

V SEMESTER
HISTORY HONOURS

- **TOPIC: EFFECTS OF INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION**
- References:
- Hobsbawn, The Age of Revolution
- Robert C Allen, The British Industrial Revolution
- T S Ashton, The Industrial Revolution

The Industrial Revolution was a great landmark in the history of the modern world. It brought about a momentous changes in the economic, social and political life of the people. The effects of the industrial Revolution may be studied under the following heads:

1.ECONOMIC EFFECTS:

- 1. Immediate result of the Industrial Revolution- expansion of Industry. Small scale production gave way to manufacture in large scale; cottage industry replaced by factory system of production by machines. The introduction of machines revolutionised the whole system and the pace of production. This was the new factory system.

2. Due to increased output at a short time, **cost of production became low** and this led to expansion of trade and commerce.

3. The **sale of manufactured goods in foreign markets brought immense wealth** which was again invested in the setting up of more factories and industries.

4. **Mercantile Capital** (money gained through trade and commerce) was converted into **Industrial Capital**. This led to rapid economic development of England.

5. The Industrial Revolution increased the national wealth of England; wealth utilized in opening up more mills and factories and the entire country looked like a workshop. Thus it led Napoleon of France to name England as a “Nation of Shopkeepers.” England became very wealthy, she enriched her military strength by developing her weapons & thus defeated France.

6. British finance and British Technicians helped the Industrial revolution spread rapidly in Holland, Belgium and France. Germany launched her ambitious industrial programme followed by **USA**. By the end of 19th Century, it had spread to Asia especially Japan.

The Industrial Revolution had some **good effects**:

1. There was a **rise of employment in newly set up factories and mills**, thus leading to huge **migration of people** from rural to urban areas.
2. **New Industrial towns emerged** with new population like Manchester, Lancashire, Liverpool, Birmingham etc in England

3.The **standard of living of the people** was upgraded with better health facilities. Mortality rate decreased. New medicines and drugs were available in the towns for health care.

4. There was the rise of **two broad classes of people- The Capitalist or Bourgeoisie (Haves) and the Working Class or Proletariat (Have-nots)**. There was a sharp difference in wealth between the two classes.

Bad effects of the Revolution were:

- 1. The revolution led to the rise of Economic Imperialism. Demand for more raw materials and markets for finished goods led to a scramble for economic domination and search for new colonies, thus leading to colonisation of Asia and Africa.
 2. Economic exploitation of colonies led to the division of the world into two-
(1) Economically advanced or developed countries and (2) Under-developed or backward countries.

3. The condition of the working class deteriorated. Their working hours was long under unhygienic conditions. Salary was low.

4. It encouraged the setting up of secret underground movements and Trade Unions to demand for better working conditions and high salary.

2. SOCIAL EFFECTS:

1. The Industrial Revolution transformed agricultural societies into industrial societies.
2. Growth of population in England. In 1760 it was six million to 36 million in 1900.

3. The Industrial Societies had two classes of people – Capitalist class who were very rich and the Proletariat who were very poor thus giving rise to class struggle between Labour and Capital. The policy of *Laissez faire* or free enterprise encouraged the exploitation of the labourer by the capitalist class.

4. The working conditions of the labourer was hazardous, he had to work in a mill for nearly twelve to fourteen hours in extremely unhygienic conditions. Women and children were mostly employed in textile mills. Children below the age of twelve clothed in rags worked in factories in miserable conditions.

5. The worker's families were crowded and lived in **unhygienic living conditions lacking water and sanitation**. Therefore children easily fell sick and died. Cholera epidemics spread quickly.

6. Due to the absence of parents, the children became delinquents as their education was neglected.

7. With the realization of impending violent protests, **Factory Acts** were passed in England which regulated the working hours of female and child labour. Another Act prohibited women and children from working in the mines. **Free elementary education** was provided, **Old age Pensions Act, National Health Insurance Acts** were passed and social welfare measures was recognised.

POLITICAL EFFECTS: The social and economic changes got reflected in politics of every country.

1. Each country came under the increasing control of the Industrial Capitalists thus the national policy of European countries became **Imperialism**.

2. Rise of the working class movement; 1848
Chartist movement started, became violent when the workers failed to get their demands. In 1868 the
Trade Union Congress founded in Manchester. In the US, two trade Unions formed: (Noble Order & Knights of Labour) The Labour movement became strong ,led to Labour Party formation in England. Gradually Britain became a true democracy.

Conclusion: In spite of the evils that followed the Industrial Revolution, there were benefits reaped from the industrial changes and technology. The *application of science* to industry has not only made life comfortable but it has resulted in the expansion of the horizon of human thought and imagination.

India was badly affected because she was reduced to – a. supplier of cheap raw materials to feed British industries & b. a ready market for British products.

Thankyou..

Dr Anjalee M Shangpliang
Associate Professor
Deptt of History