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suraj_winner | rajawat.rs.surajsingh@gmail.com | www.gktoday.in/upsc/ias-general-studies

Modern World History-1: Brief History of Europe before 18th century

[Integrated IAS General Studies:2016-17](#)

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We begin our study with a short summary of key events in ancient and medieval Europe history. This part is not in your syllabus, but we have included here just for sake of background knowledge.

Roman Empire

From 2nd century BC to 5th century AD, the towns of Europe and Middle East were ruled by the Roman Empire. At its zenith, the Roman empire spread in east up to Greece, Turkey, Syria, Mesopotamia and Persia; in south up to include the Africa, North of the Sahara from Egypt to the Atlantic; in north and west of Europe within its borders the Danube and the Rhine, and included Great Britain south of Scotland Hadrian's Wall.



As Rome grew in size and population, the rulers of Rome became very corrupt. Rather than serving the interests of the Empire, rulers, generals, and politicians became more concerned with protecting themselves. Civil wars between groups waged, taxes increased, and inflation soared. To stem the forces of history, the empire was divided in two {East and West} by Diocletian. The Eastern Empire was able to thrive, but western was susceptible to invasion and ruin. This ruin came in the form of invasions of nomadic tribes (including *Visigoths*, *Ostrogoths*, *Franks*, *Anglo-Saxons* etc) from the North. The once great Roman empire vanished by the dawn of 5th century.

In eighth century, there were serious attempts to re-establish the grandeur of the fallen Roman Empire. At that time, *Roman Catholic Church* was the only stable and unifying institution that



survived since the old Roman Days. It was able to dominate the lifestyle of the day and claimed superiority over all political establishments. The Church started imposing and deposing the emperors and thus became *superior to kings*. A complex relation between Church and State was established which continued for almost one thousand years.

Feudalism in Europe

Since it was practically difficult to maintain strict control over the widespread lands; governance rested mainly in the hands of local nobility. Theoretically, the king owned the land which he granted to the nobles called **Lords**; who in return would give service, usually in the form of military aid. This feudalism was somewhat similar to the [Indian Feudalism](#). However, it was also significantly different. These estates called **fiefs** were sometimes so large for a lord that he himself was unable to administer. So, the Lords pledged the fiefs and granted use of part of the land to lesser lords who pledged their service in return. This system continued on until, at the lowest level, the lord administered only a small feudal estate. This is something which we don't find in Indian Feudalism.

The farming and other labor on the land were performed by **serfs** who were bound to the land and actually transferred from one landlord to another with its title. They produced the necessities of the estate. In return, they received protection by the nobles and a share of the produce of the land.

The **serf was not a slave** theoretically for, a class of slaves, usually non-Christian prisoners, also existed altogether. Then, there was also a **small class of free men** who won their freedom by giving some special service or showing some extraordinary talent to their lords. They usually performed the special skills of craftsmen, artisans, and merchants. These free men later descended into the middle class in Europe.

The wars were common. The most affected people from these near constant wars were the people who lived in the serfs. The slave like status of the residents of these serfs was mainly because they needed constant protection from the wars.

The Economy of the Fiefs

Each fiefdom or serfdom was an **individual economic unit**, almost self sufficient due to the wars and due to the lack of trade. Each feudal estate featured a fortified castle surrounded by protective walls. The surrounding areas were the fields, herds and villages where serfs lived and worked. The serfs by their labor provided everything needed on the estate.

The Dark Ages

There was almost negligible travel, trade and communication in the medieval Europe. This was opposite to the Roman Empire in which there had been great and widespread trade relations. In



Medieval Europe, the travel became dangerous. The perils of travel along with the ignorance and lack of desire to change the situations led the trade to vanish. That is why the medieval Europe is called **Dark Ages**.

The Indian feudalism had also resulted in the immobility of the population and isolation from the rest of the world. Yet, the implication of the Indian Feudalism was very profound such as development of localized customs, languages and rituals.

The Medieval Europe is also designated as **Dark Ages** due to the fact that there was a steep *decline in learning and education*. The serfs and slaves were busy in their daily lives and there was no government to sponsor education. These were the times, when Asia was flourishing. Asia became the hub of knowledge, wealth and prosperity, much ahead of the contemporary Europe. The only centre of knowledge during these times was the **Roman Catholic Church**. This implies that the learning was generally religion based.

At the same time, there were also some true scholars, who isolated themselves from the serfs and fiefs and lived in various isolated places such as monasteries or Christian monastic schools. These monks were able to preserve the ancient writings of the advanced civilizations of the ancient era. Since, they were isolated; this treasure trove of knowledge remained hidden from the world for a long time, waiting for its rediscovery.

Impact of Feudalism on Social and Political Life

The impact of Feudalism on social and political life of Europe can be summarized in below points:

- Feudal was a self-perpetuating society for almost one thousand years. Feudalism decentralized the power of the state and made way for a weak governments. Feudal lords were the real power in their local provinces. Since the soldiers in a feudal army were as likely as not recruited and paid by the lord, kings were very dependent upon their loyalty and weakened because of this feudal system.
- A centralized government would mean a loss of local power of the feudal lords. The Church favored this system of weak monarchies.
- Both the old nobility and the high-ranking Church officials could lose much power of strong national governments developed.
- The lack of learning and education and the lack of travel and trade kept the society as it was. Even if new ideas, products, and methods were discovered, they were not widely introduced.

The Social Structure – Three Estates

During the middle Ages, the social structure was strictly divided into three classes or “**estates**”.



The **First Estate**, composed of the ordained officers of the Church, from pope to parish priest and wandering monk, constituted a separate class claiming authority from God. The **Second Estate** was made of the Nobles. The nobility, by virtue of its land ownership and its right to bear arms, made the nobles' primary function as warriors. **Third Estate** was made of everyone else, mostly peasants, which had no base for power. Problems with this social structure were inevitable. In due course of time, the rise of new economy led to the **Third Estate** became richer and more powerful than the Second Estate, whose members' wealth was based solely on land ownership.

First Estate

- Made up of clergy of Roman Catholic Church .
- Opposed the enlightenment ideas

Second Estate

- Made up of rich nobles.
- They held highest offices in government.
- They also disagreed about Enlightenment ideas

Third Estate

- Included bourgeoisie, urban lower class, and peasant farmers.
- Had no power to influence government.
- Were the drivers of the Enlightenment ideas

The Church Hegemony and Church – State Conflict

In 11th and 12th century, there was a significant conflict {called *Investiture Controversy*} between Church and State. This mainly referred to challenges given by the successive Popes to the authority of monarchs. Initially, the Papal Authority {hegemony of church} prevailed and reached its zenith in 13th century. Pope remained superior to the emperor. The bishops presided over bishoprics, as the governors had once presided over the Roman provinces. Local priests ministered to each local community. Those bishops who were geographically or politically important became *archbishops*.

Reasons of rise and decline of Church hegemony

One of the most important reasons for the rise of Church in medieval Europe is that it was far better organized than the political establishments. The extensive and systematic



organization of the Church gave it access to a great wealth. Further, Church actually provided the only real opportunity for an exceptional individual to excel and rise above the social status of his birth. The too much wealth led to corruption by the office holders of the Church and that led to loss of prestige by the end of the middle ages.

The Church Doctrines

In those days, the Church was the constant link between the common man and God. The doctrine of the Church held that *one could only get to heaven by doing good works and observing the sacraments*. The sacraments refer to the holy seven sacraments viz. *baptism, confirmation, communion, penance, holy matrimony, holy orders, and extreme unction or last rites*. The Church Doctrine said that these seven sacraments would keep an individual constantly connected with God and the Church from birth to death. The Individuals could be punished by **excommunication** {process of being cut off from the Church} when a person could not receive the sacraments.

Not only individuals but the Church could also **punish the entire geographic areas** via its **interdiction** which prohibited the performance of any of the sacraments in that particular geographical area. This implies that the **interdiction** was used as a powerful weapon against immoral, rebellious or independent feudal rulers.

These two instruments viz. excommunication and interdictions led to the so called religious wars called *Crusades*.

Crusades

The term crusade is somewhat similar to Jihad. It referred to a series of religious wars against *Muslims, pagans, heretics, and peoples under the ban of excommunication*. These wars were overseen by priests, directed at establishing control of Church, and involved persecution and driving out of non-catholic people from the “holy territory”. Crusades were also a response to the Turkish activity of restricting the religious pilgrimages and persecution of the Christians.

Since *Church promised salvation for all who fought in Crusades*, common people were attracted to this fight for *God and glory*. These wars continued sporadically for three centuries but not much successful politically mainly because of some reasons such as – Muslims were formidable enemies; the crusaders became more interested in fortune hunting and looting etc. Nevertheless, crusades brought tremendous economical, social and political changes. They helped in reestablishment of trade across territories as the soldiers brought back many of the products of the East including spices and textiles.

How crusades led to development of the Nation States?

The expansion of the trade led to development of new products and new merchant class for carrying



out the transactions. Thus, a whole new class of merchants appeared in the society. The cities began to grow as centers of population and trade. Many of the cities such as Venice and Pisa became great port cities. This was the development of the new economy of trade. This growing, neo-rich class could not fit into the centuries old system of existing political and social structure of feudalism. The ownership of land became less important. The decreasing importance of the land ownership eventually led to the breaking down of the feudal system. The traders and merchants developed their own system to bring order to the new economics. This new organization was known as **Guild System** which was mainly to maintain the quality and prices of goods and services. The Guild System allowed the merchants and craftsmen to maintain control over their own professions. Any outsider was forbidden to practice a trade or enter a business without the approval of the guild membership. Once established, the guilds would become as rigid in their own way as the old class structure. These merchants and craftsmen formed the basis for a new class of town dwellers, the **bourgeoisie and burgesses**. The political and social systems were not able to keep up with the economic changes. On the one side, there was a development of powerful and prosperous **cities** driven by the new economy of the merchant class. On the other hand, the estates and land remained in the hands of the landlords, who now lost their importance to the trading class.

Those monarchs who were willing to increase their power in the new society led to the rise of new centralized modern states. In the remote estates, many of the landowners had been killed during the Crusades leaving more land in the hands of fewer people. Now, the cities and towns started attaching their development to the Kings rather than the lords. They wanted a protection from this centralized monarchy against the lords. In return, they paid taxes to the King. King was now having more wealth in controlling the lord, who until now were independent of his authority. The strong kings were supported by the merchants in lieu of the protection, uniform law, measures and weights and several trade concessions. The wealth was used by the Kings to pay for new modern and well equipped armies and navies. Old nobility had no wealth to keep up with such changes. *This is how the crusades led to development of the nation states stimulated by the trade.*

Dawn of Renaissance

The increasing wealth, wider travel, and a greater knowledge of the outside world led to a new philosophy and outlook on life which is collectively called **Renaissance**. Up till now, the inspiration was mainly from the Church to have a better life in the heaven, now the man was interested in the earthly affairs and having a better life here in this world only, in which he lived. Thus, the Renaissance was the rebirth of the human spirit. This rebirth of the human spirit was reflected in the art, the architecture, the literature, the music, a new interest in learning and



scientific discovery, the rediscovered curiosity about the world bringing exploration and discovery, and in new political ideas. This new philosophy *which was human-centered and emphasized human reason*, was called **humanism** and dominated the period of the Renaissance.

The **Renaissance** did not come quickly or easily but for many centuries, much of the history of Europe saw a constant clash between the old traditions of the middle Ages and the new ways of the modern world.

Key Facts On renaissance

- Renaissance *was not a political or religious movement* because man continued to be obedient to the church, kings and other lords. However, his outlook changed. The changed outlook came in the aftermath of Crusades and culminated in the wealth of the new middle class. It was manifested in the way they lived, the way they thought, the way they spoke and the way they expressed themselves in art and literature. Man was now not interested in the blessed existence in heaven desperately wanted to establish their paradise on this planet and in this life. And they were successful to a great extent in doing so. Thus, *Renaissance was a state of mind*.
- In contrast with the medieval scholastic mode, the Renaissance was characterised by Humanism, which was not a philosophy but a method of learning of five humanities: poetry, grammar, history, moral philosophy and rhetoric.
- The Renaissance represents a *cultural rebirth* from the 14th through the middle of the 17th centuries. It is not characterised or known by wars but by the movements in the humanities catalysed by the rediscovery of ancient texts and the invention of printing, which democratized learning and allowed a faster propagation of ideas.

The Reformation

In the 16th century, the *reformation or Protestant Reformation* led to the ultimate assault upon the monopolistic power of the universal church. This great religious turmoil not only witnessed a great religious change, but also announced the beginning of a new era. It was initiated by John Wycliffe, Jan Hus, Martin Luther, John Calvin, and other early Protestants and precipitated by some great events such as Black Death, which eroded the faith of the people in Catholic Church. It was sparked by the 1517 posting of Luther's *Ninety-Five Theses*.

The Protestants protested the doctrines, rituals, leadership, and ecclesiastical structure of the Roman Catholic Church and the Papacy that governed it. This, as well as many other factors, such as spread of Renaissance ideas, the spread of the printing press, and the fall of the Eastern Roman Empire, contributed to the creation of Protestantism. Abuse and sale of **indulgences** was another catalyst for



reformation.

An indulgence was a promise of remission in part or in entirety of the penalty after death on account of sin. However, the sinner had to repent and do some form of penance. A part of the penance might be in the form of donating money for worthy ecclesiastical purposes.

The reformation began in Germany

The reformation began in Germany mainly because most of the Germans were not good Roman Catholics, either by temperament or by training. They were far away from Rome, and this distance made communication difficult. Also, there was no strongly centralised government in Germany to aid the church in carrying out its decrees. Germany was home of Martin Luther also.

Martin Luther

Martin Luther (1483-1546) was a fearless and dynamic critic of the church and a critic of the idea of eternal salvation. In 1517, he published his **95 Theses** in an attempt to get the Roman Catholic Church to stop selling **indulgences**, or 'get out of hell free' cards. Luther did not think the Church had the authority to grant such indulgences, especially not for money. Luther believed that salvation could be achieved through faith alone. The Church responded by labeling Luther a heretic, forbidding the reading or publication of his *95 Theses*, and threatening Luther with **excommunication**. Luther refused to recant his beliefs.

The next year, in 1521, Luther was summoned to appear at the **Diet of Worms**, where the leaders of the Holy Roman Empire would decide his fate. When Luther once again refused to recant his positions, the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V, ordered his arrest. Luther's supporters hid Luther in Wartburg castle, where he completed a translation of the Bible into German, as well as publishing a variety of treatises against the Church. By the time Luther returned from his exile, Germany was in the grip of a **Peasant Revolt**, as peasants burned and destroyed all things Catholic. Luther calmed the revolt in his hometown of Wittenberg and established his own Lutheran Church in 1526.

We note here that Luther held the Bible as the highest authority, higher even than the papacy. He realized that so long as people could not read the Bible, they would continue to fall for the lies and deceptions of Catholic ideology. Luther's supporters smuggled his translation out, and soon printing presses across Germany were cranking out copies of Luther's Bible. The publication had the desired effect. All across Germany, people started reading the Bible and began challenging the authority of the Church. In the coming years, a war broke out between Roman Catholics and Protestants. The war ended with a **Peace of Augsburg** (1555) which established that the German states could choose their religion between Lutheranism or Catholicism. Thus, Lutheranism was recognised and its rights were defined.



Luther's influence reached beyond the territorial limits of Germany. He appealed to individualism in religion and the spirit of individualism appealing doctrine in his justification by faith. Lutheranism spread into other countries especially to the Scandinavian states, where it was more generally accepted than in the Germany.

The Temporary nature of Peace of Augsburg

The **Peace of Augsburg** (1555) was a temporary peace between the Roman Catholicism and the Lutheranism. But it could not resolve the underlying religious conflict, which was made yet more complex by the spread of Calvinism throughout Germany in the years that followed. Addition of Calvinism implied that there would be a third major faith to the region, whose position was not recognized in by the Augsburg terms, to which only Catholicism and Lutheranism were parties. This was one of the main reasons behind the **thirty years war** that followed in the next century and which eventually evolved into modern state system in Europe.

Thirty Years War

The Thirty year war was fought between Catholics and Protestants in Central Europe between 1618 and 1648. It is considered to be one of the most devastating wars in Europe. Though the war took place mainly within modern-day Germany, many of Europe's nations were involved. Throughout this conflict, the Hapsburg rulers of the Holy Roman Empire sought to unify much of Central Europe under the Catholic faith. However, countries like Denmark, Sweden, and even Catholic France were not willing to let this occur. What ensued was a series of conflicts that would devastate German lands and see the deaths of many Europeans. The war ended with a series of treaties collectively called as "*Treaty of Westphalia*" (1648).

Outcome of Thirty Years War

The result of the thirty year war was that the *German princes could choose their own religion, as long as it was one of the big three*. The northern principalities remained primarily protestant while the southern principalities remained mainly Catholic. This is the situation even today over there. France emerged is the greatest power in Europe. Sweden emerged as the greatest power on the Baltic.

- This treaty ensured that the several hundred principalities of the Holy Roman Empire were free to govern themselves and the emperor's title was to remain little more than honorific.
- Under this peace, German princes were given the right to create political alliances outside the Holy Roman Empire.
- Calvinism was granted equal rights with Catholicism and Lutheranism.
- United Provinces of the Dutch Netherlands was recognized as sovereign and independent.
- Switzerland was recognized as sovereign and independent.



Modern World History-1: Brief History of Europe before 18th century

The treaty of Westphalia was although rejected by Pope, but this rejection was ignored showing the decline of the power of the Papacy. The Austrian Habsburg power was limited in the Holy Roman Empire. The office of the Holy Roman Emperor was ceremonial without real power in the German states of the Empire. The Independence of German states kept Germany divided until 1870.

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MWH-2: Revolutions and Political Developments (1750-1914)

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This document covers French Revolution, Rise and Fall of Napoleon Bonaparte , Napoleonic Wars – their outcome; War of Austrian Succession, American War of Independence, Rise of Nationalism, Unification of Italy, Unification of Germany, The Industrial Revolution, Mercantilism and related theories, Socialism and related concepts, Feminism: Seneca Falls Convention, Russian Revolution

Model Questions

1. The French revolution was ignited by the monarchical misrule and inspired and sustained by the lofty ideas. Discuss.
2. Discuss the outcomes of the French Revolution.
3. To what extent, the Theory of Separation of Powers was able to eliminate the three Estates structure of the French Monarchy? Examine.
4. Rousseau's political philosophy was so vague that it can hardly be said to point in any specific direction. Comment.
5. French political writers of the eighteenth century were influenced by Locke and also by the curious contracts which they perceived in the government of his country and their own. Comment.
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6. What were the reasons of War of the Austrian Succession? To what extent, it was able to settle the underlying issues between France and England? Discuss.
7. Examine the issues involved in the American civil war. Was it a contest between two separate nations?
8. The American War of Independence was a revolution that sought significant and deep societal change. Do you agree with this view? Argue.
9. American Revolution was a natural and even expected event in the history of colonial people who had come of age. Comment.
10. Critically examine the role played by Seneca Falls Convention towards rise of feminism in 19th century.
11. What do you understand by Nationalism? What fosters Nationalism? How did nationalism affect the political landscape of Europe in the late 19th century? Examine.
12. Differentiate Liberalism and Nationalism; and between Civic Nationalism and Ethnic Nationalism.
13. Nationalism worked as a force for disunity as well as unity. Comment.
14. What were the obstacles to Italian unification till 1852? How and with what methods was the unification of Italy achieved?



MWH-2: Revolutions and Political Developments (1750-1914)

15. "At the end of the battle of sedan (1870), Europe lost a mistress and gained a master." Discuss.
16. To what extent, the industrial revolution changed England in character & culture? Discuss.
17. "Though the businesses in continental Europe languished for adopting the British Miracle, yet most of the states could not do so as early as Britain." Discuss.
18. "Colonialism and Imperialism were born out of the cycle of industrialization, the development of new markets around the world, and the need for resources to supply the factories of Europe." Discuss.
19. "Industrial Revolution was a mixed blessing". Justify.
20. What do you mean by mercantilism? Discuss its main features and strategies.
21. What was the impact of Industrial Revolution on Mercantilism in Europe during the first decades of 18th century? Examine.
22. Examine the problems created by the quick growth of cities by the factory system during Industrial revolution in England.
23. What were the key ideas of John Stuart Mill? How did the social legislation passed by the British "Reform Parliament" contribute to the reform movement?
24. "On what grounds, socialism indicts capitalist system of being inefficient and wasteful, irrational, and unjust." Discuss.
25. What are the key principles of Socialism? In what way, the proponents of socialism achieve to establish a society on these principles? Discuss.
26. Why did Marx believe that the socialist revolution was inevitable? In what respects did his predictions prove incorrect? Examine.

The French Revolution

The French Revolution marked a turning point in the history of humankind as it put an end to the medieval monarchical absolutism, feudal laws and social inequality. It introduced for the first time the *idea of republicanism* based on "*Liberty, Equality and Fraternity*", which influenced the entire continent of Europe and also the world.

Causes of the French Revolution

The causes of the French revolution include the political, social and economic aspects that were prevalent in France before the outbreak of the revolution. Here is a brief summary of the same.

Political Causes

France was ruled by a dynasty called **House of Bourbon**, which firmly believed in Political absolutism and the *Divine Right theory* –that they were representatives of God and they were answerable only to God.



MWH-2: Revolutions and Political Developments (1750-1914)

Louis XIV (1638 – 1715) was a strong and powerful ruler from this *House of Bourbon*. He continued his predecessors' work of creating a centralized state governed from the capital. He sought to eliminate the remnants of feudalism from France and, by compelling many members of the nobility to inhabit his lavish Palace of Versailles, succeeded in pacifying the aristocracy. He compelled and seduced the nobles into becoming his ceremonial courtiers, further weakening their power.

By all these, Louis XIV became one of the most powerful French monarchs and consolidated a system of absolute monarchical rule in France that endured until the French Revolution. But his wars and his ways ruined the economy of France.

His successors Louis XV and Louis XVI were weak administrators. **Louis XVI** (1754-1793) was the most incompetent ruler and his wife and queen, *Marie Antoinette* interfered too much into the administration. She was thoroughly ignorant of the sufferings of the French people. However, she always favoured and protected the interests of the French nobles. She was such an opponent of the financial reforms, that she stood against everybody who dared to mention the word “economy” within her hearing.

Let Them Eat Cake

suraj_winner | rajawt.rs.surajsinh@gmail.com | www.gktoday.in/ups/ias-general-studies

The phrase Let them eat cake is often attributed to Marie Antoinette, but there is no evidence she ever uttered it, and it is now generally regarded as a “journalistic cliché”. It may have been a rumour started by angry French peasants as a form of libel. *Let them eat brioche.*”

Social Causes

The French society was divided into the three estates. The **first estate** was made up of the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church. It owned 10 percent of the land in France. It provided education and relief services to the poor and contributed about two percent of its income to the government. They had no political power but remained loyal to the king. The **Second Estate** was made up of rich nobles, much of whose wealth was in land. Although they made up only two percent of the population, they were owners of 20 percent of the land and paid almost no taxes. The majority of the clergy and the nobility scorned *enlightenment ideas as radical notions* that threatened their status and power as privileged persons. Both the first and second estate led a life of ease and pleasure without bothering about the wretched condition of the masses. About 98 percent of the people belonged to the **Third Estate** and they were denied all privileges. Traders, lawyers, owners of industries, government servants, peasants and workers were in this category. While the nobles and the clergy were exempted from paying taxes, the masses paid all the taxes.



The *Third Estate* itself was made up of three groups, which differed greatly in their economics. First among them was the **Bourgeoisie** – the merchants and artisans. These people were well educated and believed strongly in the ideals of liberty and equality. They paid high taxes and did not get the privileges that were meant for the two privileged estates. Some of them were very rich, even richer than the nobles but it pained them that their wealth did not entitle them to a greater degree of social status and political power. The second group was of the **cooks, servants, barbers and other service providers**. They were paid low wages and frequently out of work, they often went hungry. If the cost of bread rose, mobs of these workers might attack carts of grain and bread to steal what they needed.

The largest group within the *Third Estate* was of the **Peasants**. The peasants comprised more than 80 percent of total population of France. They paid around half their income in dues to nobles, *tithes* to the church, and taxes to the king's agents. They even paid taxes on such basic staples as salt. Hence it was said: “*the nobles fight, the clergy pray and the people pay*”.

Peasants joined the urban poor in resenting the clergy and the nobles for their privileges and special treatment. The heavily taxed and discontented Third Estate became the driver of the change.

Economic Causes

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The financial condition of France was very critical during the reign of Louis XVI. The national debt had increased beyond the limit. The national income was less than national expenditure.

The result was that the king tried to mobilize national income **by selling important offices of the government**. At last, the king appointed financial experts Turgot and Jacques Necker as Director-General of Finances. They tried to curtail royal expenditure and improve the income to the government. But their measures did not receive the support of the nobles. On their advice the queen Marie Antoinette removed them. Later, Calonne was appointed to look into the financial crisis. But he was not able to do anything but to levy fresh taxes. Therefore, Louis XVI was forced to convene the **Estates General** after a gap of 175 years, on May 5th, 1789.

Impact of the French Philosophers

The revolutionary ideas of these philosophers spread throughout France and created awareness among the masses. The French intellectuals gave the motto “*Liberty, Equality and Fraternity*” which became the watchwords of the revolution of 1789.

