

# CHAPTER: 01



French

Revolution

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



LOCATION



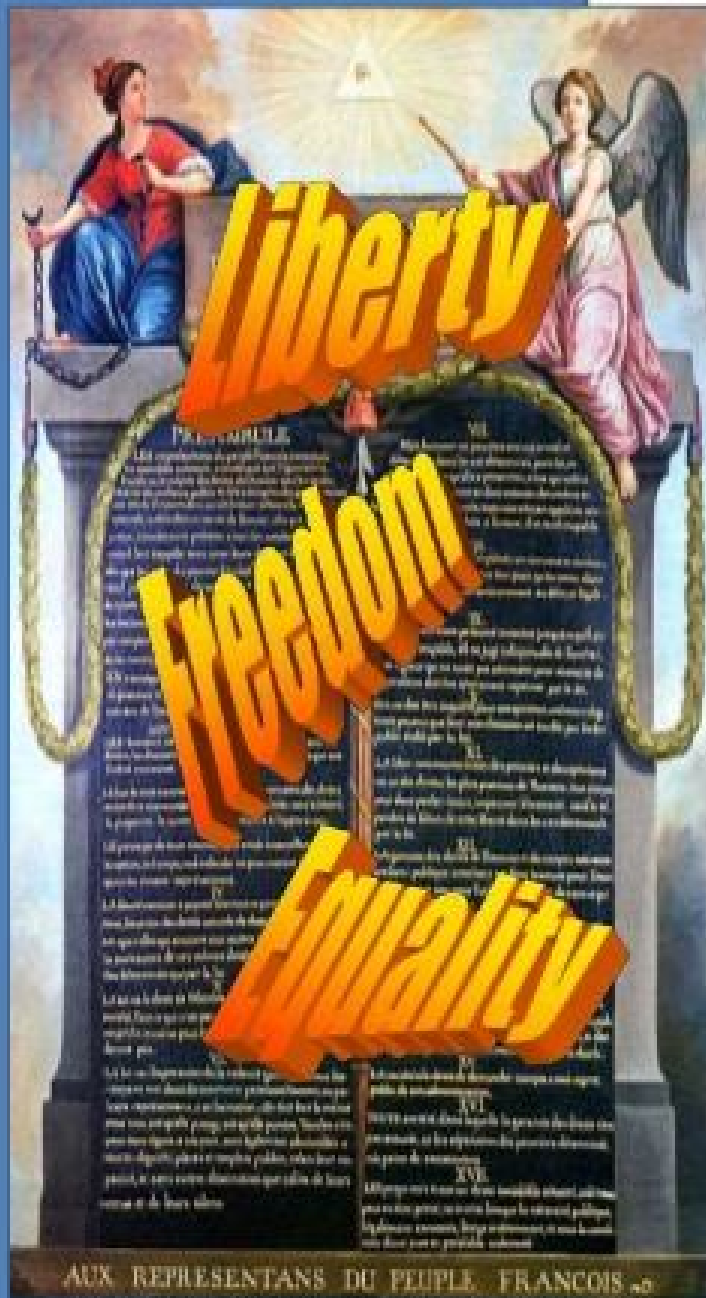
Versailles/Paris



- A political upheaval in a nation state characterized by great change.
- A revolution may result in sudden overthrow of an established govt or system by force and bloodshed, e.g., French Revolution.
- It can also be a great change that comes slowly and peacefully, e.g., Industrial Revolution.

### **French Revolution**

- French Revolution was the mass uprising of the people of France against the dictatorial and anti-people policies of the monarch.
- It started on 14<sup>th</sup> July 1789 with an incident known as Storming of Bastille.



# I N T R O D U C T I O N

- Today we often take the ideas of liberty, freedom and equality for granted.
- But we need to remind ourselves that these ideas also have a history.
- This history can find its origin in French Revolution.
- It led to the end of monarchy, end of society based on privileges and gave way to a new system of governance.
- It declared the idea that all individuals had rights and could claim equality.
- These notions of equality and freedom emerged as the central ideas of a new age.

