**Q: Discuss the Causes and Effects of the French Revolution**

**Causes of French revolution of 1789**

**Introduction:** The French revolution of 1789 is great changeable event in the history of world. The unlimited monarchy in France, despotic rule of Burbo dynasty, anarchy in administration, inefficiency of Louis 16th, arrogent queen Marie Antainet such bad political condition and in addition to it climax of unequality was in Frane. The French Philosophers like Rousseau Montesque, Voltaire awakened people against this injustice and inspired them for revolution. So the revolution took place in France on 1789. Many events happened in the course of revolution. It began with very important role of National Assembly from 1789 to 1791. Fall of fort of Bastille, declaration of human rights including liberty, equality and fraternity, the great principles. Imprisonment of king and queen then their assasination, end of Reign of Terror with Robespear etc. were main events in course of revolution. Revolution overthrew despotic and corrupt rule in France, Moderate thoughts took place of orthodox. Unlimited monarchy and feudalism was rejected. Revolution had effects on world also. It gave advise to world that king cannot be a representative of God but of people. People being supreme, can over throw despotic ruler. Because by such type of contract is done between king and people. Man is free in born, sovereignty rests with people not with king was new message was given by revolution to world.

**Causes of French revolution of 1789 - Political, Social religious, intellectual, economic.**

**A)** **Political causes** - The political condition in France was grave due to the following political aspects –

**1) Despotic rule of Buorbon dynasty** - From 1553 there was depotic rule of Buorbon dynasty in France. All rulers followed devine right theory. Every king ruled unlimitedly. Total power was centralised. From 1614 the session of parliament (Estate General) was not called. In the reign of Henry 4th, Louis 13th and 14th industrial, educational, cultural development was done. Some colonies were acquired. But rules of 15th and 16th Louis were despotic only.

**2) Law and Judiciary** - All power was centralised with king. So his word was law and justice. Every province had different law system, feudals and clergies had their own laws. So there were hundreds of law systems in nation. Laws were unwritten, not clear, unequal, injust. Voltaire says while travelling in France found many law systems than number of horses changed in travell. Judiciary was defective. Many courts were on various levels. Military, political, religious courts were there. Judges were from upper class and royal family only. Uniformity was not in judiciary. Judges were getting salaries without working. Corruption was in judiciary punishments were inhuman. Judgements were partial. There was not system of appeal.

**3) Divine Right Theory** - There was unlimited monarchy in France. King is the part and representative of God. In that capacity only, he was ruling on earth. So nobody can challage him. So disloyalty to king was to God. It created unrest.

**4) Aggrasive policy** - Burbo rulers accepted imperial policy. Established colonies in Africa, Asia. French East India company also helped to this policy. On this issue France had to fight with many European countries. It caused to much economic loss. During 1748-60 France had to fight against England over influence in India, in which France was defeated. At the same period, 1756 to 1763 for seven years France fought and defeated against England. Due to economic loss injustice taxes imposed upon people. So agressive policy was not at all beneficial to nation.

**5) Anarchy in administration** - There was very much anarchy in administration, It was corrupt. No responsibility among officials. Influence of upper class was on administration. Officials were busy to find sympathy of king and royal family only. There was no room to common people in administration. France was divided among 40 provinces and 36 generalities, again those were divided among Districts and cammuns. Higher posts were reserved for members of royal family and upper class. Like this the inefficient, corrupt and oppressive administration was responsible for unrest.

**6) Role of Marrie Antoinette** - 1755-1793 - She was daughter of Austrian empress Meria Theresa. To create friendship between Austria and France, she was married to Louis 16th, the king of France. She became an empress of France. But she always remained Austrian and not French. Being so smart Louis always remained under her influence. She was luxurious, egoism and having interest in politics. Making very much expenditure for living a life of pleasure. It affected national treasury. So she was called 'Madam deficit.'

**7) Role of Louis 16th** - He was ruling France at the time of revolution. But the background was already prepared for revolution. He was not interested in politics, though he was king of nation. His hobbies were strange like repairing locks, hunting etc. He was not strong enough to administre nation. He said to his ex-minister, 'how fortunate you are, I wish I could resign too.' But such king adopted policy of his predessors. Did not care for people. But by advise of upper class introduced oppressive policy and opposed revolution. So revolution became inevitable.