Inspiration from the American War of Independence

The independence of the thirteen American colonies from England provided a boost to the French people. The French captain Lafayette with his soldiers returned from America after helping the colonies to secure their independence. His experience in America along with the fighting spirit for



the cause of democracy reached the ears of the French and inspired them. Therefore, they decided to put an end to the despotic rule of the Bourbons.

Major Events of the French Revolution

Convening of the Estates-General

The financial condition of France was very critical during the reign of Louis XVI. The national debt had increased beyond the limit. King tried to mobilize national income *by selling important offices of the government but in vain*. At last, he appointed financial experts Turgot and Jacques Necker as Director-General of Finances. They tried to *curtail royal expenditure and improve the income to the government*. But their measures did not receive the support of the nobles. On their advice, queen *Marie Antoinette* removed them. Later, Calonne was appointed to look into the financial crisis. But he was not able to do anything but to levy fresh taxes. Louis XVI was forced to convene the *Estates General* after a gap of 175 years, on May 5th, 1789 with an objective to impose further taxes upon the Third and Second Estate. The Second Estate forced him to call a meeting of the *Estates-General*—an assembly of representatives from all three estates—to get approval for the tax reform. Thus, the beginning point of the French Revolution was the bankruptcy of the French Government.

National Assembly

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Under the assembly's medieval rules, *each estate's delegates met in a separate hall to vote, and each estate had one vote*. The two privileged estates could always outvote the Third Estate. The Third Estate delegates, mostly members of the bourgeoisie, whose views had been shaped by the ideas of Liberty and Fraternity, were eager to make changes in the government. They insisted that all three estates must meet together and that each delegate have a vote. This would give the advantage to the Third Estate, which had as many delegates as the other two estates combined.

However, the King took the side of the Nobles. He ordered the Estates-General to follow the medieval rules. The delegates of the Third Estate, however, became more and more determined to wield power. Thus, there was a deadlock.

A decision was taken by the Third Estate that it itself will name it the National Assembly and will pass laws and reforms in the name of the French people. On 17th June 1789, the third Estate declared itself as the **National Assembly**. The king got alarmed and prevented them from entering the hall. But, the members of the National Assembly went to a nearby **Tennis Court** and took an oath to frame a new constitution. This is known as **Tennis Court Oath**.

On 23rd June 1789, a special session of Estates General was held. The king declared the acts of the Third Estate as illegal. He also ordered that the three Estates should meet separately. But the third Estate refused to accept the king's orders. Finally, Louis XVI submitted to the will of the third Estate,



which represented the common people. He ordered the three Estates to sit together. Thus the formation of National Assembly was completed.

Fall of the Bastille

The King though recognised the National Assembly, yet he decided to suppress it. A large number of soldiers were brought to Versailles and Paris. Necker, the popular minister was also dismissed. On hearing this, the mob of Paris became violent.

They attacked the State prison called the **Bastille**, murdered the guards and freed the prisoners. The *fall of the Bastille was regarded in France as a triumph of liberty.*

After the fall of the Bastille, the peasants rose against the nobles. Riots began against the aristocrats all over France. Nobles were attacked and their castles stormed. They also destroyed the records of their feudal services.

- The nobles voluntarily surrendered their feudal rights and the privileges on 4th August 1789.
- Feudalism and serfdom were abolished.
- The principle of equality was established.
- Class distinctions were abolished.

There was a hike in the prices of bread in Paris. On 5th October, a large number of women went to the King's palace at Versailles to make a petition. They were not satisfied with the reply of the queen and hence they brought with them the king, the queen and their son to Paris.

Work of the National Assembly (1789 – 1791)

The National Assembly styled itself the **Constituent Assembly**. It drew up the **Declaration of the Rights of Man**. The new constitution drafted by the Constituent Assembly provided for a limited monarchy to France.

The titles of the nobles were abolished and Judiciary was remodelled. The method of torture was abolished. New central and local courts were established. Judges were to be elected. Drastic action was also taken against the church. Absolute religious toleration was proclaimed. The collection of **tithes** by the church was abolished. Then, measures were taken for the nationalization of church properties. After drafting the new constitution, the National Assembly dissolved itself in 1791.

The Split of National Assembly

Despite the new government, old issues such as food shortages and government debt remained. *Angry cries for more liberty, more equality, and more bread soon caused the Revolution's leaders to turn against one another.* The Legislative Assembly split into three general groups, each of which sat in a different part of the meeting hall. These were the Radicals, Moderates and Conservatives.

Radicals

- They sat on the left side of the hall



- They were called left-wing and said to be on the left
- They opposed the king and the idea of a monarchy
- They wanted sweeping changes in government and proposed that common people have full power in a republic

Moderates

- They sat in the center of the hall and were called centrists
- They wanted some changes in government, but not as many as the radicals

Conservatives

- They sat on the right side of the hall
- They were called rightwing and said to be on the right
- They upheld the idea of a limited monarchy
- They wanted few changes in government

Apart from the above three groups, there were two main more extreme groups viz. **Émigrés** and the **sans-culottes**.

- The **Émigrés** comprised the nobles and others who had fled France during the peasant uprisings. They wanted to undo the Revolution and restore the Old Regime. They can be called the Extreme Right group.
- The **sans-culottes** “those without knee breeches” made the most Radical group of all. This group typically comprised the urban labourers, wage-earners and small shopkeepers. Though ill-clad and ill-equipped, they had made up the bulk of the Revolutionary army during the early years of the French Revolutionary Wars. The Upper classes of France wore fancy knee-length pants, but the sans-culottes wore regular trousers. They wanted a greater voice in government, lower food prices, and an end to food shortages. Although they did not have a role in the assembly, they soon discovered other ways to exert their power as a group, especially by influencing one of the political clubs that developed later.

Political Clubs

The political clubs sprang up in different quarters. Of these, the most conspicuous were the **Jacobian Club** and **Cordelier Club**.

- The Jacobian Club was led by **Robespierre**, a radical democrat.
- The Cordelier Club was led by Danton.
- The Girondists were a group of eloquent young men and stood for establishing a republican form of government. Madame Roland was a prominent member of the Girondists.

The Wars with Prussia and Austria

As per the new constitution, the new Legislative Assembly met in 1791. To curtail the activities of



the Nobles, the Legislative Assembly passed laws. The king did not approve of these laws and used his veto against them.

When the revolution broke out many of the nobles (**Émigrés**) managed to escape from France. They carried out propaganda against the revolution in France and tried to mobilize support from other countries. Austria and Prussia came forward to help them. King Leopold of Austria issued the famous **Declaration of Pilsnitz** against the revolutionaries on 27th August 1791, whereby Austria and Prussia proposed that France put Louis back on the throne. The Legislative Assembly responded by declaring war on Austria in April 1792. Prussia later joined Austria in the war.

Austria defeated the ill equipped revolutionary army. The wrath of the revolutionaries turned against the French king. On 10th August 1792 the mob attacked the King's palace at Tuileries. The mob brutally massacred the guards and imprisoned Louis, Marie Antoinette, and their children in a stone tower. Elections were ordered for a National Convention to prepare another new constitution for the country.

This was followed by the "**September Massacres**". The Radicals at Paris led by Danton massacred 1500 suspected supporters of the French king. Then the French army defeated the Austrian army at Valmy.

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The National Convention (1792 – 1795)

Faced with the threat of the radicals, the members of the Legislative Assembly gave up the idea of a limited monarchy. They set aside the Constitution of 1791, declared the king deposed, and dissolved their assembly, calling for the election of a new legislature. After the dissolution of the Legislative Assembly, the **National Convention** met in 1792. It abolished monarchy and declared **France as a republic**. By around the same time, the French army won a war against Austria and Prussia, thus now there was no danger from foreign. Adult male citizens were granted the right to vote and hold office, however, women were not given the right to vote. The delegates reduced Louis XVI's role from that of a king to that of a common citizen and prisoner. Then, guided by radical Jacobins, they tried Louis for treason and found him guilty. The king Louis XVI after a summary trial was found guilty of treason was executed by guillotine on 21st January 1793.

Three days later the queen Maire Antoinette was also executed by guillotine.

The Terror grips France

The National convention was controlled by the Jacobians, who formed the majority and were major force to carry out the execution of the King.

After the execution of the King and the Queen, the Great Britain, Holland, and Spain joined Prussia and Austria in an alliance known as the **First Coalition** in early 1793. The France was attacked from



several sides and suffered a string of defeats. The Jacobin leaders took extreme steps to meet the new dangers. The National Convention decreed a draft into the army of 300,000 French citizens between the ages of 18 and 40. Within a year, the army had grown to 800,000.

Apart from the foreign armies, the Jacobins faced threats from within the country from moderates, peasants, who were horrified by the beheading of the king, priests who would not accept government control and rival leaders who were power hungry. The Jacobians had set up the **Revolutionary Tribunal** to deal with the moderates. It was the beginning of the Terror in France and was the final phase of the Revolution. It was also the darkest period of the Revolution.

Riots broke out in many places like Lyons, Marseilles and other cities. In 1793, the first coalition was the revolutionary government. The Jacobians suspended the constitution and created the **Committee of Public Safety** with full powers to deal with the people causing the internal threats.

Maximilien Robespierre was the leader of this committee. He slowly gathered all control in his hands. As head of the committee, he decided who should be considered enemies of the republic. It was said that this committee often tried people in the morning and guillotined the same afternoon. For one year, Robespierre governed France nearly as a dictator, and the period of his rule became known as the Reign of Terror. The Reign of Terror put down all the riots staged by the royalists within the country. Around 2100 people were killed by guillotine before he himself was sent to hell via guillotine in 1794.

End of Revolution

With the fall of Robespierre the Reign of Terror gradually came to an end. The **Revolutionary Tribunal** was suspended and the functions of Committee of Public Safety were restricted. The Jacobian Club was closed.

The National Convention at last took up its long neglected task of framing of a constitution for the French Republic. The executive was entrusted to a **Directory**, consisting of five members. The legislative power was entrusted to two houses called the **Council of Five Hundred** and the **Council of the Ancients**. Napoleon Bonaparte was then at Paris and he was entrusted with the task of defending the Convention against the Parisian mob. He dispersed the mob and saved the Convention and began his brilliant career. On October 26, 1795 the convention declared itself dissolved and the Directory took charge of the French government.

Results of the Revolution

- The French Revolution of 1789 inaugurated a new era in the history of the mankind. The ideas of “liberty, equality and fraternity” spread to other parts of the world. The Bourbon monarchy was abolished.



- The Revolution rejected tyranny, divine right, conservatism, and feudal vestiges associated with bourbon rule in France.
- At the same time it **failed to establish a permanent Republic in France**. The French Revolution, after a violent turn led to the emergence of a great dictator, Napoleon Bonaparte.

Contribution of Philosophers to French Revolution

Montesquieu and Theory of separation of powers

Montesquieu (1689-1755) was a French social commentator and political thinker who is famous for his **theory of separation of powers**. His early life was influenced by the *Glorious Revolution of England* whereby England had declared itself a constitutional monarchy; and succession of the five-year-old Louis XV after death of his father Louis XIV.

According to him, individuals were so fearful that they avoided violence and war. The need for food caused the timid humans to associate with others and seek to live in a society. As soon as man enters into a state of society, he loses the sense of his weakness; equality ceases, and then commences the state of war. This state of war among individuals is what that needs the existence of a government. According to him, the main purpose of government is to maintain law and order, political liberty, and the property of the individual.

Montesquieu opposed the absolute monarchy of his home country and favored the English system as the best model of government. His first notable work was the *De l'Esprit des Lois (The Spirit of the Laws)* 1748, which **advocated the constitutional form of government**. This work quickly rose to a position of enormous influence and was later banned by the Catholic Church by putting it into the Index of Prohibited Books. However, it received the highest praise from the rest of Europe, particularly Britain.

Montesquieu divided French society into three classes (*trias politica*): the **monarchy, the aristocracy, and the commons**. Montesquieu saw two types of governmental power existing: the sovereign and the administrative. The administrative powers were the executive, the legislative, and the judicial. He said that these should be separate from and dependent upon each other so that the influence of any one power would not be able to exceed that of the other two, either singly or in combination.

This was a radical idea because it *completely eliminated the three Estates structure of the French Monarchy: the clergy, the aristocracy, and the people at large* represented by the Estates-General, thereby erasing the last vestige of a feudalistic structure.

Voltaire

Voltaire (1694 – 1778) was a French historian and Philosopher who is famous for his attacks on



Catholic Church, and his advocacy of freedom of religion, freedom of expression, and separation of church and state. He was known to be the “**King of Satire**” and this genius made him immense popular. Sometimes, his thoughts were too strong and for them, he was sent to Jail several times. He wrote more than 20,000 letters and more than 2,000 books and pamphlets.

He was heavily influenced by the English writers such as Sir Francis Bacon and John Locke. He was an ardent admirer of Locke’s *Letter for Toleration* (1689). He supported Bacon’s idea of *how progress can be achieved: government should be focused on “an enlarged royal prerogative, at the expense of the rights of the Church, Parliament, and the courts” or essentially a strong monarchy.*

His most notable works are *A Treatise for Toleration* and play titled *Brutus* (1730). In *Brutus*, he has vividly depicted the horror of a tyrannical government of an ancient Roman King Brutus. This play had a profound effect upon the revolution and some of the most common slogans of the revolution were borrowed from *Brutus*.

Voltaire launched a crusade against superstition and attacked traditional beliefs. He wrote many essays, poems and dramas creating awareness among the masses. He advocated the supremacy of reason. He stood for religious toleration. He strongly condemned the corruptions in the church. He stood for a benevolent despotism.

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Rousseau

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712– 1778) was born in Geneva, Switzerland, where all adult male citizens could vote for a representative government. This adult franchise was a major influence on his works. Rousseau travelled in France and Italy, educating himself. In one of his earliest writings, he wrote that *man was naturally good and was corrupted by society*. His ideas quickly made him a celebrity in the French salons where artists, scientists, and writers gathered to discuss the latest ideas.

In 1762, he published his most important work on political theory, **The Social Contract**. His opening line is still striking today: “*Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains.*” The Social Contract helped inspire political reforms or revolutions in Europe, especially in France. The Social Contract argued against the idea that monarchs were divinely empowered to legislate. Rousseau asserted that **only the people, who are sovereign, have that all-powerful right.**

According to him, the problem in the state of nature was to find a way to protect everyone’s life, liberty, and property while each person remained free. He gave a solution to this problem and *asked the people to enter into a social contract. They would give up all their rights, not to a king, but to “the whole community,” all the people. Then, he called all the people the “sovereign,” a term so far used only for the king. He further writes that the people then exercise their “general will” to make laws for the “public good.”*



However, Rousseau argued that the general will of the people could not be decided by elected representatives. He believed in a direct democracy in which everyone voted to express the general will and to make the laws of the land. Thus, Rousseau had in mind a democracy on a small scale, a city-state like his native Geneva.

In Rousseau's democracy, anyone who disobeyed the general will of the people "will be forced to be free." He believed that citizens must obey the laws or be forced to do so as long as they remained a resident of the state. This is a "civil state," where security, justice, liberty, and property are protected and enjoyed by all.

According to Rousseau, all political power must reside with the people, exercising their general will. There can be no separation of powers, as Montesquieu proposed. The people, meeting together, will deliberate individually on laws and then by majority vote find the general will.

Rousseau's view of the general will was later embodied in the words "We the People"—which are found at the beginning of the U.S. Constitution.

However, the above description leads us to conclude that the ideas of Rousseau were rather vague on how his democracy would work, there would be some sort of Government which could be entrusted with administering the general will. But it would be composed of "mere officials" who got their orders from the people.

In fact, Rousseau's political philosophy was so vague that it can hardly be said to point in any specific direction. His ideals were suitable for a small community with a prevalently rural economy, loosely federated with other similar communities. It was not suitable for a bigger country like France or United States of America. Yet, his ideals were suitable for the purpose of the Radical democratic parties of France. Robespierre and the Jacobins owed most to him for his theory of popular sovereignty and his denial of any vested right in any other body than the people themselves.

On the basis of his ideals and its immense influence on French Revolution, Rousseau's *Social Contract*, is considered the **Bible of the French Revolution**.

John Locke

- John Locke (1632–1704) was an English philosopher and physician regarded as one of the most influential of Enlightenment thinkers. He was born shortly before the English Civil War. He studied science and medicine at Oxford University and became a professor there.
- He sided with the Protestant Parliament against the Roman Catholic King James II in the Glorious Revolution of 1688–89. This event reduced the power of the king and made Parliament the major authority in English government.
- Locke's writings influenced Voltaire and Rousseau and many others. His contributions to



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classical republicanism and liberal theory are reflected in the United States Declaration of Independence.

- In 1690, Locke published his Two **Treatises of Government**. *He argued that natural rights such as life, liberty, and property existed in the state of nature and could never be taken away or even voluntarily given up by individuals. These rights were “inalienable”.*
- *John Locke’s conception of the social contract retains the central notion that persons in a state of nature would willingly come together to form a state. For him, the social contract was between the people and the state. Locke argued that individuals would agree to form a state that would provide a “neutral judge”, acting to protect the lives, liberty, and property of those who lived within it.*
- Locke argued that government’s legitimacy comes from the citizens’ delegation to the government of their right of self-defense . The government thus acts as an impartial, objective agent of that self-defense, rather than each man acting as his own judge, jury, and executioner—the condition in the state of nature. In this view, government derives its “just powers from the consent of the governed”.
- According to Locke, the natural rights of individuals limited the power of the king. The king did not hold absolute power, but acted only to enforce and protect the natural rights of the people. If a sovereign violated these rights, the social contract was broken, and the people had the right to revolt and establish a new government.
- Less than 100 years after Locke wrote his Two Treatises of Government, Thomas Jefferson used his theory in writing the “**Declaration of Independence**”.
- Although Locke spoke out for freedom of thought, speech, and religion, he believed property to be the most important natural right. He declared that owners may do whatever they want with their property as long as they do not invade the rights of others. According to him, Government was mainly necessary to promote the “public good,” that is to protect property and encourage commerce and little else.
- Locke favored a representative government such as the English Parliament, which had a hereditary House of Lords and an elected House of Commons. But he wanted representatives to be only men of property and business. Consequently, only adult male property owners should have the right to vote. Locke was reluctant to allow the property-less masses of people to participate in government because he believed that they were unfit. According to him, the supreme authority of government should reside in the law-making legislature, like England’s Parliament. The executive (prime minister) and courts would be creations of the legislature and under its authority.



Napoleon Bonaparte

Napoleon Bonaparte was the military and political leader of France who changed the course of European Politics by his conquests. He was born in 1769 and remained emperor of France from 1804 to 1814. His career began in 1785, when he was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the French artillery. In next three years, he polished his warfare skills with a French army regiment. In 1793, Napoleon distinguished himself in a Battle between the Revolutionaries and royalists (**Battle of Toulon**), in south France. He was promoted from Captain to Brigadier General. He became a national hero in 1795, when he defended the delegates from thousands of royalists who marched on the National Convention.

In 1796, the Directory appointed him to lead a French army against the forces of Austria and Sardinia. He crushed the Austrian army and then led an expedition to Egypt to check the British impediments in French trade with India. But, his army as well as naval forces were defeated in Egypt. But somehow, his defeat could not become public.

In 1799, the Directory had lost control of the political situation and confidence of the French people. In such circumstances he was advised to seize the power. The Directory was dissolved and in its place, a group of three consuls, one of whom was Napoleon, was established. Thus, Napoleon quickly assumed dictatorial powers as the first consul of the French republic.

A plebiscite in France was held to approve Napoleon as chosen leader of the free republic and to approve a new constitution. The French public overwhelmingly favoured Napoleon.

In the same year, the second coalition of anti-French powers viz. Britain, Austria and Russia was established to drive out Napoleon from power. There was again war and by 1802, all three nations signed peace agreement (**Peace of Amiens**) with France. After the peace agreements, Napoleon focussed to restore peace and order in France. *He devoted all his energy to heal the wounds of the French People inflicted during revolution.*

Reforms of Napoleon

The reforms of Napoleon are summarised as follows:

In the *sphere of economy*, his goal was to achieve “Equal taxation and low prices”. He set up a fair taxes code and a National Bank. He also provided State Loans to Business and worked towards currency stabilization. These efforts resulted in equal taxation and a stable economy.

In the *sphere of Government* and society, his goal was to lower corruption and equal opportunity for all. All decided to make appointments on merit, sacked corrupt official, created a code of laws {Napoleonic Code}, and set up Lycees or government ran public schools. The result of these efforts was that honest and competent officials were included in the government and it raised the



confidence of the public.

In the *sphere of religion*, the goal was to reduce power of Catholic Church and more religious tolerance. Catholicism was recognized as faith of Frenchmen. A concordat was signed with pope and government control over Church lands was established. These efforts led to government recognition of Church influence.

The Napoleonic Code

Napoleon's most lasting effect on France and the world was the set of laws he created during his rule as emperor. These laws were so important that by 1960s, more than 70 countries around the world had adopted them or had used them as the basis for their own laws.

- The Napoleonic Code was originally drafted as the **French Civil Code**. Before revolution, French law was based on the whims of its kings. Laws were the product of each individual monarch. They were lengthy, complicated, and different from region to region. Before Napoleon, there was no single law or document to unify them.
- Though the rise of Napoleon marked the end of the French Revolution, *he was really a child of the revolution*. Within his empire, Napoleon tried to spread the ideas of the French Revolution. These ideas included legal equality and religious and economic freedom. The purpose of the French Civil Code was to collect all of the French laws into a single volume that would be simple and easy to understand.

At the heart of the code were three ideas from the revolution

- That laws should be based on reason and common sense
- That all men should be treated equally under the law
- That they should have certain freedoms.

The Key concepts of the Napoleonic Code were as follows:

1. Legal equality for everyone.
2. No recognition of nobility or titles of birth.
3. Freedom of religion.
4. Separation of church and state.
5. Freedom to work in any occupation.
6. Protection of the family.

Flaws in Napoleonic Code

Napoleon was the child of the revolution, but in many ways he reversed the aims and principles of the movement from which he sprang. **This statement is particularly true for Napoleonic code.**

The major flaw in the Napoleonic code was that he considered women inferior to men and women



should not be allowed to have much influence in a society.

- The Women could not vote.
- Husbands had complete control over their wives and their personal property.
- Children and unmarried women had few rights.

Despite these flaws, the heart of the Napoleonic Code—reason, equality, and freedom—has survived throughout the ages.

Napoleon as French Emperor

In 1804, Napoleon crowned himself as French Emperor. After becoming the emperor, he envisioned control of the rest of the Europe and reassert French power. The Austrian Netherlands and parts of Italy had already been annexed to France. A puppet government had also been already established in Switzerland. Fearful of his expansion plans, Britain persuaded Russia, Austria, and Sweden to join in a third coalition against France. This third coalition was defeated but only one major battle the **Battle of Trafalgar** was lost by Napoleon. This was a naval battle and it took place in 1805 off the southern coast of Spain. There was a decisive British victory in this battle. The French fleet was destructed and this battle assured the **supremacy of the British navy for the next hundred years!**

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This battle also forced Napoleon to give up his plans of invading Britain. Britain was a formidable enemy of the British and Napoleon now tried to control them via the English Channel. However, his extravagant efforts remained largely fruitless.

The extent of French Empire

By the end of the first decade of the 19th century, the major powers, which remained out of the control of Napoleon, were only Britain, the Ottoman Empire, Portugal, and Sweden.

The French Empire under Napoleon controlled not only France but also Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, the Italian peninsula, much of modern-day Germany, and a variety of central and eastern European lands including parts of the Balkans and modern day Poland. Poland was officially independent but only in name.

By 1812, Napoleon controlled numerous supposedly independent lands apart from those which were formally part of the French Empire. These included **Spain, Warsaw**, and numerous **German** principalities. The rulers of these states were puppets of Napoleon. The countries such as Russia, Prussia, and Austria were loosely attached to Napoleon's empire via alliances. Such was the fear of Napoleon that they could be easily manipulated by threats of military action.

The most important result of the military might and threats of Napoleon was that the conquered people became more and more conscious of their loyalty to their own nations. This was an important aspect of the



development of nationalism.

To have a legitimate heir, Napoleon needed a son. He divorced Josephine, who had failed to bear him a child, and married Marie Louise, of the Austrian Royal Family, who gave birth to a son Napoleon II

The French empire could be maintained at its greatest extent only for five years from 1807-1812. After that it quickly disintegrated owing partly the spread of *nationalistic feelings across Europe and partly due to the policies of Napoleon himself.*

Three Mistakes of Napoleon

Continental System

In 1806, Napoleon had signed a decree ordering a **blockade** (closing of ports), so that to prevent all trade and communication between Great Britain and other European nations. The idea was to make the continental Europe more self sufficient and simultaneously destroy Britain's trading and industrial economy. But this system was not successful because the blockage was loose enough to be broken occasionally by smugglers. *The blockade was able to weaken the British trade but could not destroy it. Britain also imposed its own blockade whereby the British navy stopped neutral ships bound for Europe and forced them to sail to a British port to be searched and taxed. The navy of Britain was stronger and so their blockade worked better than that of French.* The British Navy had also stopped the American Ships with the result that America declared a war upon Britain in 1812, which ended in a draw. In summary, the Continental system hurt more to French than their enemies. The economy of France was weakened.