# **UPCOMING TOPICS**

- 1) CAUSES**
- 2) EVENTS**
- 3) CONSEQUENCES**



# POLITICAL CAUSES

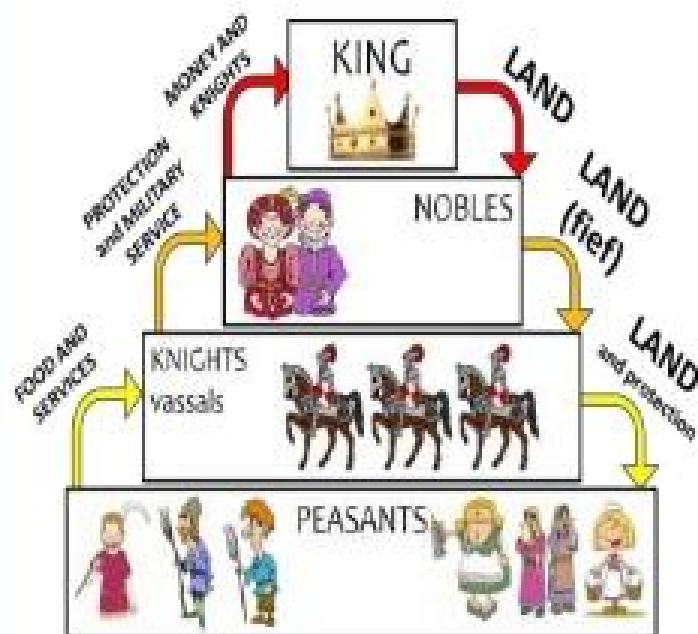
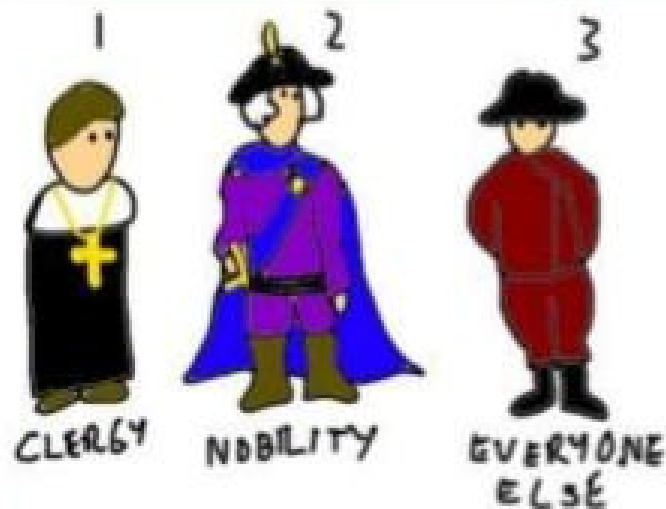




- In 1774, Louis XVI of the Bourbon family of kings ascended the throne of France.
- He was 20 years old when he married to the Austrian princess Marie Antoinette who always interfered with the administration.
- He ruled as an absolute monarch.
- He had maintained a **huge army** and built a big extravagant court at the immense palace of Versailles which drained the wealth of France.
- **Common people** had no say in administration. All bureaucratic posts were occupied by the aristocrats.



# SOCIAL CAUSES



Feudal Pyramid of Power

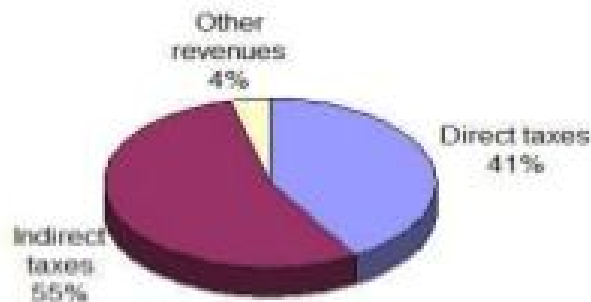
- French society in the eighteenth century was divided into three estates **Clergy, Nobility & Common People**.
- The members of the first two estates, enjoyed privileges by birth.
- Peasants made up about 90 per cent of the population, however, only a small number of them owned the land they cultivated.
- About 60 per cent of the land was owned by nobles and church which they leased to peasants for greater share in the production.
- Peasants were obliged to render free services to the lord – to work in his house and fields – to serve in the army or to participate in building roads.



# ECONOMIC CAUSES



### Revenues



- French economy was based on revenue from land and on feudal system.
- During Louis XVI, France had 2 billion livre debt.
- The government charged huge **taxes** from third estate.
- These included a direct tax, called **Taille**, and a number of indirect taxes which were levied on articles of everyday consumption.
- First two estates were exempted from paying taxes to the state.
- The **Church** too extracted its share of taxes called tithes from the peasants.