**B) Social Causes** - It was important cause of all to revolution. There was unequality. French Society was divided among classes like –

**1) Feudals** - It was called nobles also. They were rich, landlords, exmpted from tax. They have their own tax, 'Tally', on common people. Higher posts in civil and military were reserved for them. They were living luxuriously. They were doing injustice and exploitation of common people for many years. Their population was less than 1% but were holding 60% land, poor, common people were working on land as bonded labours. Taking prizes and presents from people. Montesque defined this feudal like - "who can talk to king, communicate to minister, has pension, loan and hereditary rights is feudal."

**2) The Clergy** - Roman catholic was national religion of France. Religion had great influence on King and people. Clergies were owners of 1/5 land of nation, and all religious centres. They were rich and tax free. Even they collect their own tax, 'tiths' from people. They were away from religious duties, busy in geting sysmpathy of king and royal family. They had much respect and rights. Living luxuriously like feudals. Exploiting common people.

**3) Common people/Third Estate** - This class was in majority but living in very grave situation. They had to pay 4/5 taxes of all types. Working like bonded laboures on land of upper class. Trying to be alive on 1/5 remain portion of production or income. So the situation in France was 90% people were facing starvation while 10% indigesation. It is sufficient to clear the unequality. This third estate included doctors, advocates, professors, teachers, journalists, farmers, workers etc. the important people of middle class were exploited by upper class. They had not any chance in administration. This middle class led the people during revolution. So this class was waiting for opportunity to raise voice against this unequality. They got it on 1789.

**C) Religious causes** – Some of the religious causes of the revolution are discussed below:

1. **Luxurious clergies** - The clergies of France were included in upper class. Nearly there were one and half lac clergies. Number of religious centres was five thousand. There were 25 thousand men and women each in all centres. Immorality was among them. Religious institution was strong. There was strong chain from Priest of village to Pope of Rome. Their officials were Pope, Cardin, Archbishaps, Archdikan, Bishap, Bikan, Abat etc.

Roman catholic had their monopoly in France. Reformist Protestants were minor in value in France. The massacre of protestants was done at night at the day of the memory of saint Sent Bartholo in Paris. Clergies were rich, selfish and luxurious. All worst things were going on in the name of God and religion. There were two groups, upper and lower clergies among them. Lower were totally neglected by uppers. So there was unrest.

1. **Injustice with people by Religious institutions** - To do religious activities, to maintain and increase social morality was duty of clergies. But actually they had influence over government also. So they got rights, concessions, ownership of land, money and the religious centres were very rich like of feudals. Even concent of religious authority was necessary to king at the time of coronation. Then what the condition of common people might have been before such clergies. There were evil traditions by which people were exploited. So unrest was among people against religious centres, and clergies.

**D) Intellectual Causes** – Rise of the Intellectual class that contributed to the revolution are as below:

**1) Montesque - 1689 to 1755** - He was born in noble family. Advocate Montesque was judge also. He studied history, political science and law. He wrote a book, 'Spirit of Laws' on 1748. It was so popular that within one and half year 18 editions were published. He criticised monarchy, accepted democracy. In his opinion parliamentary democracy was ideal. He said, three types of government a) Monarchy, b) Dictatorship, c) Republic, are there. a) In ideal monarchy, though power gets centralised, nobles and council of experienced people should be there to help and discuss with king. It should be bold and independent in thinking. It can prevent king to be a dictator. b) In dictatorship all power gets centralised with king; lack of any factor to control his power. Dictator creates his terror and make people slaves. Terror is the base of his existance. c) In democracy government takes care of people. Ordinary man also gets chance to be a leader. For success of republic people must be aware of it, economic equality is important. For the wel fare of people power should be separate. Montesque gave his famous theory of separation of power, in his book, 'Spirit of Laws.' He said there are three factors of government-Legislative, Executive and judiciary. These factors should be separate from each other. Otherwise there will be injustice with people. He strongly demanded it and parliamentry democracy. He awakened people to overthrow the rule in France.

**2) Frene - 1694-1774** - He was medical practitioner. He studied economic condition of nation indetail. To develop nation economically, it is necessary to concentrate and reform in agriculture, trade and business. These sectors should free. During course of revolution his thoughts were accepted and implimented.

