BHIC 111: HISTORY OF MODRERN EUROPE- I (C. 1780-1939)
(TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS)

Course code: BHIC-111
Assignment Code: BHIC-111/ASST/TMA/2026-27
Marks: 100

Note: There are three Sections in the Assignment. You have to answer all questions in the Sections.

Assignment-I

Answer the following in about 500 words each.

1. What are the factors that prepared the ground for the revolutionary change in France? 20
2. Discuss the impact of industrialization on urban growth. 20

Assignment -II

Answer the following in about 250 words each.

3. Write a note on the contribution of early socialist thinkers. 10
4. What was Metternich system? Why did it fail? 10
5. How did the liberal democracies foster the growth of nationalism in Europe? 10

Assignment- III

Answer the following in about 100 words each.

6. Bureaucracy 6
7. Religious divide and Concordat 6
8. Women rights movement in 19^{th}-20^{th} century Europe 6
9. Idea of German nation 6
10. The Stalinist Thirties 6

1. What are the factors that prepared the ground for the revolutionary change in France? 20

Answer

The French Revolution of 1789 did not arise from a single incident. It emerged from an interaction of unequal social institutions, fiscal crisis, changing ideas and political mismanagement. Although France possessed considerable wealth and an influential monarchy, its political order had become increasingly difficult to reconcile with the aspirations of a changing society. The following conditions prepared the ground for revolutionary change.

Inequalities of the Old Regime

French society was conventionally divided into three estates: the clergy, the nobility and the Third Estate. The first two estates enjoyed important legal and social privileges. Many nobles retained seigneurial dues, preferential access to prestigious offices and exemptions from some direct taxes. The Church owned substantial land, collected tithes and possessed great institutional authority. The Third Estate included wealthy merchants and professionals as well as artisans, labourers and peasants. Its members differed greatly in wealth, yet bore much of the tax burden and lacked proportionate political influence. This contradiction between economic contribution and inherited privilege caused resentment.

The peasantry particularly disliked seigneurial payments, church tithes and various royal taxes. In many regions, communal rights and traditional obligations created disputes over land and harvests. Urban wage earners experienced insecurity because food absorbed much of their income. At the same time, educated members of the bourgeoisie believed that talent and property should count for more than noble birth. Thus the demand for change came from groups with different immediate interests but a shared objection to privilege.

Financial breakdown and taxation

The monarchy's repeated wars and borrowing produced a serious fiscal crisis. Support for the American War of Independence added to the burden left by earlier European conflicts. Large debt-service payments consumed government revenue. The existing tax system was inefficient and uneven: indirect taxes affected ordinary consumers, while privileged bodies defended exemptions. Successive ministers, including Turgot, Necker and Calonne, considered reforms, but attempts to broaden taxation faced resistance from powerful interests and institutions. A government unable to reform its revenues was also unable to regain public confidence.