Peninsular War

Spain is located at Iberian Peninsula. After imposing the continental system, it was found in 1807-08 that Portugal was deliberately ignoring it. So, to teach them a lesson, Napoleon sent an army via Spain to invade Portugal. The people in Spain rioted in protest, and consequently, Napoleon deposed the Spanish king and placed his brother Joseph Bonaparte on the throne.

This move outraged the Spanish public who were ardent supporters of their king

The public in Spain was devout Catholic. They were afraid that the French conquerors would undermine the Church. Thus, the Spanish peasants rose and started the Guerrilla warfare against the French army, which continued till 1813. In the meantime, Britain also sent its own troops to support the rebels. From 1809, the British forces, under the Duke of Wellington, gradually fought their way forward in a bitter struggle, finally invading southwest France in 1813-14. The result was that Napoleon lost around 3 Lakh men in this peninsular war. This drastically reduced the power of the French empire. The nationalism proved to be a powerful weapon against Napoleon. Following the



Spanish, the Germans and Italians etc. conquered peoples also turned against the French.

Invasion of Russia

The worst blunder of Napoleon was committed in 1812. The Emperor of Russia Alexander I had become Napoleon's ally, yet he refused to stop selling grains to Britain. Apart from that there was a mutual suspect on designs on Poland.

In June 1812, Napoleon marched into Russia with his 4,20,000 strong *Grande Armée*, which was not all French was a huge group of men from all over Europe. Those who were not French; had little loyalty to Napoleon.

When this army entered Russia, the Russian army retracted towards east (from western borders) rather than confronting with it. As these Russians retreated toward Moscow burnt all the grain fields and slaughtered all the livestock, so that nothing is left for the enemy aliens to eat.

This was an effective policy because the French soldiers needed to desert the army and search for food. The important battle took place in September 1812 at **Borodino**. The fight remained largely indecisive but gave a narrow victory to Napoleon, who was now able to take Moscow. But when he entered Moscow, he found that the Russians had set the city on fire rather than allowing surrendering it to the French.

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Napoleon stayed in the ruined city for few days and expected that the Czar would come down and make a peace offer but the Czar did not turn up. In October 1812, Napoleon asked his army to return back. But the climate was harsh now. The snow began to fall and many of the soldiers were killed due to exhaustion, hunger, and cold at minus 30 degree temperature. The Napoleon army finally reached in December and this *Grande Armée* was thus reduced to around 30,000 soldiers, out of which only 10,000 were fit for fighting.

The Downfall of Napoleon

It was now turn of the enemies of French to take advantage of the situation. A fourth coalition was formed between Britain, Russia, Prussia, and Sweden. After sometime, Austria also joined this coalition. Napoleon was defeated in the Battle of Leipzig. In April 1814, Napoleon abdicated the throne and accepted a treaty of surrender drafted by Russian emperor Alexander I. He was given a pension and sent to Elba, a tiny island near the Italian Coast. Napoleon later tried to comeback and he again ruled for 100 days; then he was again defeated in the Battle of Waterloo and was exiled to St. Helena for 6 years. He died in exile in 1821.

Outcome of the Napoleonic Wars: Congress of Vienna and beyond **Congress of Vienna**

After defeat of Napoleon, the European heads of government met from 1814 to 1815 to settle the terms by which the Napoleonic Wars should be concluded. A series of meetings in Vienna for this



purpose was held with an objective of a collective security and stability for the entire continent. This is called **Congress of Vienna** and it ended by sealing a return to more or less the same system of European powers that existed before the French Revolution.

Most of the decisions were made by the *five great powers of the day viz. Russia, Austria, Britain, France and Prussia*. The Austrian delegation was led by its foreign minister **Prince Klemens von Metternich**. Metternich was one of the most influential diplomats, served as foreign minister of the Austrian Empire from 1809 until 1848. He was an ardent anti-democracy, who believed that Napoleon's expansionist dictatorship was a result of the experiments with democracy.

Thus, there were three goals of Metternich at Congress of Vienna.

- To prevent future French aggression by surrounding France with strong countries.
- To restore a balance of power, so that no country would be a threat to others.
- To restore Europe's royal families to the thrones they had held before Napoleon's conquests.

How France was contained?

France was contained by making weaker countries around France stronger. For example:

- The Austrian Netherlands and Dutch Republic were united to form the Kingdom of the Netherlands.
- The German confederation was created out of 39 German speaking states as a loose group dominated by Austria.
- Switzerland was recognized as a free country.

However, that the defeated French may not stand up again to seek revenge, France was not severely damaged. Those territories which had been conquered by Napoleon were taken back from it but still it was left as a large and intact nation. France could keep some of its overseas territories, its army and its government. Thus, France was still a major nation, but its power had been curtailed to a great extent. The power was balanced in such a way that no country would become a threat to another.

The Vienna Congress was a victory for the conservatives, who favoured restoration of the powers of the Royal families. In France Louis XVIII returned to power. This new king took a wise decision to remain the constitutional head and adopt the constitution. The royal dynasties of Spain and Sicilies were also restored. Now, France and Britain were the two Constitutional monarchies of Europe, while Russia, Prussia and Austria remained absolute monarchies. Thus, there was cooperation among these countries for a long time till The Crimean War that broke out in 1853.

King George's War (War of Austrian Succession)

France and Britain are close allies today but they have fought countless wars during middle ages and renaissance over crowns and territories. As both countries started expanding across the



Atlantic Ocean, the same conflicts became an issue in the colonies.

Background

Beginning in 1713, England entered into a trade partnership with Spanish following the signing of the Treaties of Utrecht that ended Queen Anne's War. England had gained access to trade with Spanish colonies. In exchange, the Spanish had the right to search British ships to make sure they were following the terms of the treaties. Through the 1730s, Spanish search and seizures of British ships became a big problem. After a particularly outrageous ship search, a British captain had an ear cut off by a Spaniard, ultimately leading to armed conflict between the two countries.

While the War of Jenkins' ear raged on, a bigger problem was bubbling beneath the surface in Europe. There was a succession issue over the Austrian crown: who had legal right to the throne? At the time, England and its allies believed that the Austrian Maria Theresa should take the throne. Meanwhile, Spain and Prussia had other ideas. France quickly sided with Spain in the issue, a move that would give them a legitimate reason to go to war with England of territorial disputes in the New World.

England and France officially went to war on March 15, 1744. In Europe the struggle over the Austrian throne was known as the **War of the Austrian Succession**. The conflict ultimately spilled over into the colonies where it was known as **King George's War**.

King George's War

King George's War began in earnest in spring of 1744 and lasted for about three years in the New World.

1744

Although England and France knew they were at war with each other, news of the conflict took a few months to spread through the colonies in the New World. On May 23, 1744, Jean-Baptiste-Louis Le Prevost du Quesnel, the French governor of Cape Breton Island, planned to take the British in Nova Scotia by surprise. With an expeditionary force of about 200 men, the French surprised less than 100 British colonists. The French burned buildings and took prisoners, ultimately leading the British to surrender. A prisoner exchange was quickly negotiated, and both sides agreed not to upset the fishing industry that French and English colonists relied on to survive.

Through the summer of 1744, tensions escalated. The French turned to Native American allies to help them against the British. In July of 1744, the French incited a Native American attack on Annapolis Royal, located in Nova Scotia. Fortunately for the British living in the area, the governor of Massachusetts was able to send reinforcements, causing the Native American attack to fail.

Beginning on September 8, the French tried once again to capture Annapolis Royal, but this time they tried to take it by **siege**. French troops surrounded Fort Anne, preventing supplies from coming



in, and soldiers and civilians from coming out. Meanwhile, Native Americans raided the surrounding area by night. Once again, the Massachusetts governor sent reinforcements. The siege was lifted just after a month.

1745

In spring of 1745, the English colonists were ready to go on the offensive. Massachusetts governor, William Shirley, managed to put together the largest military operation of King George's War. Roughly 4,000 men, many of which came from Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire planned to capture Louisburg, a French stronghold in Canada. With aid from Rhode Island, New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, Shirley's troops were ready to take action. The assault began on April 4 when British colonists cut off supply lines to Louisburg. Through May, they used siege tactics and caused significant damage to the French fort. The French were forced to surrender the city on June 28, 1745. Both sides suffered heavy casualties, the British lost nearly 1,000 men alone just to exposure.

Through the remainder of 1745, the French did their best to recapture Louisburg, but to no avail. Thanks to poor weather, and a number of other mishaps, the French couldn't catch a break. On August 13, 1745, the British managed to capture the French ship *Notre Dame de la Deliverance* off the coast of Louisburg.

1746 to 1747

Through 1746 to 1747, King George's War was at a bit of a stalemate. The French still tried to take back Louisburg and incited Native American raids on British settlements, while the British did the same thing to the French.

One of the biggest battles of the conflict was fought on February 11, 1747. The French caught the British off-guard during the **Battle of Minas**. On the orders of French leader Jean-Baptiste-Nicolas Roch de Ramezay, about 200 Frenchmen and 50 Native Americans attacked about 500 English colonists from Massachusetts during a snowstorm. The British were forced to surrender.

The End of King George's War

By the end of 1747, the British colonists living in the Americas had stopped fighting. England had promised to send money and aid to support the war effort, but neither of those things ever came. Tired of exhausting and costly raids, not to mention little territorial gain made by either side, the Americans were done. The War of the Austrian Succession and King George's War came to an end on October 18, 1748. The **Treaty of Aix-La-Chapelle** returned any and all conquests made during the war. This meant that Louisburg was given back to the French. The treaty was just a temporary fix to end the costly war. In reality, it did not fix the deep underlying issues between France and England.



American War of Independence 1763-1776

After the discovery of the American continent, there was a continuous migration of people from Europe to the New World. While the South America was colonized by Spain; the English and French established their colonies in North America.

France and Great Britain were rivals in East India as well as America. The conflict between the France and England got renewed in 1756 in Europe, in the form of *Seven Years War* {third Carnatic War in India was one of the theatres of this war in India}. The war concluded with the signing of the 1763 **Treaty of Paris** {also called Peace of Paris/ Treaty of 1763}. In these wars British had emerged as winners but *they were deeply in debt and demanding more revenue from the colonies*.

By the mid eighteenth century, the English had established their **thirteen colonies** along the Atlantic coast populated by European landless peasants, people seeking religious freedom and traders.

Thirteen Colonies

Thirteen Colonies were the British colonies on the Atlantic coast of North America founded between 1607 (Virginia) and 1733 (Georgia). These were Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Georgia, Connecticut, Massachusetts Bay, Maryland, South Carolina, New Hampshire, Virginia, New York, North Carolina, and Rhode Island and Providence Plantations. Each colony developed its own system of self-government. Residents of these colonies were mostly independent farmers, who owned their own land and voted for their local and provincial government.

Initially the relationship between the colonies and British Government was cordial. Although these colonies were controlled through the governors, they enjoyed political freedom. Each colony had its own assembly elected by the people. It enacted laws concerning local matters.

However, the policies followed by the home government in Britain after the French and Indian wars resulted in the confrontation. This ultimately led to **the American War of Independence** at the end of which the thirteen colonies became independent.

Causes of American War of Independence

The major causes of American War of Independence were as follows:

Policy of Mercantilism

The British Government followed the policy of **mercantilism**. This policy says that the colonies existed for the benefit of the mother country. The colonies were expected to furnish raw materials. They had to serve as markets for produced goods. Further, the colonies had to ship their goods only in British ships, adding more and more wealth to the home country.



The unjust legislations

The British Government enacted laws to implement its policy of mercantilism. A series of **Navigation Acts** were passed by the British Parliament to control the trade of the American colonies. These Acts insisted that all the goods of both exports and imports should be carried in ships owned by England. Custom collectors were appointed in the colonies to implement the Navigation Acts. But, the American colonies considered these Acts as infringement of their rights.

When Granville was the Prime Minister of England a series of Acts were passed affecting the interests of the American colonies.

- The **Proclamation of 1763** prohibited the colonists from purchasing lands beyond Appalachian Mountains.
- The **Sugar Act of 1764** increased the duties on the sugar which affected the interests of the colonies.
- The **Stamp Act of 1765** insisted on the use of British stamps in commercial and legal documents of the colonies.
- The **Quartering Act** made it compulsory that colonists should provide food and shelter to English troops.

suraj_winner | rajawat.rs.surajsingh@gmail.com | www.gktoday.in/upsc/ias-general-studies

These Acts were opposed by the colonies. Due to these restrictions, bitterness developed between the home government and the American colonies. They were looking for an opportunity to free them from the control of Britain. They raised the slogan “*No Taxation without Representation*” thus insisting American representation in the English Parliament. As violence broke out in the streets, the **Stamp Act** was repealed.

No fear of French

The end of the *Seven Years War in 1763* and the transfer of Canada from France to England removed the French fear from the minds of the Americans. There was no need to depend on their mother country against any possible attack by the French. Therefore, the American colonies could gather the courage to face the colonial attitude of the British.

The Townshend Laws

Charles Townshend, the Finance Minister of England imposed fresh taxes on glass, paper, tea, paints, etc in 1767. It was known as Townshend laws. The Americans protested it and boycotted the British goods. On 5th March 1770, five Americans were killed by the British soldiers at Boston during the protest. It was known as the **Boston Massacre**. After this event, the Townshend laws were repealed.

Major Events of American War of Independence



Boston Tea Party

In 1773, a new Tea Act was passed imposing a tax on import of tea. *It was a symbol to show that the British Parliament had the right to tax the colonies.* But Americans showed their protest.



A group **Boston Tea Party** of Americans dressed as Red Indians climbed on the ships and threw away the tea bundles into the sea at the Boston harbour. This event took place on 16th December 1773 and was known as *Boston Tea Party*. The offenders were punished. In 1774, the British Parliament passed the *Intolerable Acts* against the Americans in order to prevent such protests.

The Philadelphia Congress

The residents of American colonies decided to unite in their fight against the British. In September 1774, the *first Continental Congress* was held at Philadelphia and was attended by the representatives of the twelve colonies except Georgia. This congress appealed to the British King to remove restrictions on industries and trade and not to impose any taxes without their consent. The second Continental Congress met in May 1775 at Philadelphia. Delegates from all the thirteen colonies attended this Congress. The notable leaders who participated in this Congress were Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin. In this Congress, *George Washington* was made the Commander-in-Chief of the American army. As a last attempt, an *Olive Branch Petition* was sent to the British king George III, who rejected it. The king proclaimed that the American colonies were in a state of rebellion.

Declaration of Independence

In January 1776, Thomas Paine came to America from England and issued a pamphlet "Common Sense". It attacked the idea of hereditary monarchy and advocated democratic government. More than one lakh copies of this fifty page booklet were distributed throughout the thirteen colonies. It inculcated the fighting spirit among the Americans. On 4th July 1776, the **American Declaration of Independence** was adopted by the Continental Congress. It was prepared by a committee of five led by **Thomas Jefferson** who included the ideals of human freedom in it. The Declaration of independence laid emphasis on the unalienable rights of men namely, "**Life, Liberty and Pursuit of**



happiness”.

The Key Battles

The war started in 1775, when the first battle was fought between the British soldiers and the colonial militia at **Lexington** in Massachusetts. Soon, George Washington assumed the command of the army of the American colonies. The British General, Gage won a victory at Bunker Hill. In 1776 the British forces led by Sir William Howe defeated Washington in the battle of Long Island. However, the army of American colonies commanded by General Gates defeated British troops at **Saratoga** in October, 1777. The victory at Saratoga marked a turning point in the war. The French troops under Lafayette came to the help of the American colonies. At last, the British troops under the command of General Cornwallis surrendered to Washington at Yorktown in 1781. The war came to an end by the Treaty of Paris in 1783.

Importance of the American War of Independence

The American colonies became free and the Republic of the United States of America was established. The first democratic government with a written constitution in the world became a reality. The **Bill of Rights** ensured fundamental rights to the citizens of the U.S.A. The American War of Independence was also called the *American Revolution* because *it inspired the French Revolution*. It was not only a war against England but against aristocracy and reactionary elements. It was also a fight against colonial domination. It introduced new political, social and economic set up in the United States of America. Democracy with separation of powers on the model suggested by French thinker Montesquieu was founded. Capitalism also took strong roots. However, the rights of the sons of the soil, the Red Indians and the Negroes were not considered at that time.

Central America & Mexican War of Independence

For centuries, the people of Europe were accustomed to monarchical rule while those of new world felt that there was little they could do, and they had nothing but to go along the European imperialist agenda.

However, American and French Revolutions sent powerful messages to the rest of the world. They inspired various people groups throughout the world to believe that they had the power to throw off the shackles of foreign rule and establish self-rule. This led to independence of Central America also.

Background

Modern region of Central America is made up of Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama. Before Europeans arrived here, this territory was inhabited by various Mesoamerican Tribes such as the Aztec, Maya, Olmec etc.

By the mid-16th century, Mesoamerican tribes were in decline and they easily fell subject to Spanish



colonial rule. The colony of New Spain extended throughout Mexico and Central America. At the height of its power, it even extended into what is now the northern Midwest of the United States; and was known as *Kingdom of Guatemala*.

Grito de Dolores

Inspired by Enlightenment thinking and the successful American and French Revolutions, many ethnic groups in New Spain began dreaming of independence from Spanish rule. The Spanish influence and stability was also. Adding to the instability throughout New Spain was the removal of Spanish King Ferdinand VII during the Peninsular War. Little by little, pockets of resistance began popping up.

The Mexican War of Independence began on September 16, 1810 when a Catholic priest named *Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla* proclaimed the *Grito de Dolores*, which was basically a call to revolt against Spanish rule. Mexico achieved independence from Spain in 1821, after 11 years of war. The Declaration of Independence of the Mexican Empire was ratified September 28, 1821.

Independence movements were also gaining momentum south of Mexico. In El Salvador, a revolt broke out in 1811, often called '**The First Shout for the Independence of Central America.**' It was led by *Jose Matias Delgado*, who urged liberal and disgruntled Creoles to break away from Spain. Although the revolt was soon suppressed, it helped spread the independence movement.

In September 1821, as the Mexican War for Independence was winding down, a special council representing Central American groups met in Guatemala and declared independence from Spain. But they did not want to become part of the Mexican Empire either. They wanted complete independence. Central American independence from Spain officially took effect on September 15, 1821. Today this date is still celebrated as Central American Independence Day.

Independence was short-lived, however. In early 1822, the region was annexed by the newly created *Mexican Empire*. A year later, when Mexico became a republic, it granted self-determination to the region of Central America. In 1823, a new nation was created: the *Federal Republic of Central America*, also called the United Provinces of Central America. It consisted of the present-day states of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica.

The nation of Central America was plagued by internal divisions, and in 1838 Nicaragua left the union. Throughout the next year or two, the country dissolved, leaving behind the group of independent countries we know today. Throughout the 19th century there were various attempts to reunify the states into one country, but none of them proved to be successful.

Summary

The American and French Revolutions helped inspire the people of Central America to revolt



against Spanish colonial rule. **New Spain** was the name of the Spanish colony covering what is now Mexico and Central America. It even extended into the United States. In 1810, **the Mexican War of Independence** began when Catholic priest Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla proclaimed the *Grito de Dolores*, which was a call to open revolt. A revolt also broke out among Creole groups in El Salvador in 1811. This is often called '**The First Shout for the Independence of Central America.**'

On September 15, 1821, Central America officially gained independence from Spain. It did not last long, however, because the region was absorbed into the Mexican Empire the following year. In 1823, the **Federal Republic of Central America** was created, uniting Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica into a single nation. It broke up between 1838 and 1840, leaving in its place the countries we have today.

Rise of Nationalism

From 1815 till 1848, several revolutions erupted in Europe. The Congress of Vienna had tried to restore the monarchies and territories that existed before the French Revolution. But in reality, the **three forces** were scrambling for power in Europe as follows:

- The **Conservatives** were in favour of protecting the traditional monarchies.
- The **Liberals** were in favour of elected parliaments. However, they favoured that only those who are educated and hold property should be able to vote for election of the representatives.
- The **Radicals** wanted to bring sea changes and establish democracy for one and all. They favoured the ideals of the French Revolution.

However, the emerging ideals of **Nationalism** blurred the lines of these three political theories.

The word Nationalism did not exist before the 1790s. It seems to have appeared first in the Abbe Barruel's *Memoirs Illustrating the History of Jacobinism*, published first in French in 1797 and later in English in 1798. The term has been subject to constant redefinitions.

Meaning of Nationalism

By Nationalism we mean that one's greatest loyalty should not be to a King or Empire but a nation of people, who share common language, history, beliefs, goals etc. Thus, in nationalism, the loyalty to the nation-state surpasses other individual or group interests. When a nation has its own independent government, it becomes a nation state.

Nationalism is a modern movement. In most part of our history, the people have been attached to their native soil and territories, but it was only by the mid of the 18th century that the nationalism was generally recognized as a *one's sentiments in public and private life*.

The *first powerful manifestations* of Nationalism were the **American War of Independence** and



French Revolution. The 19th century is called the age of nationalism in Europe, while the 20th century saw the rise of national movements through out in Asia and Africa.

However, there are evidences of national feeling among certain groups at certain periods even before these two revolutions. One of the earliest manifestations of Nationalism occurred in 17th-century England, in the **Puritan revolution** (English Civil War) whereby, nationalism, as an idea and a force, *emerged alongside doctrines of popular sovereignty*. However, some scholars debate this and prefer to use the term Patriotism to Nationalism. The scholar agrees that there **was** a gradual recession of the religious character of the national idea and assertion of more self-consciously secular and democratic nationalism.

Prior to the rise of Nationalism, people did not give their loyalty to the nation-state but to different kinds of political organizations such as city state, feudal fiefs or its lord, royal dynasties, religious groups etc. For the greater part of the history, nation-state was non-existent. Nationalism is considered to be one of the most determining factors of the modern history.

Liberalism and its links to Nationalism

Liberalism is the political philosophy based upon the ideals of **liberty and equality**. It **rejects** the *hereditary privilege, state religion, absolute monarchy, and the Divine Right of Kings*, while it **supports** ideas such as *free and fair elections, civil rights, freedom of the press, freedom of religion, free trade, private property and so on*.

In other words, Liberalism is the set of beliefs that **emphasise the rights of individuals** to have some say in the government. This involves ideas of basic freedoms of speech, of religion, and of citizens being allowed to carry on their lives and businesses without interference from government.

John Locke is credited with founding the Liberalism as a distinct philosophy. Locke argued that each man has a natural right to life, liberty and property and according to the social contract; governments must not violate these rights.

Philosophy of the Liberalists

Liberalism was used to justify the French revolution and other revolutions of the 18th century. The ideals of Liberalism were a curse for the conservatives, because these ideals seem to be synonymous with the revolution. The Liberalists of the 18th century did all that could be done to undermine the prerogatives of the monarchy, the aristocracy and the church. The also promoted **Constitutionalism** (*The idea that government must be limited to specific powers by a written constitution is called Constitutionalism*) and **Republicanism** (*They also wanted representative, or parliamentary, government; in that sense liberalism became synonymous with republicanism*).

They demanded for a *constitutional monarchy as a first step toward a more a more satisfactory regime*.



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Liberals also called for a separation of powers among the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government. They proclaimed the sanctity of the individual and promoted the protection of individual rights including property rights and personal freedoms.

At the same time, they also had a belief that the **right to vote should be restricted by property qualifications**, limited to landowners and well-to-do businessmen and professionals. Liberalism thus became identified with the middle or upper classes, convincing the lower classes that it had little to offer.

The Link between Nationalism, Liberalism and concept of Liberal Nationalism

Nationalism and liberalism are sometimes thought of as **synonymous** because both emphasise on freedom and self-government. The line between the two is blurred but there is a difference.

The classical Liberalism seeks to support the rights of individuals within and **sometimes also against the nation state**. Nationalism, on the other hand would willingly *accept to surrender some of the individual rights in the interest of the nation and common good*. For example, in the state of certain threat or aggression, the Nationalists would sacrifice some of the individual rights in the interest of all to overcome that immediate threat.

However, it does not mean that Liberalism sees the individuals in isolation. Individuals need to interact and this is how the society works. A viable nation-state would require social cohesion and that rests upon communal and patriotic i.e. national 'unity'. This leads us to combine the Nationalism and Liberalism to another concept called **Liberal nationalism** or **Civic Nationalism**.

The ideals of Liberal Nationalism are compatible with liberal values of freedom, tolerance, equality, and individual rights **but not compatible** with the **Ethnic Nationalism**, whereby the nations are defined by a shared heritage, which usually includes a common language, a common faith, and a common ethnic ancestry.

The philosophy of the **Liberal Nationalism** is that individuals need a national identity in order to lead meaningful, autonomous lives and that democratic polity's need national identity in order to function properly.

The Impact of Nationalism on political landscape of Europe in 19th century

Due to the rise of the Nationalism Movement, a strong resentment to foreign rule began to develop. In Ireland, Italy, Belgium, Greece, Poland, Hungary and Norway local hostility to alien dynastic authority started to take the form of nationalist revolts. Nationalism came to be seen as the most effective way to create the symbols of resistance and to unite in a common cause.

First national revolution was in Serbia (1804–1817) which created the first nation-state in Central Europe. Success came in Greece where an eight-year war (1821–1829) against Ottoman rule led to an



independent Greek state.

