

## Russian Revolution : 1917

- 1.** The Russian Revolution of 1917 was one of the most significant events of 20th century. It established the ideology of Marxism. It was a great revolution after French revolution which was not limited to Russia but affected several countries of the world.
- 2.** The great revolution in Russia took place in two stages. The first stage of Russian Revolution began in March 1917 with the overthrow of the Czar Nicholas II. The second stage in Nov. of the same year led to the establishment of the world's first communist state by Bolsheviks under Lenin.
- 3.** The basic causes of the revolution were deep-seated. The government was autocratic. The Czar was the source of all authority and his powers were vigorously exercised by corrupt and inefficient bureaucracy. The general standard of living of the people was tragically low. There was little social freedom. All Russians were forced to support the orthodox church.
- 4.** The immediate cause of the event was however the suffering and confusion caused by Russian disastrous defeats during world war I. Her armies lacked arms and ammunition. Prices soared high and the economy was in shambles.
- 5.** Russian Revolution began with March Revolution (February Revolution, according to old Russian Calender). Disorders broke out in Petrograd (now Leningrad), the Russian capital, in March 1917. Czar Nicholas II was forced to abdicate. (He and his family were later killed by the revolutionaries).
- 6.** A provisional government composed of liberal and democratic elements (Mensheviks group) under the successive premierships of Prince Lvov and then Aleksandr Kerensky lost ground to the radical wing (Bolsheviks group) of the Social Democratic Labour Party.
- 7.** The Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, seized Power in Petrograd on Nov. 7, 1917—November Revolution (October Revolution, according to the old Russian calender). The Kerensky Government was overthrown and authority was vested in a council of Commissars (Ministers) with Lenin as Premier.
- 8.** The new Government immediately decreed the abolition of private land ownership and set up a dictatorship of the Proletariat—actually of the communist Party, as the Bolsheviks came to be called.
- 9.** The Bolsheviks extended their authority over a large part of European Russia, but elsewhere they faced the resistance of the anti-Bolshevik Parties. The

resulting civil war lasted till 1920 and was complicated by ' foreign intervention. The communists were ultimately in undisputed control of the country.

**10.** In the period between 1917 and 1920, the Communists took drastic action against internal enemies, or counter-revolutionaries, as they were called. Former landlords, capitalists, Czarist officers, etc. were arrested, exiled or executed, the Czar and his family were killed.

**11.** In 1923, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.) came into being. Its constitution declared the establishment of a 'republic of workers and peasants'. Ownership of the means of production, including land, factories, mines, banks and railroads, was vested in the state. The state which is known officially as the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U. S.S.R.), also commonly referred to as the Soviet Russia, or just Russia.

**12.** Lenin died in 1924 and was succeeded by Stalin (1924-53).