**3) Voltaire - 1694-1778** - He was poet, journalist, author, historian and scholar of law. He was famous by his writings. Ridicule was the feature of his writing. Though he was theist, he criticised church. He criticised luxurious living of clergies. Due to his ridicule writing he was jailed in Bastil. He wrote famous book 'Candid'. Monarchy and religious corruption were main subjects. He did not like mobrule in democracy. He accepted limited monarchy. He said, 'I would prefer, to be ruled by one lion than by hundred rats.' He said Louis rulers are responsible for exploitation by upper classes. So he suggested to overthrow reign of Burbo and establish limited monarchy.

**4) Rousseau - 1712 - 1778** : Jazak Rousseau is great political philosopher of the modern period. He born at Jinevha in middle class, poor family. Further he settled in France. He wrote autobiography, named 'My confession.' 'Amil' and 'Social Contract' are his famous books. 'Man' was his main subject of Writing. He wrote, 'man is born free, no need to give it. Man is bound in political, social and religious institutions. In ancient period state came into existance by a contract. For the welfare of people socio, economic, religious condition should be improved. He was theist but criticised on clergies for their corruption and hypocrisy. He is world known philosopher by his principles like Welfare and limited monarchy, sovereignty of people, liberty, crative change, right of people of passing law, social contract etc. His work was responsible for revolution. Napoleon Bonaparte says. "If there had been no Rousseau, the French revolution would have been not occured." His contribution in creating modern Europe is very important.

**5) Didero - 1713 to 1784** : He was editor of encyclopedia's art and science sections. Through writings he brought real condition of nation before society. Criticised on unequality, economic exploitation, anarchy in religion. Reforms are necessary for the development of nation. Injustice with people will be certainly problematic to government. By his thoughts middle class people were very much influenced. French government imposed restrictions on encyclopedia.

**6) Cane** : He was French economist. He said the economic progress depends upon freedom of agriculture, business and trade, emancipation of farmers from government and upper class is important. His theory was, total freedom in economic field is the real progress of nation.

**Economic causes** :

**1) Feudal economy** : France was agriculturist. Out of total land 60% to feudals, 20% to clergies and 20% to common people who were 80 lacs in number. 10 lac serfs were labours on land of feudals. Farmers had to pay tax to government, feudals and clergies. Government did nothing to improve farming, feudals also neglected it. Exploited farmers and serfs were waiting for change.

**2) Dissatisfied merchants** : There was ample mineral wealth in France. Many rivers like Sen, Rhoan, Luar and Atlantic, Mediterrian sea shore was useful for development of trade. Many ports and cities were there. Trade of silk and cotton, wooden furniture, liquor, steel was developed. French East India company was existed for foreign trade. But by the negligence of government and exploitation by upper class downfall of traders was began.

**3) Injustice in tax system** : There was very much injustice in tax system in France before revolution. Burdon of taxes was imposed on common people. Relatives of royal family, ministers, feudals, clergies had concession in taxes. Common man had to pay 80% income as tax. There were not rules for taxation. Tax collection was inhuman.

**4) Bankruptcy of France** : Due to oppressive government people were in the calamity like proverty, starvation, hard work. Economic condition of people was worst. Government did not took care of it. In addition to it offensive policy of rulers, expenditure of royal family; loan on nation etc. made nation bankrupt. Expenditure to build palace was 30 crore franks, annual expenditure of royal family was 20 lac pounds. 1800 labours were working in Varsailles palace. It affected treasury so king decided to collect new tax. It increased unrest.

**5) Effect of American war of independence** - Thirteen American colonies fought against British empire during 1776 to 1783 and got independence. In 1776 England declared war against America. Under the leadership of Lafayat French troops were sent to help America. England was defeated. French army got valuable experience and inspiration there. They thought that we can also overthrow unwanted own government. It is notable that this Lafayat played very important role in the French revolution. In this way, by the above causes favourable condition to French revolution was created. In this situation new tax was imposed by king, which was opposed and Louis 16th was compailed to call session of Estate General in the beginning of 1789. From there the course of revolution began.