After the Napoleonic wars, the **Vienna Congress** was had carefully crafted the restoration of the powers of the Royal families. But this return to the old order proved to be temporary in the tide of the nationalism. By 1830s, the edifice of Congress of Vienna started breaking down. *The Liberals and nationalists throughout Europe started launching open revolts against conservative governments. In most of these revolts, the liberal middle class led the struggle for constitutional government and the formation of nation-states.*

In 1831 Belgium obtained independence from the Netherlands. Over the next two decades nationalism developed a more powerful voice, spurred by nationalist writers championing the cause of nationalist self-determination.

In 1848, revolutions broke out across Europe, sparked by a severe famine and economic crisis and mounting popular demand for political change. In Italy Giuseppe Mazzini used the opportunity to encourage a war for national unity.

The Revolts of 1830s

France	Belgium	Poland	Italy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The Liberals set up the Constitutional monarchy •Louis Phillipe was the new Monarch King 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Nationalism led Belgium to rebel against the former Dutch Republic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Nationalism led Poland to try break free from foreign powers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Nationalism led Italy to fight for independence

The Revolts of 1840s

France	German States	Central Europe	Italian States
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •1848: a group of moderate and radical republicans overthrew the monarchy •The Second Republic was set up and Charles Nepoleon Bonaparte was elected as the President 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •1848: Liberalism and nationalism led to the Frankfurt Assembly to call for a parliamentary government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Czech and Hungarian revolutionaries demanded liberal constitutions and their own governments •The Austrian Military defeated the Hungarian revolutionaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Revolutionaries in Lombardy and Venetia tried to set up a liberal constitution and unified Italy •By 1849, the Austrians reestablished complete control over Lombardy and Venetia

Nationalism as a force for disunity as well as unity

The Nationalist Movement of the 19th century threatened and eventually toppled the Austro-

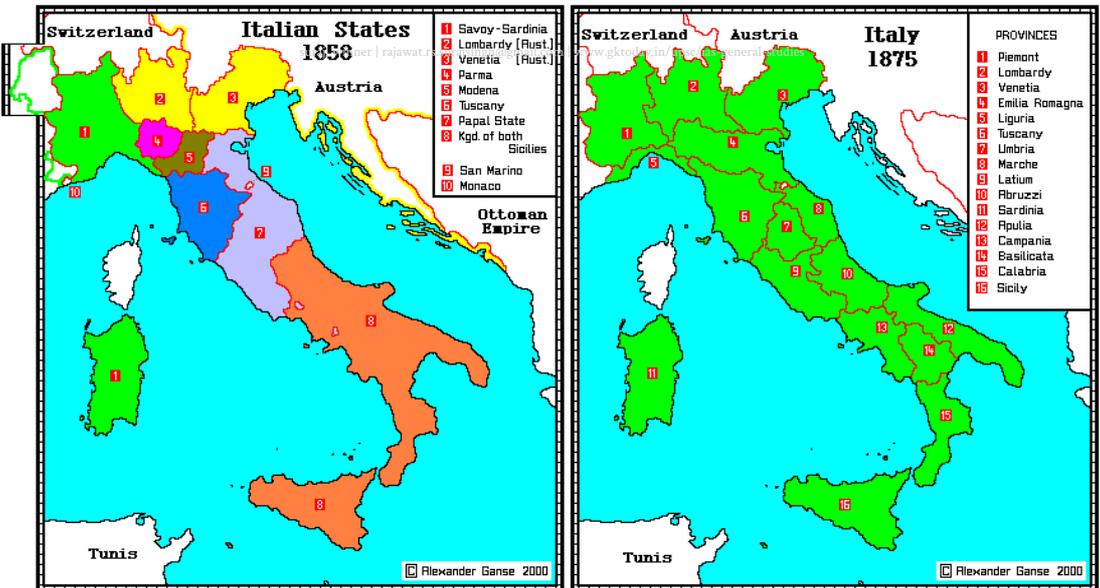


Hungarian Empire of the Hapsburgs, the Russian Empire of the Romanovs, and the Ottoman Empire of the Turks. All of these were vast conglomerations of the ethnic groups, and the fate of the territories was decided periodically by the victories or defeats in war and on royal marriages. Thus, the nationalistic movements could tear apart the long established empires.

The conservatives look at nationalism as a dividing force and contended that if there was a separate nation state for each ethnic group, the empires would split and disappear. But at the same time, Nationalism was a great force for unity also. This was first seen in the nationalistic spirited Napoleonic army which was able to defeat other armies of Europe. Several nation states were built by unification of small parts in the tide of nationalism. The best examples are Germany and Italy. In conclusion, the nationalism gave rise to the nation-state which is basic to modern polity.

Unification of Italy

Deciding the fate of the Italian regions, the Congress of Vienna (1815), the restored the pre-Napoleonic patchwork of independent governments, either directly ruled or strongly influenced by the prevailing European powers, particularly Austria.



Thus, 5 main divisions restored and it reflected high level of Austrian control. Austria ruled the Italian provinces of Venetia and Lombardy in the north, and several other small states. Similarly, Spanish Bourbon family ruled the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies in the south. Central Italy was the seat of Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Papal State.



The factors against the unification were as follows:

- Italy was broken into nine states.
- The Apennine Mountains run north and south, splitting the region in half.
- The Po River runs east and west, splitting the region in half.
- Pope wanted to keep control of the Papal States.
- Other European countries didn't want to see a strong Italy, because that might upset the balance of power.

However, there was a growing discontent towards the foreign rulers; the Italians had come together in a war against Austria to get back the provinces she had taken in a previous war. In 1820s, secret revolutionary societies called Carbonari became active. The members of these Carbonari supported the initial failed revolutionary activities for Italian Reunification called **Risorgimento** with a dim idea of creating an Italian state. They failed mainly because there was no concrete plan and leadership.

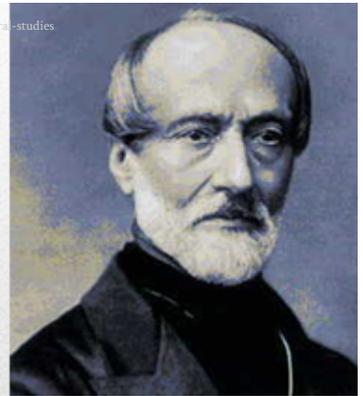
In such circumstances, two prominent radical figures in the unification movement appeared viz. **Giuseppe Mazzini** and **Giuseppe Garibaldi**. The former was idealistic and the later was practical.



GARIBALDI



CAVOUR



MAZZINI

Giuseppe Mazzini

Giuseppe Mazzini was a young man of 26 years, when his activities in the Carbonari led him to be put in jail. While in prison, he concluded that Italy should be unified. He formulated a program for establishing a free, independent, and republican nation with Rome as its capital. After his release in 1831, he went to Marseille, where he organized a new political society called *La Giovine Italia* (Young Italy). The new society, whose motto was "God and the People", sought the unification of Italy. It had 60,000 followers in the beginning of 1830s.



He planned a revolution in early 1833. However, the government discovered the plot before it could begin and many revolutionaries were arrested and executed. Mazzini disappeared and was tried *in absentia* and sentenced to death.

During the violent year of 1848, revolts broke out in eight states on the Italian peninsula. Mazzini briefly headed a republican government at Rome. He believed that nation-states were the best hope for social justice, democracy, and peace in Europe. However, the 1848 rebellions failed in Italy as they did elsewhere in Europe. The former rulers of the Italian states drove Mazzini and other nationalist leaders into exile.

For many years, he remained in hiding. He made several failed attempts of resurrection before he died in 1872 of a lung disease.

Role of Camillo di Cavour

The largest and strongest of the Italian states was Piedmont-Sardinia, which was somewhat favouring to the nationalists. This Kingdom had also adopted a liberal constitution in 1848. Since the democratic idealism of Mazzini had already failed, the nationalists looked towards the unification of the Italy under the Piedmont-Sardinia as a sensible alternative.

In 1852, Sardinia's King Victor Emmanuel II appointed Count Camillo di Cavour as his prime minister. This wealthy, middle-aged aristocrat, worked tirelessly to expand Piedmont-Sardinia's power. Initially, his goal was to strengthen Sardinia's power, not to unite Italy. At first, Cavour's major goal was to get control of northern Italy for Sardinia. The greatest roadblock to annexing northern Italy was Austria. To expel the Austrians from the north, Cavour entered into an agreement with France. In 1858, the French emperor Napoleon III agreed to help drive Austria out of the northern provinces of Lombardy and Venetia.

Thus, a war between the combined French-Sardinian army and Austria triggered which resulted in the defeat of Austria. Sardinia succeeded in taking over all of northern Italy, except Venetia, from the Austrians.

Giuseppe Garibaldi

After control over almost entire northern Italy, Cavour looked at southern parts. He secretly started helping the nationalist rebels. In 1860, a small army of Italian nationalists led by **Giuseppe Garibaldi** was able to capture Sicily from the Bourbon Kings. This successful expedition is also known as **Expedition of the Thousand**. From Sicily, Garibaldi crossed to the Italian mainland and marched north to Rome. He got immense support of the Volunteers. He wanted to capture Rome but Cavour persuaded him not to do so, because there was a fear that the French troops might come to protect the Pope.



In battle, Garibaldi and his followers always wore bright red shirts. This is why they became known as Red Shirts.

The *Expedition of the Thousand* ended in a plebiscite in 1860, whereby the voters gave Garibaldi permission to unite the southern areas he conquered with the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia. There was a meeting of Garibaldi and King Victor Emmanuel II arranged by Cavour in Naples. Garibaldi willingly agreed to step aside and let the Sardinian king rule.

Thus, this was the last territorial conquest before the creation of the Kingdom of Italy on 17 March 1861. King Victor Emmanuel II of Sardinia was proclaimed the King of Italy. This Kingdom of Italy existed until 1946 when the Italians opted for a republican constitution.

In 1866, the Austrian province of Venetia (including city of Venice) became part of Italy.

In 1870, Italian forces had also taken over the territories of the Papal States. With this, the city of Rome came under Italian control. The pope, however, would continue to govern a section of Rome known as Vatican City.

Garibaldi, who is now known as one of Italy's "**fathers of the fatherland**" and also the "**Hero of Two Worlds**" (due to his military enterprises in Brazil, Uruguay and Europe) retired to the rocky island of Caprera, refusing to accept any reward for his services. He again later took arms in Austro-Prussian War. After a political career full of ups and downs, he died in 1875, with his last wish of a simple cremation, much away from pomp and display.

Challenges of Italy after Unification

- The Unification itself was not a panacea for all problems of Italy. The centuries of separation had created fierce rivalries among the different Italian provinces.
- The major source of the tension in Italy was that the northern part of the country was industrialized while the southern part was agricultural. The people of these two regions had such a difference that they spoke two different versions of the Italian language and scarcely understood each other.
- The Italian Parliament was soon got filled with disorganized parties and vague politics. There was a frequent change in the cabinets and the prime ministers.
- In the south, violent peasant revolts broke out because of the economic problems. The northern parts were also affected by an array of strikes and riots. Thus, by the dawn of the 20th century, Italy was a poor and wretched state.

Unification of Germany

Germany was a ragbag of 314 states & 1474 estates i.e. total 1789 independent sovereign powers



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in the medieval times. These were held together by the absolute rule of the emperor and his troops. Here, the *local patriotism* was a powerful force among Bavarians, Saxons, Prussians, Wurtembergers & others.



Germany in 1815

Napoleon had won much of the German area. The 1815 Settlement via the Congress of Vienna led to a formation of loose grouping called the **German Confederation**, still made of 39 states.

This German Confederation was dominated by the two largest states viz. **Austro-Hungarian Empire** and **Prussia**.

The state of Prussia had several advantages that eventually helped it to forge a strong German state. The population of Prussia was mainly German speaking, thus the waves of Nationalism actually united Prussia while the Austria-Hungary was tore apart by the ethnic groups.

Napoleon was responsible for interest of intellectuals in German unification because his domination of Germans at will during Napoleonic wars brought wave of nationalistic reaction. This interest was also heightened by the shame of the Germans inability to drive out the French. Most of the states, particularly Prussia remained firmly opposed to Napoleon. Prussia had also shared the glory of victory at Waterloo.

The Revolt of 1848

The Prussian army was one of the most powerful armies of the times. The emergence of Prussia as a



strong power coincided with the waves of nationalism. The tide of nationalism led to several revolts, important among them was that of 1848, when the rioters in Berlin forced the Prussian king, **Frederick William IV**, to call a constitutional convention. The king called a convention to draw the liberal constitution for the kingdom but refused to become a constitutional monarch so the revolts remained a failure in 1848.

Constitutional Crisis of 1861

In 1861, **Wilhelm I** succeeded Frederick William as King of Prussia. He moved drastic steps in the parliament to reform the army and double the military power of Prussia. But, the liberal parliament refused him these steps mainly because of the question of payment for these reforms. This led to a constitutional crisis in Prussia.

Famous Blood and Iron speech

“The position of Prussia in Germany will not be determined by its liberalism but by its power ... Prussia must concentrate its strength and hold it for the favorable moment, which has already come and gone several times. Since the treaties of Vienna, our frontiers have been ill-designed for a healthy body politic. Not through speeches and majority decisions will the great questions of the day be decided – that was the great mistake of 1848 and 1849 – but by iron and blood (Eisen und Blut).” From Otto von Bismarck speech given in 1862.

The refusal of the parliament was seen by Wilhelm as a major challenge to his authority. The King was having support of the strongly conservative **Junkers**.

Junkers refers to members of Prussia’s wealthy landowning class, who were strongly conservative and opposed liberal ideas.

To solve the crisis, in 1862, Wilhelm chose a conservative Junker named **Otto von Bismarck** as his prime minister.

Bismarck, who was a master of **Realpolitik** declared with King’s approval that he would rule without the consent of parliament and without a legal budget.

Realpolitik is a German term which refers to the politics of reality, where there is no room for idealism in the power politics. With Realpolitik as his style, Bismarck later became one of the tallest figures of German history.

Thus violating the constitution directly, he said that the major issues will not be solved by majority decisions of the parliament but with **Blood and Iron**. This 1862 speech is now famous as Blood and



Iron speech.

The Seven Weeks War

In 1864, Bismarck formed an alliance between Prussia and Austria. He declared a war on Denmark and quickly won the two border provinces of Schleswig and Holstein, thus infusing national pride among the Prussians.

The other sections of Germany also gave support for unification of the Germany and for Prussia as head of a unified Germany. After the 1864 victory, Prussia governed Schleswig, while Austria controlled Holstein. But, Bismarck wanted to anyhow curtail Austria and win the Holstein so he stirred up border conflicts with Austria. The border conflicts led to Austria to declare a war on Prussia in 1866, which is now known as **Seven Weeks War**.

The Kingdom of Italy participated in the war with Prussia, because Austria held Venetia and other smaller territories wanted by Italy to complete the process of Italian unification. In return for Italian aid against Austria, Bismarck agreed not to make a separate peace until Italy had obtained Venetia.

The war resulted in a decisive victory of Prussians over Austria. The Austria lost Venetia to Italy and some other territories including Holstein were taken over by Prussia. In 1867, the remaining states of the north joined a North German Confederation, which Prussia dominated completely. By this time, only a few states of south were independent of Germany. Most of these southern German states such as **Bavaria, Wurttemberg, Baden** and **Hesse-Darmstadt** were Catholics and they would resist being taken over by the Protestant Prussians.

Here, using his Realpolitik skills, Bismarck concluded that he might win the support of the southern people if they faced a threat from outside. This outside threat was could be France. In those times, the rise of Prussia as a mighty state in Europe had disturbed the balance of power. France was strongly opposed to the annexation of the southern German states, which would have significantly strengthened the Prussian military. At the same time, Bismarck considered it necessary to have a war with France to arouse the nationalistic emotions among the southern German states.

The Franco-Prussian War

So, a war was manufactured by Bismarck. In 1870, the King Wilhelm I of Prussia was on a vacation at **Bad Ems**, a resort spa. During one of the morning strolls here, he was waylaid by Count Benedetti, French ambassador to Prussia. The overloads of this French ambassador had instructed him to present the French demand to the King of Prussia. These demands included a promise from the King that Prussia will not put its candidate for the Spanish throne, which was vacant at that time. The meeting was cool and the King had cordially refused to make any promise for the indefinite future. After the meeting, the secretary of King sent a telegram to Bismarck regarding the accounts



of this meeting. This Telegram is called **EMS Dispatch**. Bismarck altered and edited the language of the telegram and published it in such a way that it appeared that the King insulted the French diplomat. In a reaction to this, France declared a war on Prussia in July 1870.

The most important battle in this war was the **Battle of Sedan** in which there was a quick Prussian victory and 80,000 men from France including the French Emperor **Napoleon III** himself were taken as prisoners. Paris did not fall and resisted Prussians for four months but finally hunger forced them to surrender. This was the final phase of the unification of Germany.

As a result of this victory, the nationalistic fever seized people in southern Germany also. They accepted Prussian leadership. On January 18, 1871, at the captured French palace of Versailles, King Wilhelm I of Prussia was crowned Kaiser or emperor. Germans called their empire the Second **Reich** (First was the Holy Roman Empire). Thus, Bismarck achieved Prussian dominance over Germany and Europe “by blood and iron.”

The Industrial Revolution, 1700 –1900

Industrial Revolution began in England and soon spread to Continental Europe and North America. It roughly corresponds to a period between 1750 to 1860. The first major industry to taste the Industrial revolution was Textile Industry. However, it was the **Agricultural Revolution** in England that eventually paved the way for Industrial Revolution.

British Agriculture Revolution

By the dawn of the 18th century, the landscape of England was covered by small farms.

The much of these small farms were bought up by the wealthy landowners. After buying up the land of the villagers, the landowners enclosed their land with fences and called them **Enclosures** {Thus, it is sometimes called **Enclosure Movement**}. Due to the increased landholding, they were able to cultivate within the enclosures using new techniques and harvesting methods. The result was that

- Experiments with new harvesting methods were done
- The large landowners forced the small land *owners to either give up farming and **move to cities** or work as tenant farmers.*

Another major change in the practice of agriculture was the adoption of **Crop Rotation**. Turnip was used for improvement of soil in rotation with other major crops such as wheat which depleted the soil nutrition.

The Livestock breeders also improved their methods to increase the meat output. For example, Bakewell used only strongest and healthiest animals for breeding.

The increased food supply improved the living conditions, life span and decreased the infant



mortality rate. Thus the population of England mushroomed. The increase in population boosted the demand for food and goods.

Jethro Tull

Jethro Tull (1674-1741) was one of the first of these scientific English farmers, who is known as pioneer in the British Agricultural Revolution. He saw that the usual way of sowing seed by scattering it across the ground was wasteful as many of the seeds failed to take root. He invented the Seed Drill in 1701. This horse drawn seed drill sowed the seeds in neat rows and allowed a larger share of the seed to germinate thus, boosting crop yields. This method was later adopted by many large land owners.

Meaning of Industrial Revolution

Industrial revolution refers to a major change in a country's method of producing goods and organizing labour and a movement from agricultural to an industrial society; manual labor to use of machines that lead to greatly increased output and rural society to an urban society.

Characteristics of Pre-Industrial Revolution Society

In the pre-industrial revolution period, most people lived and worked in farms, the land was controlled by nobles. Agricultural methods were archaic, remained unchanged drastically for centuries. People rarely travelled, Communication between towns and cities was slow and infrequent. People supplemented their income by mining their land, working out of their homes. There was high infant mortality and short life expectancy. The Industry was domestic system or Cottage Industry whereby:

- Produced goods such as Textile and coal in their homes or own land
- One step of manufacturing was completed in one house and then it was passed onto another home for the next step (Spinner, weaver, fuller, dryer)

This system had some advantages such as workers could set their own hours; women could carry along with their domestic duties and children worked along with their parents.

Why Industrial Revolution began in England only?

Apart from the above mentioned British Agricultural Revolution, the other reasons why Industrial Revolution was happened in England only are as follows:

- Though Britain took part in many wars during the 1700s, none of these struggles occurred on British soil. Furthermore, their military and political successes gave the British a positive attitude. The political stability and general peace in Britain was a very important factor.
- Increased Good Labour Supply because birth rates increased & death rates decreased, population mushroomed and skilled and educated workers were available.



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- England was rich in coal, iron ore, waterways, resources from colonies (wool, cotton). It was rich in water power and coal to fuel the new machines; Iron ore to construct machines, tools, and buildings; rivers for inland transportation and harbours from which its merchant ships set sail.
- Britain had availability of Investment capital from wealthy landowners and merchants. It had a highly developed banking system contributed to the country's industrialization. People were encouraged by the availability of bank loans to invest in new machinery and expand their operations.
- Availability of Markets because colonies provided markets to sell finished goods. New jobs and wealth created a cycle of new markets (more money made = more money to spend). Large demand for textiles (demand exceeded supply).
- Support of the Government because political stability due to long surviving constitutional monarchy. There were Laws to protect businesses. There were Patent laws, which encouraged investment. There were no internal tariffs.
- There was no rigid class system and work ethic admired

Contribution of Steam Power

suraj_winner | rajawat.rs.surajsingh@gmail.com | www.gktoday.in/upsc/ias-general-studies

- Cloth and other products were produced more efficiently
- Cost of producing textiles and other products was greatly reduced
- Put hand producers out of business
- Factories could be run continuously
- Factories could be built anywhere

Spread of Industrial Revolution

- Wealthy industrialist spread the Industrial Revolution to other countries for profit
- Railroads and factories were built in the Colonies
- France, Germany and US (Samuel Slater) follow
- By 1870 US ranks with England and Germany as one of 3 most industrial counties in the world

Impact of Industrial Revolution

The industrial revolution changed England in character & culture. The effects of Industrial Revolution can be divided into three categories viz. Economic, Social and Political. They are as follows:

The Economic Effects

- New inventions and developments
- Rapid Growth of Industry



- Increased production and high demand for raw materials
- Growth of trade -worldwide
- Population explosion
- Exploitation of resources
- Development of Banking and Finance System
- Advances in travel, transport and agriculture

The Social Effects

- Long working Hours disturbed social fabric
- Population pressure on cities
- Poor city planning
- Expansion of middle class
- Working Problems for labour class
- Creation of new jobs and improvement in wages
- Technological progress

The Political Effects

- Enactment of Child Labour Laws
- Rise of reformers and social reform movements such as utilitarianism, utopianism, socialism and marxism
- Rise of Trade Unions
- Reform bills

The major impacts can also be enumerated under following heads.

Rising Middle Class

- A growing wealthy class of industrialists, business owners, and overseers appeared.
- Men work, women stay home – new men and women stereotypes emerged.
- Hired domestic help to help with women's domestic chores
- Boys went to school, girls prepared for marriage

Growth of Urban Poor

- Once small rural farmers, now urban poor.
- Dependent on factory work for livelihood
- No longer made or grew what families need
- Lost jobs as competition for factory jobs grew

Pathetic Working Conditions

- Labour worked for 10-14 hr. days for low wages
- Men, women and children worked
- Dangerous Conditions – unventilated rooms, cramped work spaces, heavy machinery, dust



and filth, few breaks, severe punishments

Poor condition of Female Workers

- Worked in factories, mines, as domestic servants
- Mill girls – single girls worked in mill towns away from families
- Spent long hours away from children
- Housework after 12-14 hour work days
- Hazardous working conditions
- Paid 50% of male wages

Proliferation of Child Labour

- No longer worked along side parents
- Started as early as 6 yrs old
- Paid 10% of male wages
- Few breaks and dangerous work that resulted in deformed bodies, lost limbs, long-term illness, sever punishments

Urbanization

- 5 out of 10 English lived in the city
- Poor Housing – dark, poorly constructed, badly ventilated, cramped dwellings
- Unsanitary conditions – no garbage removal, in-door plumbing
- There was a spread of disease and increase in crimes.

Beginning of Labor Unions

- Labour Unions as group of workers formed to compel business owners to improve wages and working conditions.
- They used various tools to achieve their goals such as **sit-ins** (Stopped working but also refusing to leave), Walk-out (Stopped working at a specific time and walked out), Strikes (Refused to return until demands were met), Collective Bargaining (both sides meet to negotiate a compromise) and slow downs (purposefully slow down production).

Other Notes

Three Factors of Production and Britain

Britain had an all the factors of production viz. Land, Labour and Capital. These were the resources needed to produce goods and services that the Industrial Revolution required. They included land, labor, and capital (or wealth).

Cotton Gin

England's cotton came from plantations in the Americas. Removing seeds from the raw cotton by hand was hard work. In 1793, an American inventor named **Eli Whitney** invented a machine to speed up the work. His cotton gin multiplied the amount of cotton that could be cleaned.



Steam Engine and Steamboats

The invention of the steam engine, stemmed from the search for a cheap, convenient source of power. The earliest steam engine was used in mining as early as 1705. This was not an economic engine because it used too much fuel. In 1765, James Watt of Scotland figured out a way to make the steam engine work faster and more efficiently while burning less fuel.

In 1774, Watt was employed by an entrepreneur Matthew Boulton, who encouraged him to build better engines. After that, an American inventor named Robert Fulton ordered a steam engine from Boulton and Watt. He developed the steamboat, the **Clermont** which ferried passengers up and down New York's Hudson River. In England, a network of canals was created. By the mid-1800s, 4,250 miles of inland channels slashed the cost of transporting raw materials. A steam engine on wheels drove English industry after 1820.

