***All Saints Secondary School Oyigbo, Rivers State.***

***History Department.***

***JSS I***

***Week seven topic; Major Centralized States in Pre-colonial Nigeria (Oyo Empire)***

***Decline and the fall of the old Oyo Empire***

The old Oyo Empire reached the zenith of its power in the first half of the 18th century.

In the second half of that century (18th century) , the first signs of the decline of the empire began to appear with the breakaway of Kings formerly subjects to the Alafin of Oyo. For instance, in 1781, Gezo , the king of Dahomey kingdom, refused to continue the payment of the crushing annual tribute ( tax ) to the Alafin.

***Factors Responsible for the Decline and Fall of the Oyo Empire***

1. The weakness of the central government.

Due to the struggle for power between the Alafin and the Bashrun, such as Bashrun Gaha, civil war resulted to the decline of the central government.

2. Some Oba's and subject states rebelled against the Alafin E.g Egba under Lishabi and Dahomey kingdom under Gezo.

3. Lost of commerce or trade: Oyo empire lost its place as centre of inland trade, because of coastal trade (slave trade and later legitimate trade).

4. The European slave trade: Trans- Atlantic slave trade led to civil wars among Yoruba Oba's which affected the central government.

5. External Invaders: External Invaders such as the fulani Jihadist and Dahomey warriors, attacked and weakened the empire.

Oyo army was so weak and was not strong enough to crush these revolts.

The attack by the fulani Jihadist ( Sokoto jihad of 1804) marked the final breakup and eclipse of Oyo empire.

***Why the Oyo Empire Lasted for so Long***

Oyo Empire lasted from the 15th century to the 19th century. Several factors were responsible for this.

1. The Oyo army was efficient.

2. The central government was efficient.

3. Much wealth was generated from a sound economy.

4. Capable and capacity Alafins: Alafin Sango and Orompoto managed the empire very well.

5. There was relative peace and unity in Yoruba land.

***Assignment***

1. Discuss the negative effects of the fall of old Oyo empire.

***Submit via WhatsApp to 0706 731 8898, or at the school’s security post***