**Course of the Revolution of 1789 -**

**Meeting of Estates - General** - It was first aspect in the course of revolution. Louis 16th tried to improve economic situation through finance ministers like Targot, Nekar, Kelon etc. But he failed in it. Then he imposed new taxes, but Paris Parliament opposed him. So he decided to call a meeting of Estates General (Loksabha) to get concent for new taxes and loan. In the very beginning of 1789 elections were held. After 178 years Louis 16th called the meeting of new Loksabha in palace of Versailles. On first day he addressed parliament. Traditionally the members of Upper and Lower class were working in separate houses. But at this time members of common people strongly demanded that members of both classes should work together and in one house only. But upper class members rejected it. In order to show equality common members remained firm. But Louis supported upper class members. It increased clashes and revolution of 1789 was began.

**National Assembly** - On 17 June, 1789, members of common people announced themselves 'National Assembly'. Then National Assembly began to write constitution for nation. Appealed to member of upper class to join Assembly. Meanwhile struggle betweenking and Assembly increased. By the advise of queen, upper class Louis 16th opposed Assembly. On 20th June members of Assembly came to palace for meeting. But it was surrounded by military. So the members furiously gathered on Tennis court. They took oath, under chairmanship of Belli, "all should work unitedly upto the completion of liberal constitution." It is known as 'Tennis court Oath'. Mirabu and Abesais played important role at this time. Some members of upper class joined Assembly. Considering changed situation Louis accepted demand of joint meeting.

**Fall of the Bastitille** - 14 July 1789 On 23rd June, king called joint meeting, but upper class members did not cooperated, so king asked members of Assembly to quit hall. But they rejected. Mirabu said, we are reprentatives of nation, will not leave hall untill death. Our opponents will be supposed traitors. Then also struggle between Assembly and King grew day by day. On 9th July 1789 Assembly formed constituent assembly, people awakened all over nation, organised public meetings. Prepared, tri-colour national flag of red, white-blue. People supported National Assembly, at the same time King gathered military to crush Assembly. Leaders were arrested so on 14th July revolutionaries attacked fort of Bastille. As a symbol of despotic rule. The Lonny was chief of fort. Many people, soldiers were killed. After fall of Bastille many prisoners were emancipated. Flag was unfurled on fort, on account of this victory, 14th July celebrated as a 'national day.'

**Revolution of 4th August** - Fall of Bastille created enthusiasm among people. Revolution was now spread all over nation. Feudals was target of revolutionaries. Many feudals were killed. Their record was burnt. Many feudat joined revolutionaries. On 4th August meeting of feudals was called. Noalis, a feudal, declared willingly, that he was joining revolution and giving up all his feudal rights. Many other feudals and clergies followed him. Many resolutions were passed on 4th August upto midnight. It is said that in a one night feudalism was destroyed, that was social revolution of 4th August 1789. But Louis 16th learned nothing so far. But ambitious Marie Antoinet was trying to destroy revolution, under the leadership Count of Artois, the brother of Louis 16th, They insulted national flag. Now people went, by Morcha, on Versailles, arrested king and queen and brought them to Paris, kept in Tulriz palace as a house arrest.

**Effects of Revolution on France and Europe** –

**Effects on France** –

**1) Victory of the principles** - liberty, equality, fraternity were principles of Revolution. Rousseau said, man is born free. It was included in declaration of human rights. Everybody is equal before law and have a right of justice. There is not any special right to anybody. People have right to overthrow despotic rule. It was proved by French revolution. Backward society was emancipated from slavery and unequality.

**2) Loss of lives and Money** - During course of revolution the struggle between royal soldier and revolutionaries had happened, in which loss of many lives took place. There was monarchy in many countries. All such nations became rivals of revolution and France. In the struggle between France and coaliation of Austria, Prussia, Spain, Holand etc. so many soldiers and people were killed. In the course of revolution during reign of Terror thousands of people were massacred. There was much monetary loss also.

**3) End of unlimited monarchy** - From 1553 to 1789, i.e. from Henary Fourth to Louis 16th the unlimited monarchs of Burbo dynasty ruled France. Louis 14th used to say 'I am the state.' During reign of Louis 16th there was climax of injustice and oppression. By the revolution of 1789 people got chance to end such monarchy. The wrong idea like, king means part of God, came to an end.

**4) End of Feudalism** - Feudalism was a feature of medieval period, which was ended by this revolution. Feudals of France were rich and having many priviledges and concessions. They were exploiting common people. So very much unrest was among people against them. In course of revolution people burnt their properties, record, many feudals were killed. Government confiscated their land and destroyed special rights and concessions.