Road Development

John McAdam, a Scottish engineer developed the macadam roads in 1805. Toll was charged on these roads to it became a profitable business. On the macadamised roads, even in rainy weather heavy wagons could travel over without sinking in mud.

Impact of Industrial Revolution in England over other European Countries

Though the businesses in continental Europe languished for adopting the British Miracle, yet most of the states could not do so as early as Britain because of the political troubles. Between 1789 till 1815, the French Revolution and Napoleonic wars kept the continental Europe plunged into political instability; the frequent wars interrupted communication, trade and caused inflation. Thus, Industrial Revolution came to continental Europe only after a few decades and these countries could now see the gap between themselves and England.

Belgium

- The First notable country to adopt Britain's path was Belgium. This region was rich in Iron ore, coal etc. and had fine waterways for cheap transportation. The British workers brought here the technology and secret plans to build factories and equipments.
- A British carpenter William Cockerill arrived in Belgium in 1799 and brought with himself the secret plans for building spinning machinery. His son John Cockerill built an enormous industrial enterprise in eastern Belgium. Many more British came and established themselves in Belgium.

Germany

- Germany was a scattered empire yet some pockets of industrialization appeared in some parts such as coal rich Ruhr valley. **Ruhr Valley** was later called 'Miniature England' because of its similarities to the industrial areas of England.



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- Till 1835, Germany could not speed up the industrialization. From then onward, it started copying the British model and imported British equipment and engineers. The German manufacturers also sent their children to England to get education on industries.
- Germany built railroads linking its growing manufacturing cities, such as Frankfurt, with the Ruhr Valley's coal and iron deposits. Soon Germany became an economic and military giant in Europe.

Rest of Europe

- The Industrialization came up in rest of the Europe in specialized pockets rather than the entire regions. For example, Bohemia became specialized in Spinning Industry, Catalonia in Cotton processing, Northern Italy in silk spinning.
- The country where Industrialization came very late was France. In France, the industrial growth could occur only after 1850, when the government constructed railroads.
- Most of other European countries could not industrialize due to many reasons such as tough geography (Example Mountains of Austria and Hungary) and social structures.

Worldwide Impact of Industrialization

- Shift in the balance of power
- Increased competition among the Industrialized countries
- Rise of Global Inequality, widened gap between Industrialized and non-industrialized countries, which were later known as Third world.
- Less developed countries were seen as sources of raw material and markets for finished goods. The demand for raw material and look for markets led to exploitation of the colonies. This led to a large inequality between the industrialized West and the rest of the world. A competition among industrialized countries to seize the colonies and their economic resources started.
- *Thus, Colonialism and Imperialism were born out of the cycle of industrialization, the development of new markets around the world, and the need for resources to supply the factories of Europe.*

Merits and Demerits of Industrial Revolution

“Industrial Revolution was a mixed blessing” – this can be justified on the basis of merits and demerits of Industrial Revolution. These are as follows:

Merits

Firstly, Industrial revolution led to mechanised production. This, in turn, increased production much more than before. Thus, it resulted in improved production, both in quality and in quantity. This was true of both agriculture and industry. Mass production of goods inaugurated an era of plenty. Secondly, agriculture was to benefit immensely out of industrial revolution. New tools and machines



such as steel plough and harrow for tilling, the mechanical drill for planting of seeds and machines for thrashing, reaping and cultivating mechanised agricultural production made harvests become bumper and production increased by leaps and bounds with the use of chemical fertilizers. Thirdly, mass production of goods and articles gave an encouragement to trade and commerce. Transport and communication systems improved with the network of roads and railways. Water-transport did not lag behind. Travelling and transportation of goods were revolutionised. Europe became one big trading village, with this conquest of man over time and distance. Human mode of life became fashionable and more comfortable with the production of articles of basic and conventional necessities. Life was pleasant and comfortable, with man's needs being satisfied more fundamentally and easily. Fourthly, exploration of markets abroad and beyond the shores of Europe started more seriously. Better ships and navigation helped the process. International trade improved. Fifthly, industrialisation brought urbanisation. Towns and cities grew up in industrial centres. The difficulties and inadequacies of village-life came to be done with in the new urban life. Workers lived as neighbours and gradually demanded political rights. Trade-union of workers came up to successfully work for protection of workers' rights. Sixthly, industrial revolution resulted in a contrast. While it came to strengthen capitalism, it also gave birth to communism as propagated by Karl Marx. Seventhly, growth of science and technology continued unabated. The industrial revolution was the greatest blessing for mankind in this regard. Conquest of time brought more leisure, which came to be used for creative purposes.

Demerits

Demerits of Industrial Revolution were as follows. Firstly, it broke the back of the self-sufficient rural life. Old life-style was replaced by a new economic system that brought a virtual end to traditional society. In this transition, artisans of village-industry and the peasants came to forfeit their hereditary means of livelihood. Farmers became landless labourers, and artisans gave up their ancestral profession to seek means of livelihood in industrial centres. In summary, the industrial revolution broke the link with the past. People found it difficult to adjust to this transition.

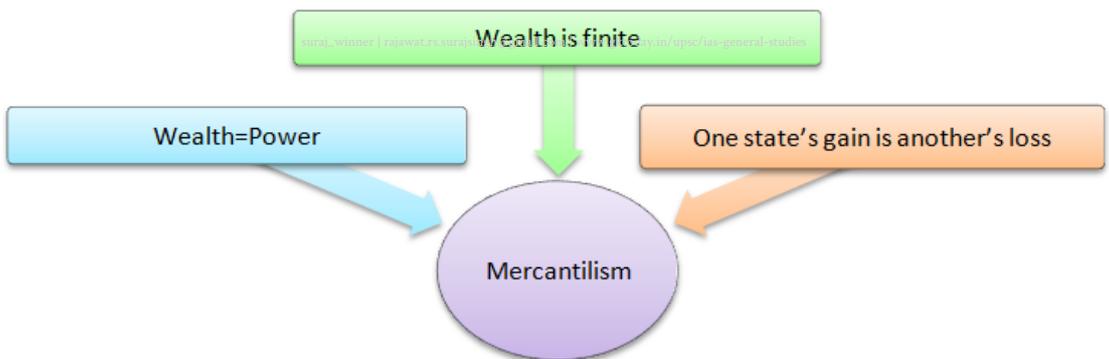
Secondly, rural unemployment led to over-crowding of cities and industrial centres. As such, unemployment in the cities grew. Not everybody can get a job in an industry because the industry would not absorb any labourer over its needs. Increased unemployment led the people to frustration. More availability of labour led to lesser wages. As such the gulf between the rich and the poor widened. This led to class-rivalry between the capitalists or the rich or the 'Haves' and the labourers or the poor or the 'Have-nots'. Thus, industrial revolution made class-wars inevitable. Fourthly, industrial revolution led to capitalism inside countries; but at the international stage, it brought



competition, imperialism and war among the nations. *Fifthly*, industrial revolution made the life of the workers and labourers wretched. Miserable life in slums of the cities, with no sanitation or hygienic living conditions and exposure to smoke and gas pollution brought diseases. No grant of leave, no insurance against death by diseases or by accident and the burdens of poverty made their life hell. *Sixthly*, industrialisation brought the political ideology of imperialism into focus at the international stage and made war inevitable. From an economic and political point of view it brought capitalism and communism face to face. It also led to Europe's colonial and commercial hold over the rest of the world. Thus as a result of industrial revolution, human civilization came to have a past and materialism came to have a future. The victim was humanism.

Mercantilism

The Mercantilism theory states that there is a **finite amount of wealth** in the world and that it is in a nation's best interest to **accumulate this finite wealth**. Since wealth is power, so by accumulating wealth, a nation can accumulate power. Thus, this theory stands on three premises as follows:



Features of Mercantilist Thoughts

A country achieves wealth by producing and exporting more goods than it imports. These goods must be sold at a profit for wealth to accumulate. Profits are large when a country spends a small amount of money on raw materials needed to create a product and sells the finished product for a high price. Then, Mercantilism was meant to serve the interests of the only empire, not the colony. Colonies existed for the benefit of the home country. Colonies could not sell their raw materials to anyone but the home country and they were not allowed to manufacture anything for export.

The Principles of Mercantilism were as follows:

- A nation's wealth is measured by the amount of precious metals (**Bullion**) it has accumulated rather than by its productivity. Sometimes, mercantilism is also known as **bullionism**.



- A **favorable balance of trade** is required to increase the wealth of the nation. To achieve this, domestic industry should be protected. Exports should be encouraged even at the cost of rival economies and imports should be curbed.
- Overseas colonies supply the mother country with raw materials for manufacture and trade
- Essential industries should be encouraged through subsidies and tax credits

Strategies of Mercantilism

- Aggressively exploit natural resources abroad. Build colonies to extract wealth.
- Maximize the export-to-import ratios and build up trade surpluses with other countries. The strategies to do so were as follows:
 - Raise protective tariffs or quotas or both on foreign imports.
 - Erect non-tariff barriers on foreign imports.
 - Dump exports on foreign markets by pricing them below cost so as to drive foreign companies out of their own domestic markets.
- Prevent other states from obtaining wealth. This could be done by
- Create exclusive trading relationships with weaker states so as to deny more powerful states access to their resources.
- Attack and capture foreign colonies.
- Block foreign shipping, preventing wealth gathered abroad from reaching rival countries. This was basically used by the pirates between 16th and 18th Incidentally, this is what pirates often did during the period between the 16th and 18th centuries.

The evolution of mercantilism

Mercantilist ideas were the dominant economic ideology of all of Europe in the early modern period. It **began in France** in early 16th century when an important decree of 1539 banned the import of woollen goods from Spain and some other parts. In 1540, France banned the export of bullion. This was followed by an array of mercantilist restrictions in France.

French Mercantilism

During the tenure of Finance Minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert, the French mercantilism reached its height. Under Colbert, imports were banned and exports were favoured. The Industries were organized and regulated by the state via a series of directives. To encourage the industrial production, France imported the artisans and craftsmen. The internal barriers of trade were decreased and external barriers of trade were made stronger. Thus, the French mercantilism is also sometimes known as **Colbertism**, due to successful policies of Colbert.

British Mercantilism

In England, the mercantilism reached its peak in 17th century particularly between 1640 to 1660. A



major contrast between French mercantilism and British mercantilism was that in Britain, the focus remained in international trade rather than the domestic control. Wide arrays of regulations were put in place to encourage exports and discourage imports. Tariffs were placed on imports and bounties given for exports, and the export of some raw materials was banned completely.

The **Navigation Acts** expelled foreign merchants from England's domestic trade. The nation aggressively sought colonies and once under British control, regulations were imposed that allowed the colony to only produce raw materials and to only trade with Britain.

This led to friction with the inhabitants of these colonies, and *mercantilist policies were one of the major causes of the American Revolution.*

However, mercantilist policies had an important effect on Britain helping turn it into the world's dominant trader, and an international superpower.

One domestic policy that had a lasting impact was the conversion of "waste lands" to agricultural use.

Industrial Revolution and Mercantilism

The mercantilist ideas did not decline until the coming of the Industrial Revolution. However, slowly other ideas sprang up such as the policy of *laissez-faire*. Till the end of the 17th century, successive governments in England kept confirming the policies to mercantilism. However, in the 18th century, the belief in mercantilism started fading because of the arguments of Adam Smith and other classical economists who won favour of the British Empire as well as some other parts of Europe.

The opposition to mercantilism came up as anti-mercantilist thought. The founding fathers of this thought were Adam Smith and David Hume though many scholars pointed out important flaws with mercantilism long before Adam Smith developed an ideology that could fully replace it.

The anti-mercantilist thought

The mercantilists failed to understand the notions of absolute advantage and comparative advantage fleshed out by Adam Smith and David Ricardo. Using arguments in favour of *laissez-faire* and absolute advantage, they proved that by imposing mercantilist import restrictions and tariffs, the countries end up becoming poorer.

Absolute Advantage Example

Portugal was a far more efficient producer of wine than England, while in England it was relatively cheaper to produce cloth. Thus if Portugal specialized in wine and England in cloth, both states would end up better off if they traded. This is an example of absolute advantage. In modern economic theory, trade is not a zero-sum game of cutthroat competition, as both sides can benefit, it is an iterated prisoner's dilemma. By imposing mercantilist import restrictions and tariffs instead, both nations ended up



poorer.

Similarly, David Hume pointed out the impossibility of the mercantilists' goal of a *constant positive balance of trade*. He said that as bullion flowed into one country, the supply would increase and the value of bullion in that state would steadily decline relative to other goods. Conversely, in the state exporting bullion, its value would slowly rise. Eventually it would no longer be cost-effective to export goods from the high-price country to the low-price country, and the balance of trade would reverse itself. Mercantilists fundamentally misunderstood this, long arguing that an increase in the money supply simply meant that everyone gets richer.

Laissez-faire thinkers such as Smith, Malthus, and Ricardo opposed government efforts to help poor workers. They thought that creating minimum wage laws and better working conditions would upset the free market system, lower profits, and undermine the production of wealth in society.

Policy of Laissez faire

Laissez faire refers to the economic policy of letting owners of industry and business set working conditions without interference. This policy favours a free market unregulated by the government. The term comes from a French phrase that means "let do".

The theory stemmed from French economic philosophers of the 18th-century Enlightenment. They criticized the idea that nations grow wealthy by placing heavy tariffs on foreign goods. Instead they argued that the government regulations only interfered with the production of wealth. They believed that if the government allowed free trade the economy would prosper.

This theory of Free Market or Free economy was defended by Adam Smith, a professor at the University of Glasgow in his 1776 book **The Wealth of Nations**. He argued that the **economic liberty guaranteed economic progress**. He claimed that government need not interfere in the economy. His famous "**The Invisible Hand**" metaphor supported this idea.

The basic ideas of Adam Smith were supported by Thomas Malthus and David Ricardo. They also believed that natural laws governed economic life. Their important ideas were the foundation of **laissez-faire capitalism**. In Capitalism, money is invested in business ventures with the goal of making a profit. The ideas of Malthus and Ricardo helped bring about the Industrial Revolution.

The Invisible Hand

The invisible hand was conceived by Adam Smith to describe the self-regulating behaviour of the marketplace. The invisible hand is the market. The most important



variable in market is the Price. There are two functions of price. One is that it provides information to both buyers and sellers. Second is that it provides incentives to act on that information. Adam Smith said that the people act in the own self-interest. Buyers would act to maximize the satisfaction they get from the products they buy, given the limitations of their incomes. Sellers would act to maximize profits. Workers would act to maximize the wages. In pursuing their own self-interest, the sellers and workers ultimately do that which is best for society as a whole (consumers), even though doing so is not their intent and even though they may not know they are doing so. This is the magic of the market and thus called “The Invisible Hand”.

Principle of Population – Malthus

In An Essay on the *Principle of Population*, 1798, Malthus argued that population tended to increase more rapidly than the food supply. Sooner or later population will be checked by famine and disease. However, without wars and epidemics, most were destined to be poor and miserable. The predictions of Malthus seemed to be coming true in the 1840s.

David Ricardo

In his *Principles of Political Economy and Taxation* (1817), Ricardo believed that a permanent underclass would always be poor. In a market system, if there are many workers and abundant resources, then labour and resources are cheap. If there are few workers and scarce resources, then they are expensive. Ricardo believed that wages would be forced down as population increased. The laissez-faire philosophers advised the governments to leave the business alone. Another bunch of theorists believed that government must interfere and take action to improve people's lives.

Utilitarianism

Utilitarianism holds that proper course of action is the one that maximizes utility such as maximizing happiness and reducing suffering. This theory was first put forward by Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill.

Jeremy Bentham

Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), British philosopher and social reformer modified the ideas of Adam Smith and introduced the philosophy of utilitarianism. He is now regarded as the founder of modern utilitarianism.

He argued that *people should judge ideas, institutions, and actions on the basis of their utility, or usefulness*. The government should try to promote the greatest good for the greatest number of people. According to Bentham, in general the individual should be free to pursue his or her own advantage without interference from the state. At the same time, a government policy was only useful if it promoted this goal.



John Stuart Mill

John Stuart Mill (1806 – 1873) is called the most influential English-speaking philosopher of the nineteenth century. He led the **utilitarian movement** in the 1800s.

Mill questioned the unregulated capitalism and said that it was wrong that workers should lead deprived lives. His theory sought to help ordinary working people with policies that would lead to a *more equal division of profits*.

He favored a cooperative system of agriculture and women's rights, including the right to vote. He called for the government to do away with great differences in wealth and carry out reforms in legal systems.

The Problems with Capitalism – Socialist View

Capitalism in its modern form has **developed from Mercantilism** of the 16th–18th Centuries via Industrialism, Communism and Neoliberalism. **Capitalism** is an economic system in which capital assets are privately owned and items are brought to market for profit.

The Class Struggle

In a Capitalist economy, the means of production are **not public property**. The land, raw materials, factories, machines, are owned by individuals, who are called the **capitalists**. Thus, the position of a person in the society depends upon *whether he owns or not* the means of production.

If a person belongs to a small group of owners to the means of production, he is from **capitalist class**. A person from capitalist class can do without working. If a person belongs to the large group that does not own the means of production, he is from **working class**. A person from working class can not live unless he works.

Thus, in capitalism, one class lives by owning; the other class lives by working. Since labor is essential to the production of goods, one can think that those who do the labour would be handsomely rewarded. But they are not. In a capitalist society, the largest incomes are of those who own the most and not who work the most.

The wheels of the capitalist society go around by Profit. Profit can be maximised when a business man pays as little as possible for what he buys and receives as much as possible for what he sells. The first step towards this is to reduce expenses. One of the expenses of production is wages. So, it would be in the interest of the employer to pay as low as possible.

Thus, the interests of the owners and workers are opposed. This leads to a war between these two classes. The capitalist tries to make profits to remain a capitalist. The worker tries to get decent wages to remain alive. Each can succeed only at the expense of other.



Surplus Value

A capitalist does not produce things which he wants to satisfy his own needs, he produces things to sell to others. However, to get the things produced, he needs labour. He buys the labour power from the worker class. The worker sells his labor power in return for wages. When a worker hires himself out to an employer he doesn't sell him what he produces; the worker sells his ability to produce.

There is a difference between what the worker is paid and the value of what he produces, in the period (such as 8 hours a day) of his employment. The difference between what the worker receives in wages and the value of the commodity he produces is called surplus value. This surplus value is the profit that goes to the capitalist. What a worker gets is a wage that keeps him alive and keeps him able to raise a family so that his offspring's would replace him when he dies.

Accumulation of Capital

Greatest amount of profits goes to the capitalist who uses the most advanced and efficient technical methods. So all capitalists keep striving for improvements to accumulate more and more capital.

Monopoly

Monopoly makes it possible for the monopolists to accomplish their purpose—make tremendous profits. Competitive industries make profits in good times and show deficits in bad times. But for monopoly industries the pattern is different—they make tremendous profits in good times and some profits in bad times.

Socialist Indictment of Capitalism

The socialism indicts capitalist system of being inefficient and wasteful, irrational, and unjust. It is based on the premise that the self-interest of the business man is sure to benefit the nation, which is a wrong proposition. Instead of basing production on the needs of all, it bases production on the profits of the few. It is unjust because its foundation stone is that of inequality. *The greatest waste of capitalism is war.*

Rise of Socialism

Socialism is a system in which, in contrast to capitalism, there is **common ownership of the means of production instead of private**; planned production for use instead of anarchic production for profit. With the advent of the Industrial Revolution and the growth of the factory system, the inefficiency, waste, irrationality, and injustice of Capitalism were apparent to thinking people. Beginning about the year 1800, in both England and France, the evils of capitalism were brought before the public in pamphlets, books, and speeches.

Principles of Socialism

The socialists wished to establish a society in which

- production was for use rather than profit
- distribution was based on need rather than greed



- opportunities were offered to all members of society.

To achieve these ends, socialists saw the need for the means of production to be placed in the *hands of the community* rather than a specific social class. That is, they sought the socialisation of industry. In their view, the exploitation would be thus abolished and a better society created. However, how these aims would be achieved, on this basis, three main groups emerged as follows:

Utopian socialism

Moved by the misery and poverty of the working class, a British factory owner named **Robert Owen** improved working conditions for his employees. Near his cotton mill in New Lanark, Scotland, Owen built houses, which he rented at low rates. He prohibited children under ten from working in the mills and provided free schooling. In 1824, he travelled to the United States and founded a cooperative community in New Harmony, Indiana, in 1825. He intended this community to be a **utopia**, or perfect living place.

Thus, utopian socialists sought to implement socialism by example – through the *establishment of model socialist communities in which workers were treated with dignity and income distribution was more equal*. Robert Owen was the most prominent of the 19th century utopians, but unfortunately, all his ventures collapsed as a result of internal disputes.

Revolutionary Socialism (Marxism)

Failure of the utopian socialist experiments and the lack of democracy in most parts of Europe convinced some socialists that **revolution was the only viable path to power**. They believed that capitalists would never permit socialism to succeed.

The writings of a German journalist Karl Marx (1818-1883) introduced the world to a radical type of socialism which is called Marxism. Marx and Friedrich Engels outlined their ideas in a 23-page pamphlet called **The Communist Manifesto**.

In their manifesto, Marx and Engels argued that human societies have always been divided into warring classes. In their own time, these were the middle-class “haves” or employers, called the **bourgeoisie** and the “have-nots” or workers, called the **proletariat**. While the wealthy controlled the means of producing goods, the poor performed backbreaking labor under terrible conditions. This situation resulted in conflict.

The basics of Marxism

According to Marx:

- Socialism was a historical inevitability, due to the inherent contradictions of capitalism.
- All societies passed through six historical stages viz. primitive communism, slavery, feudalism, capitalism, socialism and finally communism.



- Each historical stage corresponded to a particular level of technology and a particular system of class relations. In his words, “The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.”
- The process worked as follows:
- Technology gradually increased society’s capacity to generate wealth, but the dominant social class was unwilling to adopt these new technologies.
- Gradually, a new social class would emerge, which controlled the most dynamic productive forces. This new class would grow to resent the “old order”, which it saw as hindering further progress.
- In the end, the new class would rise up and overthrow the old, establishing new institutions more to its liking.
- Once again the forces of production and the social relations of production would be in harmony, propelling the economy forward until a new contradiction emerged.

The manifesto further said that the Industrial Revolution had enriched the wealthy and impoverished the poor. They predicted that the workers would overthrow the owners: “*The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Workingmen of all countries, unite.*”

Marx believed that the capitalist system, which produced the Industrial Revolution, would eventually destroy itself. Factories would drive small artisans out of business, leaving a small number of manufacturers to control all the wealth. Consequently, the large **proletariat** would revolt, seize the factories and mills from the capitalists, and produce what society needed. Workers, sharing in the profits, would bring about economic equality for all people. The workers would control the government in a “dictatorship of the proletariat.” After a period of cooperative living and education, *the state or government would wither away as a classless society developed.* Marx called this final phase **pure communism**.

Impact of Communist Manifesto

The Communist Manifesto was published in 1848. Its impact was such that it was able to produce some short term results and many revolutions. It was the time when widespread revolts took place in Europe; however, they were eventually put down. But on the turn of the century, this Marxist pamphlet produced explosive results. In the 1900s, Marxism inspired revolutionaries such as Russia’s Lenin, China’s Mao Zedong, Vietnam’s Ho Chi Minh, and Cuba’s Fidel Castro etc. These revolutionary leaders adapted Marx’s beliefs and arguments to their own specific situations and needs.



MWH-2: Revolutions and Political Developments (1750-1914)

However, several of Marx's and Engels's predictions have since proved wrong.

According to Marx, communism is a form of complete socialism in which the all means of production would be owned by the people and the private property would in effect cease to exist. All goods and services would be shared equally.

Thus, Marx explained the rise of capitalism as a conflict between the **bourgeoisie** and **proletariat**. Marx believed that the industrialised nations of Europe were ripe for socialist revolution by the middle of the 19th century. But socialism itself would not be the end of the historical process, because society would still be unable to produce enough to meet all humanity's material needs. Exploitation and inequality would only be eliminated under communism, a system in which there would be no poverty, no crime, no money and no government.

Comparison the Capitalist ideas and Marxist ideas.

Capitalist Ideas

- Government should not interfere in economy
- Progress results when individuals follow their own self interest
- Businesses follow their own self interest when they compete with one another
- Each producer tries to provide goods and services that are less expensive and better in comparison to their competitors
- Consumers compete to get best goods for cheapest prices
- Market Economy aims to produce best products and lowest prices

Marxist Ideas

- All great movements in the history are a result of the class struggle
- The haves take advantage of the have nots
- The class struggle was intensified because of Industrial Revolution
- The Capitalist system would eventually destroy itself.
- The state will wither away as a classless society develops

Other Forms of Socialism

Democratic socialism

In contrary to the predictions of the Karl Marx, many European powers eventually took two measures as follows:

- They legalised the unions
- They gave the voting power to the working class.

These two developments led to the creation of democratic socialist parties, based on the principles developed by the **Fabian Society**. It rejected the view that social change could be achieved only by



revolution.

Fabian Society

The Fabian Society is a British socialist organization whose purpose is to advance the principles of socialism via gradualist and reformist, rather than revolutionary, means. It is best known for its initial ground-breaking work beginning late in the 19th century and continuing up to World War I.

