



মিণিগোৱাক্ষেত্ৰৰ অৰ্থে নক্সাশাস্ত্ৰ (অংক)

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (S)

Government of Manipur

UNIT-I
CHAPTER-I
THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

NOTES

- ❖ The French Revolution was a great historical event in the modern European History. It began in the year 1789 and ended in the late 1790s with the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte. All through that time, people of France were levelling and restructuring their country's political landscape uprooting centuries old institutions such as absolute monarchy and feudal system.
- ❖ Before the French Revolution, the French Society was divided into three Estates. The first Estate included the Clergy, the second Estate included the nobles and the third Estate included the rest of the population. Most of the taxes were used to be paid by the third Estate people while the other two upper Estates enjoyed various privileges.
- ❖ In 1774, Louis XVI ascended the throne of France. He belonged to the Bourbon dynasty of France and he was married to Marie Antoinette of Austria. Very unluckily when he ascended the throne, the treasury was almost empty due to prolong war's debt and extravagant lifestyle of his ancestors along with the cost of support to American war of Independence forced him to convene the long neglected Estates General just to introduce new taxes in the name of solving the increasing financial crisis. This in reality caused more discontent among the masses and at last, it led to the revolution.
- ❖ The actual revolution began on July, 1789 with the storming of the Bastille, the fortress prison. The Bastille was hated by everybody as it stood as a symbol of the autocratic power of the French Monarchy. The fortress was demolished and a chain of events were started by the affected middle class and the lower classes. The revolution was caused mainly due to widespread discontent with the monarchy and the poor economic policies of king, Louis XVI, who met his death by guillotine, as did his wife Marie Antoinette.
- ❖ Although, the French Revolution failed to achieve all its goals, it played a critical role in shaping modern nations by showing its goals. The social and political structure of France was completely changed due to this revolution. It brought an end to the French Monarchy, feudalism and took political power from the Catholic Church. It spread new ideas to Europe including ideas of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. These new ideas continued to influence Europe and help in shaping many of European modern day governments.