**5) Rise of effective middle class** - Middle class led the revolution. After revolution political leadership from this class came ahead. All special rights of upper class were destroyed and equality existed. There was influence of this class in National Assembly, Estates General, Constituent Assembly. They were all against unequality. So they destroyed it. Their political and social prestige was enhanced. They implimented democracy in France.

**6) Declaration of human** rights - The French declaration of human rights was based on thoughts of French Philosophers, was valuable like Magna charta of England and American declation of freedom. Emancipation of man, fundamental rights and welfare of man were its objectives. Liberty, equality, fraternity, nationality, fundamental rights, private property were included in it. It was implimented after revolution. Slavery, unequality was destroyed.

**7) Religious reforms** - Religious centres and clergies were much responsible for revolution. Many bad things were going on in religious field so there was very much unrest in society against clergies. Revolutionaries destroyed their special rights, properties of church, land was confiscated. Educational rights were taken off. Religious institutions brought under control of government.

**8) Rise of Nationalism** - Revolution destroyed unequality it created unity among people and got inspiration to nationalism. They successfully opposed internal and external rivals of the revolution. The democratic movement began in Europe and then in world also.

**9) Economic development** - Due to revolution France developed economically. Pre-revolutionary France was bankrupt. In the course of revolution many important decisions were taken. For example lands of upper class were confiscated and distributed among poor people. 80 lack farmers got its benefit. National Assembly provided attention towards development of agriculture. It increased production. Took care of wel-fare of workers. Developed trade and industry. Economically France was developed.

**10) Rise of parliamentry democracy** - French Philosophers like Rousseau, Montesque had awakened people and created favourable background for democracy in France. In the course of revolution National Assembly written constitution for nation. Bicameral legislative council, independent judiciary, right of voting, principle of election, every democratic factor was implimented. Representatives of people got right to prepare laws for nation.

**11) Rise of Napoleon Bonaparte** - It is said that Napoleon was the child of French revolution. Napoleon as a General managed all internal and external rivals of revolution. He became very much popular among French people. He took its benefit and in 1799 with military revolution captured power if France. Like this revolution had affected France.

**Effects on Europe** –

**1) Gift of principles** - liberty, equality, fraternity :- Europe and world received valuable gift of the principles like liberty, equality and fraternity from French revolution. Man is free inborn, all are equal before law. Man has right to fight for liberty and justice. Europe got such modern thoughts.

**2) Unlimited monarchy, feudalism, religious centres - shocked** : Unlimited monarchs, feudals and clergies were exploiting common people continuously. Similar condition was almost in all Europe. Revolution ended that injustice. Monarchy was replaced by democracy, all special rights and concessions of feudals and clergies were denied. Equality was established. It affected other countries also. People got inspiration and movements began against those injustice factors. It was the beginning of modern age in Europe.

**3) Beginning of reforms in all fields** - Due to revolution liberalism, nationality, classless society was existed in France. Property of feudals and cleraies was confiscated. Feudalism was no more. Clergies were now appointed by government. Agriculture, trade and business improved. Other countries of Europe also got inspiration and they began reforms.

**4) Inspiration to nationalist movements and democracy** - Principles like liberty, equality and equality of revolution created equality and unity among people. It helped to increase nationality. On the basis of such merits they got rid of all calamities and revolution was successful. Getting inspiration the movements of unification began in Germany, Italy, Russia etc. So history of 19th century of Europe is the history of nationalism.

**5) Development of democracy** - Revolution destroyed socio, economic unequality and established democracy in France. Robespiar said to eradicate crimes and oppressions in world is the responsibility of French revolution. Other nations will follow France. Pear, a revolutionary, said to soldiers, you fight for your house, members of family, nation and democracy. The central idea of revolution was, welfare of people. King and representatives are servants of society. People can overthrow injustice rule, it is their right. It helped to develop democracy in Europe.

**Conclusion**: In 1794 Robespier was hanged and the reign of Terror ended. Then the Directory came into power in 1795. Napoleon Bonaparte rose as a powerful General of France and defeated rivals like Austria, Sardenia etc. He became very popularity in France. Taking this advantage with the help of military, on 10th Nov. 1799 he dissolved the Directory and announced a Consulate of three members to run the administration of France. He became the first consul (member). In this way Napoleon came to power. In 1804, he was declared as the Emperor of France. The revolution changed the life of mankind. It ended medieval administration and marked the beginning of modern period.