The principles of Democratic socialism were as follows:

- The democratic socialists “did not foresee the eventual obliteration of the political state but its transformation into a prime agency of amelioration for society’s masses.”
- While revolutionary socialists wanted to sublimate the individual to the needs of the state, the democratic socialists saw the state as a mechanism for increasing the independence, security and opportunities of each individual.
- In their view, “the major features of capitalist philosophy – the profit motive, the monetary incentive – could be significantly modified without converting individual workers, technicians and managers into listless, lazy units in the industrial complex.”

The main democratic socialist parties established during this period were the British Labour Party and the German Social Democratic Party (SPD). These parties were also influenced by Marxist ideology, particularly his analysis of the weaknesses of capitalism. However, they rejected the notion that social change could only be achieved by revolution.

One of the main events which divided the democratic and revolutionary socialists was the First World War. The democratic socialist parties supported their respective liberal and authoritarian governments during this conflict, prompting the revolutionary socialist parties (such as the Bolsheviks in Russia) to condemn them as tools of imperialism. The democratic socialists maintained their own forum – the Socialist International. This split within the international socialist movement was never healed. In fact, as the 20th century progressed, the revolutionary socialists were further split, both ideologically and politically.

Syndicalism

Syndicalism is another form of social control based on **trade union organization** which is considered to be the institution of new society and the means to bring it in force.

It adopts the Marxian beliefs of abolition of private ownership as a means of development and also gives the producers a control over the economic and political affairs of the state. Syndicalism is



attributed to be a predominant product of workers than any other form of socialism and is much more stressed upon.

The workers will have a greater personal interest in the conduct of the plant if they own and control the industry in which they work. This way they enjoy a greater amount of freedom than that offered by the capitalistic system.

Guild Socialism

Guild socialism intended to abolish the wage system and establish self-government in industry by the workers, through a democratic system of national guilds, working in conjunction with other democratic functional organizations in the community. The theory of guild socialism was developed and popularised by **G. D. H. Cole** who formed the *National Guilds League* in 1915.

It is closely related to syndicalism. The administration was not proposed to be as democratic as the other forms of socialism. As per Guild socialists, the industry should be administered by technical experts and not by unskilled workmen. Also, the interests of the consumer were to be taken into consideration. They stood for state ownership of industry, combined with workers' control through delegation of authority to national guilds organized internally on democratic lines.

Anarchism

suraj_winner | rajawat.rs.surajsingh@gmail.com | www.gktoday.in/upsc/ias-general-studies

Anarchism is one of the most basic forms of socialism. The followers of anarchism were initially associated with communism; however, in the year 1869, they were barred at the fourth annual congress of the first international. A separate organization was formed under the leadership of **Bakunin** (1814-1876) and **Kropotkin** (1842-1921) who advocated the destruction of existing governments.

Leninism

Vladimir Lenin (1870-1924) was a Marxist and his theoretical contributions to Marxist thought are known as **Leninism**, which coupled with Marxian economic theory have collectively come to be known as Marxism–Leninism. He made a number of significant changes to Marx's theories as follows:

- Because he was unwilling to wait until Russia had fully industrialised, Lenin modified Marx's view that revolution could only occur in the **advanced capitalist nations**. He asserted that *nations in the early stages of capitalism were also ripe for socialist revolution*; the industrialisation process could be completed once socialism had been achieved.

Lenin argued that the revolutions could be staged not by the working class, but by a professional band of revolutionaries. The commitment and determination of these people would make up for the lack of a large working class in Russia. The corollary of this view was that the Communist Party



would have to rule Russia dictatorially until a large working class support base could be created.

Mao Tse Tung

The Chinese Communist leader Mao Tse Tung further changed Marx's theories, arguing that even pre-capitalist nations could stage socialist revolutions, by mobilising the peasantry rather than the working class. Mao asserted that the capitalist stage of development could be by-passed altogether – opening the way for a series of revolutions in developing nations such as Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea.

Rise of Feminism: Seneca Falls Convention

While it is difficult to determine exact dates, the first wave of feminism is generally considered to have taken place throughout the second half of the 19th century and into the very beginning of the 20th century.

Some scholars have chosen to date the first wave of feminism between 1848-1920 because the *Seneca Falls Convention* was held in 1848 and *American women gained the right to vote in 1920*.

Early feminism was concerned with securing basic civil rights for women, like the right to work, the right to vote, and the right to social equality with men. With a few exceptions, throughout most of history, women were not entitled to equality with men. This movement aimed to change that. Sometimes the first wave of feminism is used synonymously with the term 'women's suffrage movement,' or just 'women's suffrage.' This dynamic movement affected both American and European societies.

First Wave of Feminism: Seneca Falls Convention

In the United States, women had been slowly and gradually making strides towards equality with men for decades prior to the first wave of feminism. Many scholars have pointed out how the American Revolution disrupted traditional gender roles and led to opportunities for women. For example, John Adams' wife, Abigail Adams, was a strong proponent of women's rights.

The big shift, however, took place during the mid-19th century. In July 1848, the **Seneca Falls Convention** convened in Seneca Falls, New York. This was the first modern women's rights convention. The convention was organized by Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, among others. **Elizabeth Cady Stanton** is widely regarded as one of the leading figures of the first wave of feminism.

A number of well-known figures spoke at the Seneca Falls Convention, including Stanton and black abolitionist Frederick Douglass. The convention passed a resolution called the *Declaration of Sentiments*. Based off the *Declaration of Independence*, the *Declaration of Sentiments* essentially stated that women were entitled to the same civil rights as men. This might seem like common sense to us



today, but in 1848, this was pretty radical!

The Seneca Falls Convention fueled other conventions and the formation of numerous women's rights organizations, like the *Equal Rights Association* in 1867 and the *National Woman Suffrage Association* in 1869. By the 1860s, women's rights had become a major issue. Increasingly, women began demanding the right to vote.

Many feminists during this time were also abolitionists, or those in favor of abolishing slavery. Many also tended to be anti-alcohol. Because of this, the *Women's Christian Temperance Movement (WCTU)* was often allied with the women's suffrage movement. One more thing: don't confuse first wave feminism with the radical feminism of the 1960s and today. First wave feminism was much more conservative to moderate and, in many cases, even religious in nature.

The first wave of the feminist movement struck Europe at about the same time as it did the United States. The movement particularly flourished in Great Britain. Barbara Bodichon was one of the leading British feminists. She founded the *English Women's Journal* in 1858 and was instrumental in forming suffrage societies, such as the Society for Promoting the Employment of Women. In 1867, Lydia Becker founded the National Society for Women's Suffrage. Generally speaking, the first wave of the feminist movement proceeded in Great Britain at roughly the same pace as it did in America.

Expanding Opportunities for Women

The first wave of feminism resulted in all kinds of increased opportunities for women. These were especially noticeable in the areas of education, marriage, family dynamics, and the workplace. Throughout the mid-19th century, many private colleges and universities began opening their doors to women. In 1855, the University of Iowa became the first public co-ed university in America. Other schools, like the University of Michigan, soon followed suit. Throughout the second half of the 19th century, the stigma associated with a woman pursuing higher education gradually decreased.

In the domestic realm, which is a fancy way of saying 'in marriage and in the home,' women's roles were changing as well. In Great Britain, the Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857 reformed existing divorce laws, widening women's ability to obtain a divorce on civil grounds. In 1918, British author Marie Stopes published an extremely influential book called *Married Love*. The book promoted gender equality and emphasized the role of female sexual desire.

On both sides of the Atlantic, it became increasingly common for women to work outside the home. Educated women typically worked in clerical positions, while uneducated women were more likely to labor in factories.

Voting Rights of Women



Throughout the early 20th century, women became more determined than ever to secure equal voting rights. Demonstrations and marches raged throughout America and Great Britain. Great Britain passed the Representation of the People Act of 1918, granting women over 30 the right to vote if they met specific qualifications. Of course, this did not grant women universal suffrage because only about 40% of all women met the qualification to vote. Ten years later, however, British women were given equal voting rights with men.

American women were granted the right to vote in 1920 under the **Nineteenth Amendment** to the Constitution. This amendment granted women full, universal voting rights. Interestingly enough, the amendment was introduced by Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton in 1878 but did not become law until 41 years later.

Susan B. Anthony was another leading first wave feminist. Her contributions to the movement were monumental. She served as president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, and today she is well-known for her appearance on the dollar coin that was minted from 1979-1981 and in 1991.

By the mid-1920s, feminism had made profound strides, exemplified by 'flappers.' Flappers were young women of the 1920s who defied social conventions by drinking, smoking, and engaging in other 'reckless' behaviors that had previously been relegated to men.

The Russian Revolution

The **Russian Revolution** was a series of revolutions in early 20th century that ultimately resulted in the overthrow of Tsar Nicholas II and the establishment of a communist government. During the revolution of 1905, on *Bloody Sunday*, the Tsar's guards fired upon peaceful protesters, killing hundreds. Concerned his authority might topple, the Tsar conceded to reforms, including the establishment of the **Duma**, a legislative assembly.

Things calmed down until early 1917, when the **February Revolution** resulted in the Tsar abdicating the throne and the installation of a leftist provisional government. In October same year, **Bolsheviks** led by Vladimir Lenin, overthrew the provisional government and established a communist in the **October Revolution**. Shortly afterwards, Vladimir Lenin moved to end Russian involvement in World War-I. On March 3, 1918 the **Treaty of Brest-Litovsk** was signed, formally ending Russia's participation in the war.

Summary of Causes and Events

Following is a summary of the causes and events of Russian Revolution.

Growing Discontent against Tsars

There was a widespread discontent among the people against the Tsars in the entire 19th century.



The most discontent community was peasants. Further:

- Slow pace of Reforms under Tsar Alexander II. This Tsar was assassinated by revolutionaries in 1881. He was succeeded by Alexander III, who was completely anti-reforms.
- Alexander III clung to the principles of autocracy, orthodoxy, and nationality. He considered dangerous to all who spoke a different language than Russian and worshipped outside the Russian Orthodox Church.
- He imposed strict censorship codes on published materials and written documents, including private letters.
- His idea was to establish a uniform Russian culture so he oppressed other national groups in Russia. Russian was made official language and other minority languages such as Polish were banned from the Schools.
- Further, Jews were targeted for persecution. Jews could not buy land or live among other Russians. Universities set strict quotas for Jewish students. Due to his policies, a wave of **Pogroms** broke out in many parts of Russia.

Alexander III was succeeded by Tsar Nicholas II who stubbornly refused to surrender any of his power.

suraj_winner | rajawat.rs.surajsingh@gmail.com | www.gktoday.in/upsc/ias-general-studies

Pogrom refers to the organized violence against Jews. This term is particularly associated with the Russian empire and also Germany.

Industrial Revolution

Despite of growth in the number of factories in Russia, the country lagged behind other European countries. To take the country forward, a programme was launched which included higher taxes and foreign investments, to finance the build-up of Russian industries. The economic growth made Russia one of the largest producers of steel in the last decades of 19th century. The World's largest Railway line was launched in 1904 as Trans-Siberian Railway. Rapid industrialization stirred more discontent among the people of Russia. Growth of industrialization brought gruelling working conditions, poor wages, child labour and other such problems. The government outlawed the Trade Unions. There was enormous gap between rich and poor.

Mensheviks and Bolsheviks

Various revolutionary movements grew in the Russian Society inspired the thoughts of Karl Marx. They had a belief that the industrial class of workers would overthrow the Tsar and then would form a **dictatorship of the proletariat**.

In 1903, the revolutionaries got split into two groups viz. Mensheviks and Bolsheviks.

- **Mensheviks** wanted a broad base of popular support for revolution



- **Bolsheviks** wanted a small number of committed revolutionaries who could sacrifice everything for a Radical change.

Leader of Bolsheviks was **Lenin**. In the early 1900s, Lenin fled to Western Europe to avoid arrest by the Tsarist regime but he maintained contact with other Bolsheviks. Lenin then waited until he could safely return to Russia.

The Russo-Japanese War 1904

The Russo-Japanese war of 1904 was one event that showed the Tsar's weakness and paved the way for revolution. Russia and Japan both were imperialist powers. They both competed for control of Korea and Manchuria. The two nations signed a series of agreements over the territories, but Russia broke them. In retaliation, Japan attacked the Russians at Port Arthur, Manchuria, in February 1904. Though Russian soldiers and sailors went confidently to war, the Japanese defeated them. Defeat by a small country like Japan increased unrest in Russia.

Major Events

Bloody Sunday 1905

On January 22, 1905, some 200,000 workers approached the Tsar's Winter Palace in St. Petersburg with a petition asking for better working conditions, more individual freedom, and an elected national legislature. The Tsar Nicholas II was not present at the palace but his generals were there, who ordered the soldiers to fire on the crowd. Hundred of unarmed workers were killed. This event was called the **Bloody Sunday**. The event provoked a wave of strikes and violence across Russia.

The Tsar Nicholas II opposed reform but in October 1905, he reluctantly promised more freedom. He approved the creation of the **Duma**, Russia's first parliament. The first Duma met in May 1906. Its moderate leaders wanted Russia to become a *constitutional monarchy* like Britain. Hesitant to share his power, the Tsar dissolved the Duma after ten weeks.

Entry in World War-I

In 1914, Nicholas II decided to drag Russia into World War I, despite the fact that Russia was unprepared for a war. More than 4 million Russian soldiers were killed or wounded or taken prisoners. In 1905, Nicholas shifted his headquarters to the War Front to encourage his soldiers. The real government back home came into the hands of his wife **Tsarina Alexandra**. She ignored the Tsar's chief advisers and came under the influence of one mysterious **Rasputin**, a self proclaimed holy man.

Rasputin claimed to have magical healing powers. He was neither a monk, nor he was ever officially connected to the Orthodox Church. Nicholas and Alexandra's son suffered from haemophilia and Rasputin seemed to ease the boy's symptoms. To show her gratitude, Alexandra allowed Rasputin to make key political decisions. Rasputin opposed reforms and obtained powerful positions for his close



ones and spread corruption. He was assassinated in 1916.

March Revolution 1917

Neither Nicholas nor Alexandra could tackle the enormous problems on war front as well as domestic fronts. In March 1917, women textile workers in Petrograd led a citywide strike.

Thereafter, the riots flared up everywhere. Nearly 200,000 workers swarmed into the streets and government ordered to shoot the rioters. The soldiers initially obeyed the orders but soon sided with them. They fired at the commanding officers and joined with the rebels.

The March revolution was a general uprising which forced Nicholas II to abdicate his throne. A year after, he was executed by the revolutionaries. The leaders of the Duma established a temporary government under **Alexander Kerensky**, who decided to continue with the war. The decision to continue with the war cost him support from army as well as civilians.

Meanwhile, the Social revolutionaries, competing for power, formed soviets i.e. the local councils which consisted of workers, peasants, and soldiers.

Return of Lenin – October Revolution

Meanwhile Lenin returned from Germany after many years in exile. He reached Petrograd in April 1917. Along with Bolsheviks, he soon gained the control of Petrograd soviet, as well as the soviets in other major Russian cities. Lenin's slogan—“**Peace, Land, and Bread**”—got widespread appeal.

During October, 1917 (November as per Gregorian Calendar), the Provincial Government was removed and replaced with a Bolshevik government in Russia which led to formation of USSR. This was the October revolution which got over in a matter of hours. Kerensky and his colleagues disappeared from the scene.

Within days after the Bolshevik takeover, Lenin ordered that all farmland be distributed among the peasants. Lenin and the Bolsheviks gave control of factories to the workers.

Withdrawal from War

Bolshevik government also decided to withdraw from the war. In March 1918 Russia and Germany signed the **Treaty of Brest-Litovsk**. Via this treaty, Russia surrendered a large chunk of its territory to Germany and its allies. The humiliating terms of this treaty triggered widespread anger and objection to the policies of the Bolsheviks.

Russian Civil War

The opponents of the Bolsheviks formed a **White Army**. From 1918 to 1920, civil war raged in Russia between the Red Army of Bolsheviks and White army. Several countries of West including United States sent military aid and forces to Russia to help the White Army. The civil war and the famine that followed claimed 15 million lives in three-year struggle and in the famine that followed.

The Red Army emerged winner and crushed all opposition to Bolshevik rule.



The Measures taken by Lenin

Economic Reforms

In March 1921, Lenin launched the New Economic Policy (NEP). In this policy, he temporarily put aside his plan for a state-controlled economy. He resorted to a small-scale version of capitalism. The reforms under the NEP allowed peasants to sell their surplus crops instead of turning them over to the government. Individuals could buy and sell goods for profit. The government kept control of major industries, banks, and means of communication, but it let some small factories, businesses, and farms operate under private ownership. Lenin also tried to encourage foreign investment.

Political Reforms

Russia was a conglomeration of many nationalities and this was seen as an obstacle to national unity by the Communists. Moreover, the Communist leaders also saw nationalism as a threat to unity and party loyalty.

So, to check nationalism, Lenin organized Russia into several self-governing republics (Soviets) under the central government. Thus, in 1922, the Russia was named the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), in honor of the councils that helped launch the Bolshevik Revolution. The new capital of the union was Moscow. The Bolsheviks also renamed their party to Communist Party.

In 1924, the Communists created a constitution based on socialist and democratic principles but the Communist Party held all the power. Thus, Lenin had established a dictatorship of the Communist Party, **not “a dictatorship of the proletariat,”** as Marx had promoted. However, due to the new policies and peace that followed, USSR slowly recovered. By 1928, the country’s farms and factories were producing as much as they had before World War I.



suraj_winner | rajawat.rs.surajsingh@gmail.com | www.gktoday.in/upsc/ias-general-studies

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Modern World History-3: Colonialism & Imperialism

[Integrated IAS General Studies:2016-17](#)

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suraj_winner | rajawat.rs.surajsingh@gmail.com | www.gktoday.in/upsc/ias-general-studies



This document gives brief overview of Imperialism, Neoimperialism, Colonialism, Neocolonialism, patterns of colonial control, Imperialism in Africa, China and Japan. Some key words include Social Darwinism, Scramble for Africa, Policy of Splendid Isolation, Boer Wars, Moroccan Crises, Gunboat Diplomacy, Opium Wars, Open Door Policy, Japanese Isolationism, Meiji Reforms etc.

Model Questions

1. Many argue that colonialism did not end but merely evolved. What do you understand by this? Discuss with examples.
2. How the New Imperialism was different from the older Imperialism. What were the drivers of Neo-Imperialism?
3. What is Social Darwinism? What role did it play in imperial rivalry among European states and in the justification of empire over non-European peoples? Explain.
4. Differentiate between Colony, Protectorate and Sphere of Influence (SOI) with examples.
5. What is the historical significance of the straight lines visible on Africa's current political map dividing various countries? What was result of such division of the continent on its social and political status? Examine.
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6. What do you understand by Policy of Splendid Isolation? What forced Britain to move away with this policy?
7. Do you agree that Moroccan crises led to World War-I? Justify.
8. Discuss the circumstances in which the Open Door Policy with China was proposed. What were the implications of this policy on China and West? Throw light.
9. Discuss the circumstances which led Japan to adopt so called policy of "Isolationism" or "Sakoku". How the Meiji restoration reverted this policy and what were its impacts? Examine.
10. While discussing the key elements of Meiji Reforms, critically examine their role in Japanese Imperialism.

Meaning: Imperialism & Colonialism

The two words colonialism and imperialism have been used interchangeably however, colonialism is the **practice of** establishment, exploitation, maintenance, acquisition and expansion of colonies in one territory by people from another territory and imperialism is the **idea driving the practice**. The takeover of a country or territory by a stronger nation with the **intent of dominating the political, economic, and social life of the people** of that nation is called imperialism. In other words, **Imperialism** refers to *the dominance of one political*



community over another political community. The weaker political community is influenced to serve the dominant power's interests. Simply, *while colonialism is refers to establishing the colonial territories overseas, Imperialism is to create and expand the empire.* Imperialism is a broader category of domination that encompasses colonialism.

One more difference is that in colonies, there is a movement of the people from the old to new territories to live there permanently (Such as USA) while imperialism refers to exercise of power either through sovereignty or via other indirect mechanisms of control such as Suzerainty (Such as India and its Princely states).

During the course of modern history, Imperialism has allowed relatively small countries with limited resources to grow into great powers on the world stage. Let's look at England, for example. England was a relatively small island nation off the coast of Europe, but through its pursuit of imperialism, it forged a worldwide empire so extensive that it was oft said that the sun never set upon the British Empire.

Ne imperialism

The old school of imperialism typically relied on the military force & conquests and settlements / colonies for empire building. However, this is not the only path taken towards imperialism. At present, military is not used much, instead, imperialism is / can be pursued through the assertion of *political, economic and cultural influence*. This is called **ne imperialism**.

United States is sometimes called maestro of ne imperialism. That country has exerted a great deal of influence over the entire world. Though US has used its military might to forward its interests, yet it has simultaneously relied on economic power, its influence in international institutions (UN, WB, IMF). Further, it has extensively used social, political and economic values and culture across the world.

Colonialism

Colonialism is defined as conquering and settling occupied or unoccupied territory. England, Spain and France colonized North America. Colonialism is now considered extinct as the final remnants of the old colonial empires got dissolved after World War II. Nevertheless, its effect is still felt across the old colonies. Many of the former colonies suffer internal conflict because the boundaries were based on colonial system, which separated the close ethnic groups and placed traditionally hostile groups within the same boundaries.

Another legacy left by colonialism is that many former colonies are today's least developed countries. The colonial masters extracted the wealth and resources of the colonies for the benefit of their homeland. In this process, the colonies were burdened with a narrow economic base designed to



benefit the homeland {including growing certain cash crops or mining specific mineral}.

Further, in colonies, the professional class such as administrators, lawyers, doctors, etc. were from homeland. As the colonies got freedom, they suffered with serious brain drain.

Neocolonialism

Many argue that colonialism did not end but merely evolved. **Neocolonialism** involves a continued relationship of dominance between former colonial powers and their former colonies through economic dependency. Even though many former colonies gained their legal independence, they remain under the de facto control of the Western powers of Europe and the United States. For example, a former colony may rely upon its former colonial master for trade. Much needed financial aid and offered loans may come with certain political and economic strings attached designed to benefit the dominant country and its business. Additionally, the former colonies tend to be less technologically advanced and have inferior military power, which helps keep them subservient to the former colonial powers. Thus, **Neocolonialism** is the continued relationship of dominance of the former colonies by the former colonial powers based primarily upon economic dependence.

Factors Driving Colonialism and New Imperialism

The important driving factors of colonialism and new imperialism are discussed below:

Industrial Revolution

- As European nations industrialized, they searched for new markets and raw materials to improve their economies.
- As the competition for colonies intensified, each country was determined to plant its flag on as much of the world as possible.

Social Darwinism

- In the Social Darwinism theory, the ideas of Charles Darwin about evolution and “survival of the fittest” were applied to social change.
- Those who were fittest for survival enjoyed wealth and success and were considered superior to others. The non-Europeans were considered to be on a lower scale of cultural and physical development because they did not have the technology that Europeans had.
- Europeans also believed that they had the right and the duty to bring the results of their progress to other countries.

Decline of Mercantilism

- The mercantile theory which laid that ‘colonies were beneficial and necessary to the mother country’ was gradually losing its appeal on account of the sharp criticisms directed against it by economist like Adam Smith, who stood for the new economic theory of *laissez-faire*.
- With the growth of the free trade movement, the very foundation and utility of the old



colonial policy based on mercantilism, was undermined. People began to lose faith in the value of colonies.

- But as the century progressed, several focuses were found at work, which created a new impetus for colonial expansion. This revival of imperialism (the *new imperialism* as it is called) was largely the product of the new economic conditions brought into being by the industrial revolution.

Technological Advancements

- Transport communication was greatly improved due to the brilliant triumphs of modern science and engineering. The consequence was that the conquest and occupation of distant land became infinitely more feasible.
- The requirements of modern industries led to enormously increased demands for raw tropical products. Thus, it enhanced the value of colonies as sources of supply.
- The new weapons such as Maxim Gun proved vital in expansion of European powers in Africa.

Population Pressure

- Expanding population was an important reason for which new colonies were required. Economic distress and periodical recurrence of unemployment forced people to find new homes and careers abroad.

Surplus Capital

- Surplus capital required investment in newly opened up countries where greater returns could not be easy. Therefore, this sort of economic penetration was often the forerunner of political control as in the case of Egypt and Morocco etc.

Political and Military factors

- As the temper of the age grew more militaristic, the nations of Europe came to realise that the colonies might have also a military value.
- During the 19th century, thousands of emigrants left Europe for Argentina, America, Brazil and other countries. This meant the passing away of so many citizens under an alien flag and the consequent loss of the military manhood of a nation. Hence to conserve the man-power of a nation it was found necessary to have colonies where the emigrants might remain under the allegiance of the mother country.

National honour and prestige

- The spirit of national pride and desire for prestige supplied a very strong incentive to colonial expansion. This spirit was especially strong in the two new states of Italy and Germany.
- British proudly said that sun never sets in British Empire.



Role of Christian missionaries

- The missionaries often led the way for the merchants and then for the military penetration and occupation in Africa and in the islands of the south sea.

Pattern of Colonial Control

To establish control of an area, Europeans used different techniques. Over time, four forms of colonial control emerged as follows:

Colony

This was governed internally by the Foreign Power. Example is British Indian territories. The day-to-day management of the colony was done either directly or indirectly.

