

The Nationalist Movement in Indo-China

Practice Questions

Q. 1. What does Indo-china comprise of?

Answer: Indo-China comprises the modern countries of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. For a long time, its history remained under the shadow of the Chinese Empire and culture. But the French colonization of Vietnam changed its course altogether.

Q. 2. Why did the French follow a deliberate policy of failing the Vietnamese students in the final year?

Answer: The French needed an educated local labor force which could work under them and do not question their domination. They opposed full access to French education as they feared that if the Vietnamese became well educated they would lose their jobs. Thus, it followed a deliberate policy of failing the Vietnamese students in the final year so that they could not qualify for better-paid jobs.

Q. 3. What were the religious beliefs of the people of Vietnam?

Answer: Vietnam's religious beliefs were a mixture of Buddhism, Confucianism, and local practices. It was challenged by the introduction of Christianity by French Missionaries.

Q. 4. What ended the conflict between the French and Vietnam?

Answer: The defeat of French by the Viet Minh at the battle of Dien Bien Phu in May 1954, ended the conflict between the French and Vietnam. The Vietnamese captured more than 16,000 soldiers of the French Expeditionary Corps. This led to the division of the country of Vietnam.

Q. 5. What was Napalm?

Answer: Napalm was a chemical weapon that was used by the US on bombing Vietnam. It was an organic compound used to thicken gasoline for firebombs. The mixture which when comes in contact with surfaces like the human body, sticks and continues to burn. It was also used in the Second World War.

Q. 6. Explain the view of Paul Bernard regarding the economy of Vietnam.

Answer: According to Paul Bernard, the economy of the colonies need to be developed so that it could offer better profits for French business. Bernard suggested that the economy of Vietnam faced several barriers such as high population levels, low agricultural productivity and extensive indebtedness amongst the peasants. In order to reduce rural poverty and increase agricultural productivity, land reforms were necessary.

Q. 7. Explain the two opinions on the question of the use of French schools established for the Vietnamese in Vietnam.

Answer: The two opinions put forth are:

- Some emphasized the need to use the French language as the medium of instruction. As a result, the Vietnamese would be introduced to the culture and civilization of France that would help create an 'Asiatic France solidly tied to European France'.
- Another group opposed to French being the only medium of instruction. In their view, Vietnamese should be taught in lower classes and French in the higher classes. And those who learned French and acquired French culture would be rewarded with French citizenship.

Q. 8. How did nationalism develop in Vietnam?

Answer: Several factors led to the rise of nationalism in Vietnam. They are:

- Economic exploitation of Vietnam by the French. The French exploited its resources and suppressed the labor force.
- French imposed their culture and traditions on Vietnamese and undermine their native culture.
- French introduced a western style education system which dismantled the traditional system of education. As a result, students and teachers played a crucial role in creating nationalism.
- French promoted Christianity as the only religion. Thus, the religious movements of Vietnam opposed this imposition.

All this led to the emergence of Nationalism.

Q. 9. Explain three features of the 'Ngo Dinh Diem' regime.

Answer: Following were the features of 'Ngo Dinh Diem':

- The regime was repressive and authoritarian. Anyone who opposed him was called a communist and was put in jail and killed.
- Ngo Dinh Diem retained Ordinance 10, a French law that permitted Christianity but outlawed Buddhism.
- National Liberation Front (NLF) emerged as an opposition group against his dictatorial rule.

Q. 10. What was the development project undertaken by the French in Vietnam?

Answer: French undertook a number of developmental projects in Vietnam. They are:

- French brought the idea of 'civilizing mission' and developed modern education. They dismantled the traditional education system and established French schools in Vietnam. They provided western style education and conducted classes in science, hygiene, and French.
- French laid out a system for maintaining health and hygiene in the city of Hanoi. They built a sewer system which led to the creation of a hygienic environment and protected breeding ground for rats.
- They developed a system of irrigation and built canals. And drained lands in the Mekong Delta. They also encouraged rice cultivation.
- They developed infrastructure projects to help transport goods for trade and move military garrisons.
- They also built roads and railway lines. French undertook the Construction of a trans-Indo-China rail network. A second line, linking Vietnam to Siam (as Thailand was then called), via the Cambodian capital of Phnom Penh was also built.

Q. 11. Explain the major challenges faced by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

Answer: The Democratic Republic of Vietnam was formed in 1945 under the Chairmanship of Ho Chi Minh. However, it faced a number of challenges.

- The French posed a problem to the new republic. They tried to regain control of Vietnam by using Bao Dai as their puppet. Faced with the French offensive, the Vietminh were thus forced to retreat to the hills.
- The French Commander, General Henry Navarre, was very confident of his success against the Vietnamese. But on 7 May 1954, the Vietminh annihilated and captured more than 16,000 soldiers of the French Expeditionary Corps. Thus, finally fighting for 8 years, the French were defeated at Dien Bien Phu.
- Following this defeat, the Vietnamese were persuaded to accept the division of the country. North and south were split. The north was ruled by Ho Chi Minh whereas the south was ruled by Bao Dai. This division led to a series of conflicts that turned Vietnam into a battlefield bringing death and destruction all over.
- A coup led by Ngo Dinh Diem overthrew Bao Dai's regime and established a reign of terror in South Vietnam.
- When Communists began to gain grounds in Vietnam, the USA entered into the country with the aim of overthrowing the communist regime. This marked the beginning of Vietnam's war with the USA in which millions of Vietnamese lost their lives.

Q. 12. The famous blind poet NguyenDinhChieu bemoaned what was happening to his country.

I would rather face eternal darkness

Then see the faces of traitors

I would rather see no man

Then encounter one man's suffering

I would rather see nothing

Then witness the dismembering of the country in decline.

(a) What does the poet express in the given stanza?

(b) What values does it exhibit?

Answer: (a) The poet expresses his grief and sadness over the situation of the country of Vietnam. He is shaken by the condition of the colonized country. Where there is no freedom, no value of indigenous culture by the colonizers, discrimination in education and oppression of the masses.

(b) The poet exhibits the value of life and freedom. It also exhibits the value of native culture and heritage.