was called- last in 1614, next on 5<sup>th</sup> May 1789 for new tax proposal.

1<sup>st</sup> estate- 300 representatives

2<sup>nd</sup> estate- 300 representatives

3<sup>rd</sup> estate- 600 representatives (stand at back)

Who were denied entry to assembly?

Peasants, artisans and women- demands were listed in 40,000 letters.

Till now- 1 vote for 1 estate

Now Demand- 1 vote for 1 member (as under Social Contract)

Rejected by kings and members of 3<sup>rd</sup> estate walled out in protest.

On 20<sup>th</sup> June-

They gathered in ground of Versailles to declare National Assembly and draft constitution to limit powers of monarch (were led by Mirabeau- born in noble family but was convinced with need to do away with feudal privilege and Abbé Sieyès- originally a priest wrote pamphlet “What is Third Estate?”)

Simultaneously in remaining France,

Severe Winter - Bad Harvest – Price Rise – Bakers exploited and hoarded supplies.

14<sup>th</sup> July- Bastille was destroyed

Rumours that lords of manor had hired brigands to destroy ripe crops- peasants seized hoes and attacked Chateaux (residence of nobleman).

4<sup>th</sup> Aug 1789- Assembly abolished feudal system of obligations and taxes, no privilege to clergy, tithe was abolished and land owned by Church was confiscated.

- ❖ FEUDAL SYSTEM: Holding of land in exchange for service and labour.

**Useful links: -**

<http://ncert.nic.in/textbook/textbook.htm?iess3=1-5>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o4FSg5Wq65Q&feature=youtu.be>

<https://www.studyrankers.com/2017/07/notes-of-ch-1-french-revolution-class9th-history.html>

### Self-Assessment Questions-

1. Which estate of French society paid all taxes. Name the taxes.
2. Who wrote 'The Spirit of the Laws' and what was it about?
3. What were the reasons of outbreak of revolution?
4. Which book was written by John Locke and what was his belief?
5. What do you mean by Subsistence Crisis?
6. Which classes formed the privileged estates?