Direct Control

This was the preferred way of management of the colonies, whereby the Europeans thought that their subjects were naive to handle the business of running a country. Using the policy of paternalism the Europeans governed people in a fatherly way by providing for their needs but not giving them rights. To accomplish this, the Europeans brought in their own bureaucrats and did not train local people in European methods of governing.

Indirect Control

Indirect control relied on existing political rulers. In some areas, the British asked a local ruler to accept British authority (Suzerainty) to rule. The Imperial power appointed agents or officials to advise these rulers on local matters.

Protectorate

This referred to a country or territory with its own internal government but under the control of an outside power. Example is British protectorate over the Niger River delta in Africa.

Sphere of Influence (SOI)

This refers to an area where the European country claimed exclusive privileges to trade or investment.

Economic Imperialism

These were the area where government was independent but economy was controlled by the private business.

Imperialism in Africa

Africa saw the most dramatic colonisation during the later part of 19th century and early 20th century.

A unique fact about European colonization of Africa is that it was colonized so late in history. Although certain European powers had built settlements or ports along the African coast; yet by and large, the whole of Africa remained uncolonized even till 1860s and 1870s. For thousands of years,



the African tribes lived through out the interior of African continent often fighting with other tribes for dominance and expansion. Except strategic trading ports, the Europeans were not much interested in interior Africa.

However, a competition for Africa's territory and resources started after a Scottish missionary David Livingstone and an explorer HM Stanley mapped much of Africa. This mapping revealed the true value of Africa {in terms of natural resources} and fuelled European interest in the continent. This is how a tremendous competition to take over African territory started which is called Scramble for Africa.

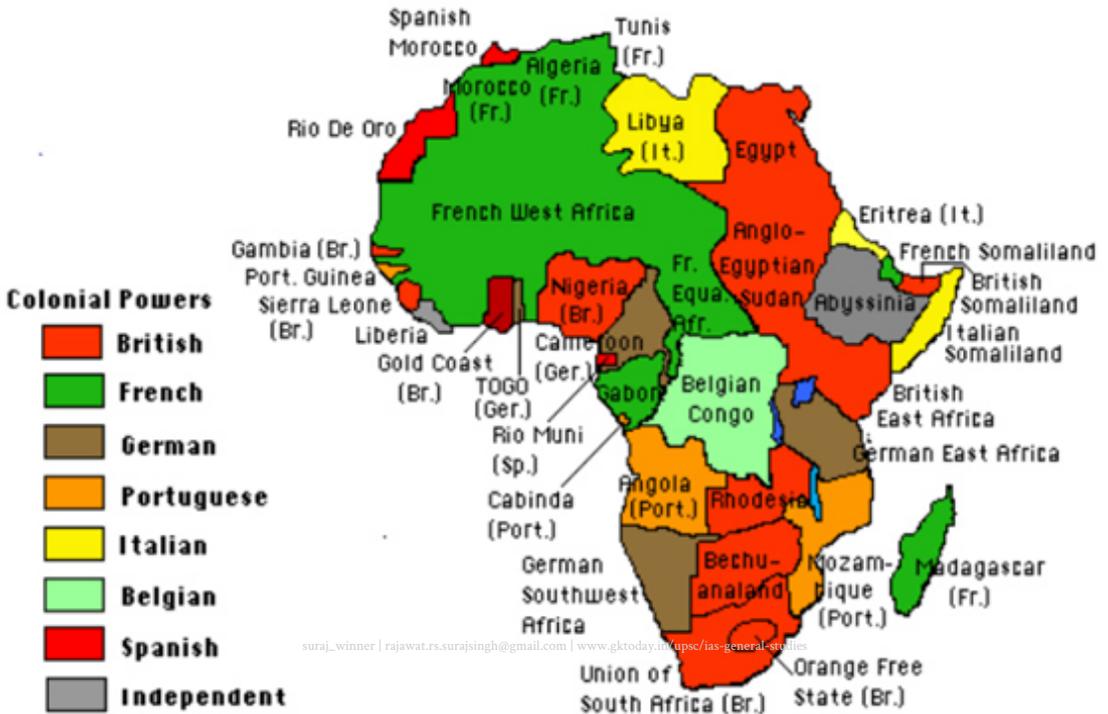
Scramble for Africa

The term "*Scramble for Africa*" is used to describe the period of intense European interest in colonization, occupation and annexation of Africa between the 1880s and 1914. Other terms used for the same phenomena include "Partition of Africa" and "*Race for Africa*".

No European power wanted to be left out of the race to acquire territories in Africa. The competition was so fierce that there was a fear of war between the European countries. To avoid the war, **Bismarck called** together representatives of major European countries to deal with rival colonial claims. This was called **Berlin Conference**. However, this Berlin conference is called the starting point for Scramble for Africa.

Berlin Conference

Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 was held in Berlin, Germany between 1884-1885 and was attended by fourteen European nations whose aim was to divide up the continent among themselves. The conference was put together by German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck.



Extent of Colonization in Africa in 1914

Ignoring the rights of existing African kingdoms and people's altogether, European powers claimed the right to acquire inland territories by expansion from existing coastal possessions. They agreed that possession should involve effective occupation of the land and control over the people. They agreed that any European country could claim land in Africa by notifying other nations of their claims and showing they could control the area.

No African ruler attended these meetings, yet the conference sealed Africa's fate. By 1914, only Liberia and Ethiopia could remain free from European control.

Outcome of Berlin Conference

Berlin Conference divided up Africa into spheres of influence, whereby each country knew what territory was theirs and what was not. France controlled much of Northwest Africa, while Great Britain controlled parts of Southern Africa and Northeastern Africa. Belgium, Germany, and Portugal also controlled pockets of territory here and there throughout the continent. Post Berlin conference, the European powers sought to snatch up regions of Africa for themselves. Also, many European countries engaged in colonization and exploitation under the pretense of civilization and humanitarian reasons.



Leopold-II and Congo Free State

Today, Belgium is a small country. However, during the scramble days, it had dreamt of a great empire in Africa. Its **King Leopold II** set up a private colony called the Congo Free State, whereby he extracted from it a fortune. The Congo Free State was set up under the guise of philanthropic activity, but in reality, it was just a way for the greedy king to get rich and exploit the area.

Summary of Impact of Imperialism on Africa

In the beginning, the Europeans thought that the Africa would prove to be a great market for their products. However, soon they realized that they were wrong. Nevertheless, Africa was rich in mineral resources so it proved to be of great wealth for Europeans. Further, the Europeans grew business of cash-crop plantations such as peanuts, palm oil, cocoa, and rubber. These products displaced the food crops grown by farmers to feed their families. This resulted in famines; and Africans started getting starved to death.

Secondly, the scramble for Africa divided the continent by artificial boundaries {visible on Africa's current map also as straight lines} that unnaturally divided groups created problems even long after the Europeans left from there. There was a breakdown of African traditional cultures. The people were forced to leave the villages to find ways to support themselves and this caused identity problems. Many Africans died of new diseases such as smallpox. Thousands of Africans lost lives in resisting the Europeans.

However, there were some positive effects also. For a considerable period, the local warfare among African tribes were reduced. Humanitarian efforts in some colonies improved sanitation and brought health and education facilities. Literacy and health conditions improved. African colonies gained railroads, dams, and telephone and telegraph lines. However, these only benefited European business interests, not Africans' lives.

Important Events in Scramble for Africa

Boer Wars

Great Britain took control of Egypt and what is now South Africa. Colonial uprisings in South Africa resulted in the First and Second Boer Wars (between 1880-1881 and 1899-1902, respectively).

Boer Wars 1880-1902

Dutch were the first Europeans to settle in South Africa, in 1652. From their first colony at Cape Town grew a distinctively Boer society {Boer is a term used for farmer in Afrikaans}. By 1815, however, the British had acquired possession of the Cape and, in the 1830s; the pressures of their



new colonial masters led the Boers to embark on the “Great Trek” inland.

This irked the Southern African Kingdoms of **Orange Free State**, Transvaal (Now South Africa) and to some extent Natal, which were known as *Boer Republics*.

The two Boer wars were fought between the British Empire and the two independent Boer republics, the Orange Free State and the South African Republic (Transvaal Republic) during the 1880 to 1902 period. In the First Boer War, the British lost the Transvaal and the Boers of Transvaal got freedom, but in the second Boer war which lasted from 1899 to 1902, converted these republics into British Colonies. These colonies later became part of Union of South Africa.

Moroccan Crises

Even though the Berlin Conference was supposed to resolve disputes among several European Powers, the crisis still broke out periodically between them, fuelled by strategic rivalry and greater territorial ambitions. One such example was the *Tangier Crisis* also known as *First Moroccan Crisis*. This crisis was a major dispute between Germany and France that took place between 1905 and 1906 over the French colony in Morocco. The relations between Germany and France reached to nadir during this crisis.

First Morocco Crisis

In 1905, Britain and France were two dominating powers in Africa. In 1904, these countries signed an agreement {Entente Cordiale} whereby Britain agreed to not to fight with France over control of Morocco. By that time, Morocco was one the last remaining places in Africa not taken over by any European Power. Germany also wanted to expand its empire and when it saw that these two have signed the *Entente Cordiale*, it decided to test how strong this agreement was.

Thus, German leaders decided to lay claim over Morocco. Germany was strongest army in the world and it desired to become the “*Weltpolitik*” means world power. Its ruler Kaiser Wilhelm II visited Tangier in 1905 and rode down the streets on a white horse with a Military band with Moroccan troops. He made a declaration *to support an independent Morocco* open to the peaceful competition of all nations for trade. He further called an international conference to discuss the future of Morocco.

The objective of Kaiser was twofold:

- To prevent France from occupying Morocco but still allowing Germany to trade
- To test the relationship between Britain and France to see if it would still hold firm.

The two countries came very close to war, before the situation was finally resolved through negotiation. In 1906, an international conference was held at Algeciras (Spain). Germany was weakly supported by Austria-Hungary and Morocco; while France was supported by Britain, Russia, and Spain. Finally, it was agreed that France should recognise that Morocco was still an independent



country and that France and Spain were given joint control of Moroccan police force.

Thus, the net outcome of this crisis was that:

- France now got some control over Morocco while Germany did not get anything.
- The Entente Cordiale passed Germany's test. Relation between France and England become strong;
- Britain started to change its *policy of splendid isolation* and started taking interest in European matters.

Policy of Splendid Isolation

Splendid isolation refers to the Foreign Policy of Britain marked by Britain's minimal involvement in European affairs. This policy was followed by Conservative Benjamin Disraeli and Robert Gascoyne-Cecil. Its key features were (1) reluctance to enter into permanent European alliances or commitments (2) increase in the importance given to British colonies, protectorates and dependencies overseas in an era of increasing competition in the wider world.

Further, Britain and France started secret talks about Germany as the fear about the latter grew. The plans were being drawn up for war and sides were beginning to form. *This is the reason that first Moroccan Crisis is known as one of the long term causes of WW-I as it was this crisis that broke down the trust between the major European powers.*

Second Moroccan Crisis – 1911

The second Moroccan crisis of *Agadir Crisis* in 1911 was sparked by a rebellion in Morocco and deployment of substantial forces by Japan in Morocco.

Background

In the aftermath of First Moroccan crisis, the Algeiras Conference had given France some control of Morocco. The distrust between European Powers kept growing. The Anglo-German and Franco-German relations soured. There was an arms race between Imperial Germany and Great Britain. Germany was trying to build a fleet two third of the size of Britain; and it was also enforcing compensation claims for acceptance of effective French control of Morocco.

Meanwhile, a rebellion against Sultan of Morocco Abdelhafid started in 1911. The Sultan called France for help which sent an army to quell the rebels.

Although rebellion was crushed, Germany reacted by sending a gunboat named *Panther* to the port of Agadir to “*protect the German people's interests in Morocco*”.

For Germans, it was no wrong because France had also sent its army to protect its own interest. But this move of Germany was seen by France and Britain as “war like stance” and a “naval race”. British



thought that Germany was going to build a naval base in the Atlantic to challenge Britain's naval base in Gibraltar.

Thus, the over reaction by Germany brought Europe close to war. All these three powers started preparation for war. However, this time also, the situation was resolved when Germany accepted two marshy strips of land in the Congo for recognising and accepting that France had control over Morocco.

Implications of the two Moroccan Crises

We have already discussed above that the first Moroccan crisis was one of the distant and early reasons to WW-I. However, the second crisis was far more serious because this time, there was a clear division of Europe between the *Triple Alliance* and *Triple Entente*. It increased tension rapidly and sparked a chain of events that finally culminated in WW-I.

Imperialism in China

Between the 17th and 19th century, China had developed a relatively advanced and self-sufficient civilization and did not need to import much of the items. However, there was a great demand of the Chinese items such as Silk, Tea, Spices, and Porcelain in Europe. However, Chinese insisted on barter with **Silver** for these items. Most of the European powers did not have much of Silver to make payments to China.

Due to high custom duties and a trade imbalance, the Europeans started searching for something which could replace silver to trade with China. Their search ended with Opium, the highly addictive drug which British produced in India. The British exported opium to Chinese and made them addicted to it. Henceforth, Chinese willingly traded silk, tea and other items for Opium.

However, the Qing Government in China soon recognized the harm of opium and attempted to ban its trade. British would not let this happen, so they resorted to a form of intimidation called **Gunboat**

Diplomacy.

Gunboat Diplomacy

Gunboat diplomacy refers to accomplishing foreign policy aims through an *impressive show of naval power backed up by the threat of war*. Basically, it's pure intimidation. Gunboat diplomacy was characteristic of British imperialism in China.

The Opium Wars

To curb opium use, the Qing government confiscated 20,000 cases of British opium and destroyed it in 1838. This sparked the first Opium war, fought between China and Britain in 1839-1842. British easily defeated the Chinese and forced upon them a humiliating treat called *Treaty of Nanking*. As per this treaty, China ceded control of Hong Kong to Britain; opened up five trade ports and made



payments of reparations to British. Since China did not get anything substantial in return, this treaty was called “unequal” and thus could not last longer. On the other hand, British grew greedier and demanded more concessions. They demanded that all of China should be opened to trade and trade of opium should be full legalized.

The difference grew and triggered the *Second Opium War* (1856-1860). In this war also British won and forced another humiliating treaty in Chinese called **Treaty of Tientsin**. This treaty opened additional ports for trade, removed restrictions on activities of Christian missionaries, legalized the use of opium, and granted foreigners permission to travel freely throughout China.

Open Door Policy

After losing two Opium wars to British, the Chinese also lost a war to Japan in 1895. By the end of 19th century, it appeared that China would be partitioned and colonized by imperialist powers such as France, Britain, Japan and Russia. However, United States did not want this to happen. United States not only wanted equal rights of trade with China but also recognized the benefit of an independent China. Thus, United States proposed the so called Open Door Policy with China.

It proposed:

- Keeping China open to trade with all countries on an equal basis.
- China was permitted to collect tariffs and engage in open and equal trade.

Outcome of Open Door Policy

This policy was outlined by US Secretary of State John Hay and was principally in place between the late 19th and early 20th century. However, it was just a principle, never formally adopted via treaty or international law. This is why; it is also called a “Pseudo-treaty”. All European powers accepted it in principle but it was never an official / written agreement. Open Door Policy arguably allowed China to remain an independent country and saved it from imperialistic powers taking over.

China's view on Open Door Policy and Boxer Rebellion

However, China maintains that neither it's Government nor its Citizens were involved in deciding what was good for China. Due to this, the Chinese scholars regard this policy as an offensive gesture of US. They argue that US imposed it on them without even consulting them. This policy created more resentment towards foreigners in China. This also triggered a uprising called Boxer Rebellion in northern China in 1900, in which 300 foreigners and Chinese Christians were murdered.

Fearful that other countries would use the Boxer Rebellion as an opportunity to declare war, the United States responded pre-emptively. This time, Secretary of State Hay issued another ‘note’ to European countries, in which he reaffirmed that China should be open. Only this time, the note hinted at American willingness to use force to maintain that openness in China.



Japanese Imperialism

Background Before Meiji Restoration – The policy of Japanese Isolationism

The Empire of Japan officially came into existence on January 3, 1868 with the *Meiji Restoration*. A brief background of history prior to that is essential here to understand the “Japanese Isolationism” or *Sakoku*; and subsequent events.

Background

Japanese rulers of early modern period were so afraid of any kind of change and foreign influence that they refused to allow foreigners to their land for nearly 250 years. A foreign policy of “closed country” or *Sakoku* was imposed by last feudal Japanese military government (**Tokugawa shogunate**) in 1633. As per this policy:

- Severe restrictions were placed on the entry of foreign nationals to Japan
- Japanese nationals were forbidden to leave the country on penalty of death if they returned without special permission.

The policy remained in effect until 1866. Prior to **Tokugawa shogunate** government, Japan had largely unrestricted trade with China and other powers of East Asia. However, while consolidating their power over the islands, the Tokugawas became increasingly suspicious of foreigners. They first banned foreign trade and spread of Christianity in 1633. In 1639, they banned foreigners from the Japanese mainland entry, allowing only few Chinese and Dutch merchants with no record of Christian evangelization.

By 1671, the policy was strictly in force banning Japanese subjects from leaving the islands altogether. For over two centuries, this policy remained in force until the power of Shogunate waned due to fiscal problems. In early 19th century, Japan suffered a series of famines, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. The revenues of government dried up. Efforts to raise revenues included increased taxation which fell upon the poor. Popular riots swept across the islands.

Perry Expedition

The countries such as Russia made unsuccessful efforts to force Japan to open up its foreign trade. However, it was not until 1853 when US sent a war fleet under *Commodore Mathew Perry* to force Japan to open its door for trade. Perry anchored his four ships in Tokyo Bay within the sight of Japan’s capital. This show was basically a drama because Perry believed that Japanese could be compelled by mere show of power. He also gave a series of gifts to the rulers and returned with the promise that he would come back next year expecting a positive decision by Japanese rulers to trade with west.

By the next year when Perry visited Japan, the Shogunate caved in to western demands and signed a



treaty in 1854 with US to open up two ports. One more treaty was signed in 1858 between Japan and US; some more ports were opened and some foreigners were allowed to reside in select cities of Japan.

However, this decision proved to be disastrous for Japanese economy. It was already under pressure and the recently signed agreement led a flood of foreign currency in Japan's market, causing it to collapse.

Thus, there was a call for reforms and change. In 1867, Tokugawa shogunate fell and was replaced by the traditional Japanese emperor, though the real power in Japan was held by several of the most powerful samurai {ruling class of Japan}.

This Meiji system evolved into something akin to the constitutional monarchies of the West.

Meiji Reform

After the institution of the **Meiji** emperorship in 1867, the samurai began instituting a series of reforms to both deal with the influx of foreign trade in Japan and ready the country for its own industrialization. During the next half century, the Japanese completed modernizing reforms with an astounding speed. Railroads and telegraphs soon connected parts of Japan, which only a few years before had been several days of travel apart. In response to foreign trade, Japan's domestic shipping industry grew exponentially.

Additionally, the rulers of the Meiji period implemented a strict westernization of Japanese culture. Educational reforms were introduced and Western-style universities were founded. A centralized army replaced the semi-feudal *daimyo* system which had previously existed, and the existing Japanese class system was eliminated. The traditional ruling class, the samurai, was eliminated and they were stripped of their symbolic right to carry swords in public.

Naturally, not all, particularly Samurai were happy with Japanese westernization and industrialization. In response, many samurai joined the **Satsuma Rebellion** in 1877. The rebellion was short-lived and was annihilated by the standardized, westernized Japanese military. The rebellion is often seen as the last stand of the samurai and the last obstacle to Japan's full-fledged westernization in the second half of the 19th century.

Rise of Japanese Imperialism

Before Meiji Restoration (1867), which led to Emperor Meiji's ascension to power, Japan was basically a feudal state with a confusing and ambiguous power structure. With this key event in Japanese history, Japan embarked on a meteoric rise as a regional and world power with industrialization, westernization, and militarization as core components of Imperial Japan. Racism against other groups such as Chinese / Korean and Nationalism also grew among



Japanese people.

Key elements of Meiji Reforms

Following reforms were undertaken by Meiji government:

1. Government shifted from Edo to Tokyo
2. A national constitution, bicameral parliament (diet).
3. Dismantled of the old feudal regime and introduced prefecture system of administration.
4. Administration was centralized
5. Modern civil service bureaucracy was setup.
6. Modern banking and fiscal system.
7. Modern industrial enterprises; railroad, telegraphs.
8. Universal primary education
9. Modern army and navy and adopted western military technology.

At that time, Korea was under Chinese Qing Dynasty. As Japan grew in power, it sought to flex its muscle power with an eye on Korea's resources. This led to **First Sino-Japanese War** (1894-95) for control over Korea. In this war, China was defeated and was forced to cede Island of Formosa {Taiwan} to Japan. Korea also came under Japanese Sphere of Influence.

Russo-Japanese War & the Takeover of Korea

After winning China, Japanese imperialist ambitions collided with those of Russia in Manchuria. For centuries, China, Japan and Russia had fought over Manchuria, but none of them had complete control. After the Sino-Japanese war, Japan gained a strategic port from the Chinese called *Port Arthur*.

However, this could not be digested by the Western Powers, who indeed were more powerful. They overruled the treaty, stripped Port Arthur from the Japanese, and gave it to the Russians. This triggered the **Russo-Japanese War** (1904-1905) over control of portions of Manchuria and Korea. Japan surprised the world by winning this war. This was a huge shocker as an Asian force had defeated a European power. Japan's victory against Russia paved the way for a complete takeover of Korea. After the war, in 1905, Korea basically became a protectorate of Japan. A few years later, the **Japan-Korea Treaty of 1910** resulted in the complete annexation of Korea to Imperial Japan. Korea was placed under Japanese police rule.

20th Century Expansion & Defeat

In the 20th century, Imperial Japan was a powerful force in the Eastern Hemisphere. When World War I broke out, Japan cast its lot in with the Allied Powers. Although it came out on the winning



side, Japan did not receive the same kind of spoils and concessions that other victors did. This caused Japan to feel that they had been cheated, and it resulted in anti-Western resentment throughout the 1920s and 1930s.

In the 1930s, conflict again broke out among the regional Asian powers. In 1931, Japan invaded and took over Manchuria. A few years later, in 1937, Japan invaded China, beginning the **Second Sino-Japanese War**. Initially, the Japanese scored victories with the capture of cities like Nanking and Shanghai. Japanese imperial soldiers behaved mercilessly toward the Chinese.

The term **Rape of Nanking** refers to the atrocities Japanese soldiers committed toward civilian and unarmed Chinese throughout December 1937 and January 1938 as they occupied the capital city of Nanking. This included mass rape, torture, and the slaughtering of innocent men, women, and children. Estimates vary, but it is suggested that between 40,000 to 300,000 Chinese were killed in the Rape of Nanking.

The Second Sino-Japanese war came to a close in September 1945 when Japan surrendered to Allied Forces, ending World War II. With the surrender came the end of Imperial Japan. Japan was occupied by Allied Forces before adopting a democratic government in 1947.

suraj_winner | rajawat.rs.surajsingh@gmail.com | www.gktoday.in/upsc/ias-general-studies



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Modern World History-4: World War-I & World War-II

[Integrated IAS General Studies:2016-17](#)

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Model Questions

1. Why are MAIN (Militarism, Alliances, Imperialism, and Nationalism) considered long-term causes of WWI? Discuss.
2. "The Triple Alliance of 1882 was an utterly fragile web of the treaties." Analyze.
3. To what extent the turmoil in Balkans was responsible for WW-I? Examine.
4. What motivated Italy to enter the First World War? Do you think Italy got what it sought? Discuss.
5. Critically examine the impacts of World War-I on people and governments of the world.
6. What was the major difference between the Treaty of Versailles and the Wilson's 14 points? How it affected the German people?
7. The Treaty of Versailles was a peace built on quicksand. Discuss.
8. "The most permanent contribution of the First World War to the spirit of the post-war years was disillusion." Discuss critically.
9. Discuss the main elements of Fascism. How it was similar / different from Communism?
10. Hitler was greatly influenced by the Social Darwinism. Do you agree with this view? Argue.
11. The reasons of rise of militarism in Japan were fundamentally different from the reasons in Italy and Germany. Comment.
12. What were the objectives of Japan behind the Pearl Harbour Attack?

World War -I

The 19th century marked the growing influence of the British Empire, Russian Empire, German Empire, the United States and the Empire of Japan. Along with the military conflicts, this century also is known for remarkable advances in the science and exploration, which became the foundation of the technological advances of the 20th century.

After the defeat of the French Empire and its allies in the Napoleonic wars, the British Empire became world's leading power in the first half of the 19th century. The rise of Germany under the **Blood and Iron Policy** of Bismarck changed the balance of power equations in Europe. At the same time, relatively peace was imposed in the oceans and seas of the world due to the so called **Pax Britannica**.

Pax Britannica

In the later part of the 19th century, British Empire became the world's leading power and it controlled *one quarter of the world's population and one fifth of the total land area*. Beginning 1815, it started imposing a so called **British Peace** on key maritime trade routes. The naval superiority of British was further enhanced by the divided and



relatively weak continental Europe. Thus there was a presence of the Royal Navy on all of the world's oceans and seas. This period between 1815 to 1914 is called **Pax Britannica**, whereby, there was a relatively peace in the ocean and seas of the world. However, Pax Britannica did not work on land, where the continental powers kept fighting.

