



Mains Practice Question

Q. Describe the legacy of the French Revolution for the people of the world during the nineteenth and twentieth century. (150 Words)

27 Dec, 2021 GS Paper 1 History

Approach

- Explain the significance of the French Revolution
- Enumerate how the revolution left a deep impact in the lives of common people across the globe
- Conclude suitably

Answer

The French Revolution was a watershed event in modern European history that began in 1789 and ended in the late 1790s with the ascent of Napoleon Bonaparte. During this period, French citizens razed and redesigned their country's political landscape, uprooting centuries-old institutions such as absolute monarchy and the feudal system.

The revolution left a lasting legacy upon the people of the nineteenth and twentieth century which could be manifested through various ways such as:

- **Gift of principles:** Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: Europe and the world received the valuable gifts of principles like liberty, equality and fraternity from the French Revolution. French Revolution imparted many such modern thoughts to people across the world.
- **Getting rid of monarchy, feudalism:** Unlimited monarchs, feudal lords and clergies were exploiting common people continuously. Similar conditions prevailed in almost every country in Europe. Revolution ended that injustice. Monarchy was replaced by Democracy, all special rights and concessions of feudal lords and clergies were denied. People got inspiration and movements began against those factors of injustice. It was the beginning of the modern age in Europe
- **Beginning of reforms in all fields:** Due to Revolution's ideas of liberalism, nationalism etc. classless society began to emerge in France. Clergies were now appointed by the government. Agriculture, trade and business improved. Other countries of Europe also got inspiration and they began reforms.
- **Inspiration to nationalist movements:** Principle of equality created unity among people which created the feeling of nationalism. Getting inspiration from the French Revolution, the movements of unification began in Germany, Italy, Russia etc.
- **Development of democracy:** Revolution destroyed socio-economic inequality and established democracy in France. The central idea of the revolution was the welfare of people. King and representatives were to act as servants of society. People began raising voices against the unjust rule as a matter of their right. It helped to develop democracy in Europe as well.

Although the French Revolution, at times degenerated into a chaotic bloodbath, it played a critical role in shaping modern nations by showing the world the power inherent in the will of the people. Memories of the French Revolution of 1789 are not only historical in nature, but also constitute a legacy that continues till date in the form of human values and rights.

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