# SUBSISTENCE CRISIS



- An extreme situation when the basic means of livelihood are endangered.

### **CAUSES**

- The population of France rose from about 23 million in 1715 to 28 million in 1789.
- This led to a rapid increase in the demand for foodgrains.
- Production of grains could not keep pace with the demand. This led to inflation.
- Things became worse whenever drought or hail reduced the harvest.



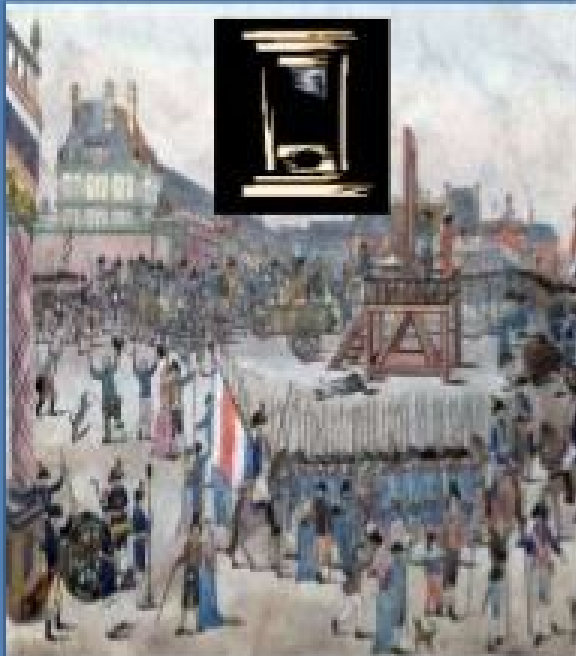
**EVENTS**



- 1) Session of estates general
- 2) Formation of national assembly
- 3) Outbreak of revolution
- 4) Constitutional monarchy
- 5) New constitution
- 6) Revolutionary wars
- 7) Rise of new ideas
- 8) French republic
- 9) Robespierre state policy
- 10) Reign of terror
- 11) Rule of directory



REIGN  
OF  
TERROR



- The period from 1793 to 1794 is referred to as the Reign of Terror.
- Ex-nobles and clergy, members of other political parties, even members of his own party who did not agree with Robespierre's methods were arrested, imprisoned and then tried by a revolutionary tribunal, if found guilty were guillotined (named after Dr Guillotin who invented it).
- Robespierre pursued his policies so relentlessly that even his supporters began to demand moderation.
- Finally, Robespierre was convicted by a court in July 1794, arrested and on the next day sent to the guillotine.



**RULE  
OF  
NAPOLEON**

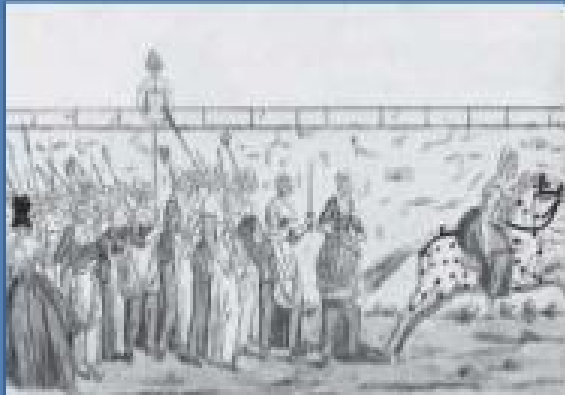


- An Army chief under king Louis XVI namely, Napoleon Bonaparte crowned himself Emperor of France In 1804.
- As a modernizer he set out to conquer neighbouring European countries, dispossessing dynasties and creating kingdoms.
- He introduced many laws such as the protection of private property and a uniform system of weights and measures provided by the decimal system.
- Initially, many saw Napoleon as a liberator who would bring freedom for the people.
- But soon the Napoleonic armies came to be viewed everywhere as an invading force.
- He was finally defeated at Waterloo in 1815.

- 1) General consequences
- 2) Abolition of slavery
- 3) Role of women



**ROLE  
OF  
WOMEN**



- From the very beginning women were active participants in the revolution.
- In order to discuss and voice their interests, women started their own 60 political clubs and newspapers.
- From the very beginning they demanded the right to vote to be elected to the assembly and to hold political offices.
- During Jacobin regime the government made schooling compulsory for all girls.
- Their fathers could no longer force them into marriages against their will.
- Divorce was made legal.
- It was finally in 1946 that women in France won the right to vote.