Reasons for growth of Nationalistic Rivalries in 20th century

Nationalism can serve as a unifying force within a country but it can also cause intense competition among the nations, because each one of them would seek to overpower the other. By the turn of the 20th century, a fierce nationalistic rivalry had developed among the major powers of Europe viz. **Germany, Austria-Hungary, Great Britain, Russia, Italy, and France**. These nationalistic rivalries grew out of economical reasons, territorial disputes, Imperialism and militarism.

Economic Reasons

The **economic reasons** included the fierce competition for materials and market. Till 1850, Britain was a leader in industry, finance and navy but after that the rise of Germany posed a challenge to Britain's power.

Territorial Disputes

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The territorial disputes were another major reason for nationalistic rivalries. For instance, France could not forget the loss of Alsace- Lorraine to Germany in the Franco-Prussian War (1870). The Austria-Hungary and Russia tried to dominate in the Balkans. Within the Balkans, there was intense nationalism of Serbs, Bulgarians, Romanians, and other ethnic groups, that led to demands for independence.

Imperialism

Another major force that set the stage for a great war in Europe was **imperialism**. The Europeans competed for colonies in Africa and Asia. As European countries continued to compete for overseas empires, their sense of rivalry and mistrust of one another deepened.

The Germany's colonial empire was so much smaller than Britain's. They wanted to expand it for many reasons. Britain had been building its empire since the 15th century, whereas Germany had only become a united nation in 1871, so it had had fewer opportunities to establish a large colonial empire.

Militarism

The increased nationalism led to a dangerous arms race. *One of the major beliefs among the Europeans was that to be truly great, they needed a powerful army.* Thus, almost every European nation had a powerful standing army. They adopted a policy Militarism, which refers to glorifying military power and keeping an army prepared for war.



Also, military experts stressed importance of being able to quickly mobilize troops in case of a war. Generals in each country developed plans for such a mobilization.

The Growth of Alliance System

As early as 1870s, Europe saw a growth of the alliance system which stemmed out of the growing rivalries between the Great Powers. The objective of alliance system was to foster peace, but eventually it pushed Europe to war.

The Triple Alliance of 1882

After the unification of the Germany, Bismarck declared Germany a *satisfied power*. But he saw threats in the form of French retaliations. So, his energy was focussed on the peace in Europe. One of the first steps to peace according to him was to isolate France, so that it remains without allies.

In 1879, Bismarck fostered an alliance between Germany and Austria Hungary. Three years down the line, Italy also joined it and it became the Triple Alliance.

*Thus, the Triple Alliance (1882) was an alliance between **Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy***

The Policy of making alliances was full of contradictions. For example, after the Triple alliance, Bismarck went ahead and made another alliance with Russia. But Russia was a bitter enemy of Austria for; both wanted to dominate the Balkans. Thus, this was an **utterly fragile web of treaties**.

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In 1888, **Kaiser Wilhem II** became the ruler of Germany. This was a proud and stubborn man who did not want to share the power with anyone. This young man forced veteran commander Bismarck to resign, on account of his different political views. This new Kaiser was too much obsessed with the power of his army. In 1890, Wilhelm II let the treaty with Russia lapse. Russia responded by forming a defensive military alliance with France in 1892 and 1894.

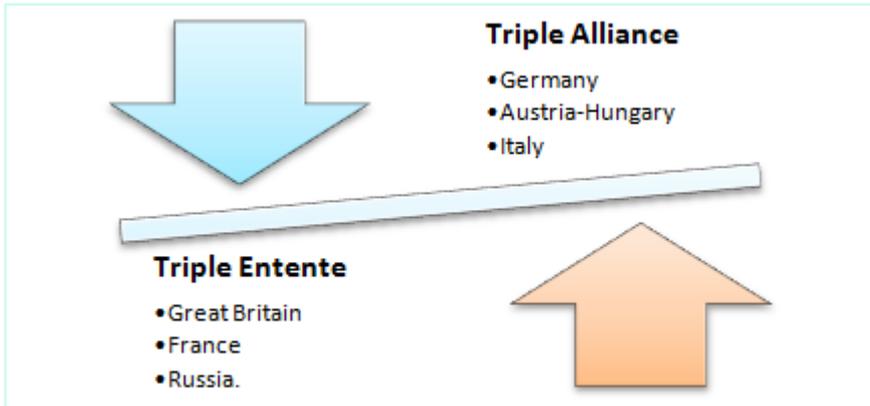
Bismarck was fearful of such an alliance because if there is a war with either Russia or France, Germany would have to fight at both of its eastern and western fronts.

The impulsive Kaiser did not stop here. He challenged the Britain's large empire and mighty navy by starting a tremendous shipbuilding programme. The idea was to have a navy, which is no less than Britain. Why not, because Germany also had a small colonial empire by that time!

Triple Entente (1907)

In 1904, Britain entered into an alliance (entente) with France. In 1907, Britain made another alliance with France and Russia. This was called the **Triple Entente**. This treaty ensured that Britain would not fight against France or Russia.

Thus, by the end of first decade of 20th century, there were two rival camps in Europe. A dispute between two rival powers could draw the entire continent into war.



The Nationalism in Balkans and Crisis

The **Balkans** is the peninsular Southeast Europe. The name is derived from the Balkan Mountains. This region is inhabited by an assortment of ethnic groups and has been one of the most volatile regions in 20th century.



The most dominating groups are the **Slavic Ethnic groups** which include the Bulgarians, Macedonians, Serbs, Croats, Bosniaks etc. The other relatively minor ethnic groups include Romanians, Greeks, Turks, Albanians, and others.

Balkans had a long history of nationalist uprisings and ethnic clashes. This was the reason that the Balkans was known as the “**powder keg**” of Europe.

Powder Keg

A powder keg is a barrel of gunpowder and was the primary method for storing and



transporting large quantities of black powder up until the 1870s and the adoption of the modern cased bullet. Powder keg is also a metaphorical term sometimes political, socio-economic, historical or other circumstances have made the subject prone to outbursts.

In 1990s, the Ottoman Empire was on a rapid decline. Some of the Balkan groups had already broken away from the Turkish rule, while other wished to get free. These free groups formed new countries such as Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, Montenegro, Romania etc.

Each of them would like to extend its border. For example, Serbia would like to absorb all the Slavs of the Balkan Peninsula. The Russia and Austria-Hungary were on direct conflict on the issue of Serbia. Russia supported the Serbian nationalism because Russia itself was a mostly Slavic nation. Austria-Hungary felt threatened by Serbs because it had a little Slavic Population, which could break away from it.

There was a power vacuum created in Balkans due to **decline of the Ottoman Empire**. Both Russia and Austria-Hungary wished to fill this vacuum with their own power.

In 1908, Austria annexed **Bosnia and Herzegovina**. Both of these regions were having large Slavic populations, thus this annexation irked the Serbian leaders. Germany was standing firmly behind Austria. Serbians were promised help from Russia, but Russia itself was not ready for a war. In this circumstance, there was no war because Serbia could not afford to fight with Austria merely on the basis of wordily support from Russia.

Tension prevailed for next few years. Meanwhile, Serbia gained confidence and new territories by small victories in some local conflicts. They wanted to take Bosnia and Herzegovina away from Austria. However, Austria-Hungary vowed to crush any Serbian effort to undermine its authority in the Balkans.

The War Triggers

In 1901, the members of the Serbian Army created a secret group called **Black Hand**. The objective of this secret group was to unite all of the territories where Slavic population was in majority and ridding Bosnia of Austria-Hungary.

In June 1914, **Archduke Franz Ferdinand**, the heir presumptive to the Austro-Hungarian throne paid a state visit along with his wife to **Sarajevo**, the capital of Bosnia. The couple was riding through the streets of Sarajevo in an open car and here, a member of Black Hand shot them fatally at point-blank range.

This assassination let Austria to use it as an excuse to punish Serbia. The German Kaiser Wilhelm II gave full support to Austria to take a **punitive action**. **Austria sent an ultimatum** to Serbians



with a list of demands which included the following two harsh demands ___:

- An end to all Anti-Austrian activity
- Allow Austrian officials enter their country to conduct an investigation into the assassinations.

Austria–Hungary’s ultimatum consisted of 10 demands. The Serbian government was prepared to accept nine of these, but refused to allow Austro-Hungarian officials to be involved in the investigation into the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand.

The Serbians were still in no mood to fight with Austria. They offered negotiations and accepted some of the demands of Austria. But, Austria, backed by Wilhem II, was determined to punish them.

Major Events of the War

On July 28, 1914, Austria declared a war against Serbia. On the same day, Russia took arms and ordered mobilization of its troops. This sparked a chain reaction. Austria declared war on Serbia; Serbia’s ally Russia ordered its troops to move to Russia-Austria border. Russia also expected Germany to attack, so it ordered mobilizing one part of army to German Border also. The Russian Mobilization of army on German Border led Germany to declare a war against Russia. Now Russia looked at its ally France to act. Before France could come into action, Germany attacked on France. Attacking France as well as Russia at one time means Germany would need to fight at two fronts viz. East and West . Germany devised a speed plan which is called **Schlieffen Plan after** its deviser General Alfred Graf von Schlieffen. **As per this plan, German troops must race very fast to first attack France, defeat it and then return back and attack Russia.** Attacking France via the long western Border would consume more time. Since it had to act fast, Germany wanted that its troops should enter France not via western border but via the unprotected Belgium border in north. Meanwhile, Belgium was a neutral country. Germany demanded a route from Belgium for its troops. When Belgium refused, Germany attacked Belgium as well as Luxembourg. Attack on Belgium irked Great Britain and it declared a war on Germany. Now Germany was fighting with 3 enemies. In summary, each major nation of Europe had taken either side as follows:

Central Powers

On one side were Germany and Austria Hungary. They were known as **Central Powers**, because they were located at the heart of Europe. These central powers were later joined by Bulgaria and Ottoman Empire.

Allies

On the other side were Great Britain, France, and Russia. Together, they were known as the Allied Powers or the **Allies**.



Reasons for Entry of Japan

Within weeks Japan joined allies. Japan joined because it wanted to seize the opportunity to expand its sphere of influence in China, and to gain recognition as a great power in post war geopolitics. It played important role in securing the sea lanes in the South Pacific and Indian Oceans against the German Kaiserliche Marine.

Reasons for Entry of Italy

Italy was first neutral but later joined Allies, breaking the **Triple alliance** with Germany and Austria-Hungary.

What motivated Italy to enter the First World War?

Italy had entered into the Triple Alliance with Germany and Austria-Hungary. But a few years before the war, it enhanced its diplomatic ties with Britain and secret ties with France. Austria was a traditional enemy of Italy since 19th century's Risorgimento. Italy wanted to acquire many of the territories in the Austrian possession such as Trieste, Istria, Zara and Dalmatia.

Italy remained neutral for one entire year after the outbreak of war. It also maintained that its membership in the Triple Alliance was only a defensive stance. At the same time, Italian leaders were conducting a probe and trying to know which side could grant the best reward for Italy's entry in the war. When Italy joined the war, it thought that it will be a small time affair, was not aware of the horrors ahead.

Further, Italians felt that the Germans had made an unprovoked attack on Belgium. This was used as an excuse to formally denounce the Triple Alliance.

First Battle of Marne

The **First Battle of Marne** was fought in September 1914 and was the first major battle of World War-I. Prior to this battle, the German troops overran Belgium and swept into France. However, French intelligence could get some vital information about the **Schlieffen Plan**. The allies attacked Germans in the valley of the Marne River. The Germans were defeated and they retreated. The defeat of the Germans left the Schlieffen Plan in ruins. However, after this, the western front came under the grip of *Trench Warfare*.

Trench Warfare

Though the allies defeated Germans in the Battle of Marne, but soon after, Britain and France found themselves facing an uninterrupted line of entrenched German forces from Lorraine to Belgium's coast. Soldiers virtually lived and battled from within the trenches and fought to acquire small lands with huge losses in return. German soldiers built trenches and defended the occupied territories. Britain and France too offensive but the war in such was went on for entire three years.



Gallipoli Campaign

When the war was getting too much prolonged, the Allies desperately searched for a way to end the stalemate. One of the promising strategies they found was to attack the Ottoman Empire via the strategic **Dardanelles** region of the Ottoman Empire.

This narrow sea strait was the gateway to the Ottoman capital, **Constantinople**. The allies thought that if they secure Dardanelles, they can take Constantinople and defeat the Ottomans and thus establish a supply line to Russia.

Securing Dardanelles can also help them to mount an offensive into the Austrian heartland via Danube River. Thus, the Allies began the efforts to take Dardanelles in February 1915. Gallipoli and Dardanelles were defended by the Ottoman Turks and the Germans. But the campaign later turned into a bloody stalemate. The allies now gave up the idea and began to evacuate after losing more than 2500000 soldiers.

However, still the allies wished to topple the Ottoman Empire. The allies helped the **Arabs in Middle East to rise against the Ottoman Turks**. With the help of the Arabs, Allied armies took control of Baghdad, Jerusalem, and Damascus. The allies assaulted various colonial possessions of the Germans in Asia and Africa.

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- Japanese overran German outposts in China and captured Germany's Pacific island colonies
- English and French troops seized three of Germany's four African possessions.

Americans Favour War

The US public was not in favour of a war that had nothing to do with them and that was 3,000 miles away. Although, the US didn't want the Allies to win. Many naturalized US citizens followed the war closely. Many supported their former countries. Many Americans felt close to Great Britain- with common ancestry, language, similar Democratic institutions, and legal systems. Stronger economic ties with the Allies- during war trade increased with the Allies.

By 1917, America had mobilized for war against the Central Powers for two reasons:

- To ensure Allied repayment of debts to the US.
- To prevent the Germans from threatening US shipping.

Till 1917, the war remained indecisive on the lands and now the focus shifted to the oceans.

Blockade of Germany

The British blocked the German coast an effort to restrict the maritime supply of raw materials and foodstuffs to the Central Powers. This German Blockade proved to be one of the key elements in the eventual allied victory in the war. It was claimed that 763,000 German civilians died from starvation and disease caused by the blockade up until the end of December 1918.



Unrestricted submarine warfare

The Germans were desperate to strike back, and then they declared to establish its own naval blockade around Britain. In January of 1917, Germany announced that its submarines would sink without warning any ship in the waters around Britain. This is known as the **Unrestricted Marine Warfare**.

This was not a new idea from Germany. Prior to this they had sunk a British Passenger Ship in the Atlantic in 1915. This act claimed lives of 1198 people out of which 128 were US Citizens.

The unrestricted submarine warfare policy of Germany outraged the Americans. A strong protest was sent from American President Woodrow Wilson to Germans. Ignoring the warning, the German submarines sunk three American Ships.

Zimmermann Note

Meanwhile, the British intercepted a telegram from Germany to Mexico, in which Germany said that Mexico would “reconquer” the land it had lost to the United States if Mexico would ally itself with Germany. This telegram was sent by Foreign Secretary of the German Empire, **Arthur Zimmermann** to the German ambassador in Mexico. This was called **Zimmermann Note**.

The Zimmermann Note was decoded by the British given to the U.S. government. Americans called for war against Germany. Further, the German war atrocities stirred anti-German sentiment in the United States.

In April 1917, President Wilson asked Congress to declare war. The United States entered the war on the side of the Allies.

Impact on general public and Governments

Soon, all countries of both camps dedicated all resources to the war, which is known as Total War. In every country, a wartime government took control of the economy. Governments dictated the factories to produce war specific goods. Many factories were converted to the ammunition factories. Every able bodied civilian was put to work. Unemployment disappeared. Farm Labourers as well as soldiers were imported from colonies.

The morale of the public went down. The short supplies of goods caused the government to adopt rationing. The anti-war protests started. Governments suppressed these protests and used false propaganda to keep up the morale of the public high.

Impact on Women

Thousands of women replaced men in factories, offices, and shops. They built weapons and they also ran hospitals. They supplied food and weapons to soldiers.

The active participation of women in war, changed the perception of men towards them.



Withdrawal of Russia from War

Once United States entered the war, the balance of power seemed to be towards Allies. Meanwhile, the Russians had tired of war and wanted to withdraw. Russian Revolution occurred and in November 1917, Communist leader Vladimir Ilyich Lenin seized power.

Lenin signed a truce with Germany via the **Treaty of Brest-Litovsk** (March 1918). This treaty was extremely hard for Russians and required Russia to surrender many territories such as those of current Finland, Poland, Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

Once Russia was out of the game, Germans sent all its forces on the Western Front. They gave a final massive attack on the Allies in France. The Germans attacked with 6000 cannons and again reached near **Marne River** near Paris but 1400000 fresh American soldiers joined the allies. This was the **Second battle of Marne**.

Second Battle of Marne (July 1918)

American soldiers proved to be decisive in the second battle of Marne. Two million American troops arrived and marched steadily towards Germany. The Central Powers crumbled and started getting defeated. The first surrender was of Bulgarians. Second was of Ottoman Turks.

In October 1918, a revolution happened in Austria-Hungary and the empire came to end. In Germany, the soldiers mutinied and forced the Kaiser Wilhelm II to step down. Germany declared itself a republic. A representative of the new German government met with allies and in a **railway car in a forest near Paris**, the two signed an armistice.

The terms of this armistice were written by French Marshal **Ferdinand Foch**. It included the cessation of hostilities, the withdrawal of German troops to behind their own borders, the preservation of infrastructure, the exchange of prisoners, a promise of reparations, the disposition of German warships and submarines, and conditions for prolonging or terminating the armistice. On November 11, 1918 World War I came to an end. After six months of negotiations at the Paris Peace Conference, the **Treaty of Versailles** was concluded.

Treaty of Versailles

The World War-I came to an end on an armistice with Germany on 11-11-1918. In duration of one year, five treaties were signed by the allies with the defeated powers which brought to a formal end to the war. These treaties were as follows:

1. Treaty of Versailles: Allies and Germany
2. Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye: Allies and new Republic of Austria
3. Treaty of Neuilly-sur-Seine: Allies and Bulgaria
4. Treaty of Trianon – Allies and Kingdom of Hungary



5. Treaty of Sèvres: Allies and Ottoman Empire

The major outcomes of the WWI on the geopolitics were as follows:

- Four empires collapsed
- Old countries were abolished, new ones formed, boundaries were redrawn
- League of Nations (LON) was established

The Paris Peace Conference

For a period of one year, the Palace of Versailles, outside Paris remained a venue of hot debates. The peace treaty took so long because of the *conflicting aims of the allied powers*.

The Paris Peace Conference was attended by the delegates representing 32 countries, but major decisions were dominated by the **Big Four**:

- Woodrow Wilson of the United States
- Georges Clemenceau of France
- David Lloyd George of Great Britain
- Vittorio Orlando of Italy.

Russia, in the grip of civil war, was not represented. Neither were Germany and its allies.

Wilson's 14 Points

suraj_winner | rajawat.rs.surajsingh@gmail.com | www.gktoday.in/upsc/ias-general-studies

While the First World War was still underway, a number of governments and groups had already started developing plans to change the way international relations were carried out to try to prevent another such conflict.

In January 1918, US President **Woodrow Wilson** had drawn series of proposals called **Fourteen Points** with an objective to achieve a just and lasting peace. These fourteen points were related to ___:

1. Reliance on open diplomacy rather than secret agreements
2. Freedom of the seas
3. Free trade
4. Reduce the military forces and/or weapons
5. Readjust the colonies fairly
6. The allowance for Russia to self-determine its own government
7. Respect for Belgium's Integrity
8. Restoration of French Territory
9. Italy receives territory based upon ethnicity
10. Austria-Hungary receives fair development opportunities
11. Independence for the Balkan states
12. Self-determination for the peoples of the Ottoman Empire and free passage through the



Dardanelles

13. Independence for Poland

14. The formation of a **League of Nations** to guarantee independence for all countries, large and small.

Difference between the Treaty of Versailles and the Wilson's 14 points

The Great Britain and France had little interest in Wilson's vision of peace; rather they wanted to denude Germany of its military and economic power. France was keen on punishing Germany in the harshest way because most of the fight had taken place on its land and it lost millions of men. After heated arguments, the **Treaty of Versailles** between Germany and the Allied powers was signed on June 28, 1919. The treaty adopted Wilson's fourteenth point and created the **League of Nations**.

Before the Treaty of Versailles was signed, the Wilson's speech was widely disseminated among Germans. But the Treaty was having significant differences particularly the **Article 231 (War Guilt Clause)**. Germany was also denied an air force, and the German army was not to exceed 100,000 men. German outrage over reparations and the War Guilt Clause was one of the contributing factor to the rise of national socialism in Germany.

Major Provisions of Treaty of Versailles

rs.surajsingh@gmail.com | www.gktoday.in/upsc/ias-general-studies

The Major provisions of the Treaty of Versailles were as follows:

- Establishment of **League of Nations**
- Punishments to Germany via the **war guilt clause**.
- Creation of new nations
- **Mandate System**

League of Nations

The League of Nations (LON) was the first permanent international organization whose principal mission was to maintain world peace. Its primary goals, as stated in its **Covenant**, included preventing war through collective security and disarmament, and settling international disputes through negotiation and arbitration.

But the new League was given a devastating blow when the US Senate refused to ratify the Versailles Treaty. The country never joined the League, making the newly formed organization permanently handicapped. The five allied powers—the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan—were to be permanent members of the league's Executive Council.

Its General Assembly would consist of representatives of 32 Allied and neutral nations. Germany was deliberately excluded. Russia was also left out because of its early withdrawal from the war and its revolutionary leadership.



Punishments to Germany

- Lost substantial territory
- Severe restrictions placed on its military operations. Germany was forbid to maintain an army.
- Harshest punishment via **War Guilt Clause** (Article 231) of the Treaty of Versailles.
 - Sole responsibility for the war placed on Germany's shoulders
 - Germany had to pay reparations to the Allies amounting to \$33 billion.
 - All of Germany's territories in Africa and the Pacific were declared mandates, or territories to be administered by the League of Nations.
 - Allies would govern the mandates until they were judged ready for independence

The Creation of New Nations

There were **total five treaties** signed with the Central Powers by the allies. Versailles treaty with Germany was just one of these five treaties. Separate peace treaties were signed in 1919 and 1920 with each of the other defeated nations: Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, and the Ottoman Empire. These treaties led to huge land loss for the Central Powers. Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia were created out of the Austria-Hungary Empire. Ottoman Turks retained only the territory that is today the country of Turkey.

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Mandate System

The Allies carved up the lands that the Ottomans lost in Southwest Asia into mandates rather than independent nations.

- Palestine, Iraq, and Transjordan came under British control
- Syria and Lebanon went to France.
- Russia suffered land losses as well.
 - Romania and Poland both gained Russian territory.
 - Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, formerly part of Russia, became independent nations.

Impact of the Treaty of Versailles

The Treaty of Versailles was a peace built on quicksand. It did little to build a lasting peace. United States, which emerged as a dominant nation after the war, ultimately rejected the treaty. It did not either join the LON.

United States worked out a separate treaty with Germany and its allies after a few years. The **war guilt clause** left a legacy of bitterness and hatred in the hearts of the German people. Other countries felt cheated and betrayed. The colonial people in Asia and Africa got angry because the Allies disregarded their desire for independence. The **Mandate system** came up as a new disguised



form of European Colonialism. Japan and Italy, which had joined the war to gain territory, gained but too less than what they expected. **Absence of United States** from the League of Nations kept it permanently crippled. It was in no position to take action on complaint of any country.

Japan and Italy were both alienated and angered by the outcome of the Paris Peace Conference, as neither felt they had received the territorial gains as merited their contribution to the war. Japan was also angered by the rejection of the proposed 'racial equality clause'.

Other Important Notes

WW-I as first modern war

World War I has been described as the 'first modern war', largely because it was the first war in which advanced machine guns, chemical warfare, tanks, attack aircraft and submarines were widely used. It was also the first 'total war', where nations mobilised all of their available resources for the war effort. Millions of people, mainly young men, lost their lives in this conflict, and towns, homes, businesses and farms were destroyed.

Disillusion: The Permanent Contribution of World War-I

Disillusion means freeing from false belief or illusions. The cost of the World War I was extreme. It claimed lives of 8.5 million soldiers and left another 21 million wounded. Additionally, the war led to death of countless civilians by way of starvation, disease, and slaughter. Taken together an entire generation of Europeans wiped out. The economic cost of the war was pegged at \$338 billion. The war also destroyed thousands of acres of farmland, as well as homes, villages, and towns. It was the enormous suffering and the apparent mindlessness of the Great War that left the survivors with a sense of disillusionment. This disillusionment is reflected in the insecurity and despair expressed in the art and literature of those times. This disillusionment was particularly reflected in the middle classes who were now firm that the hatred and mistrust of the old leaders dragged the world into an unnecessary conflict, who had then mismanaged its direction with such ghastly results, and who had betrayed the cause of international peace for national gain soured the minds of many younger men and women in the post-war period. The British poet Edmund Blunden expressed this profound disillusionment when he took as the title for a poem, written to celebrate New Year's Day 1921, the biblical verse: *'The dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.'*

World War -II



Rise of Fascism

The Great Depression of the 1930s caused millions of people to lose faith in democracies around the world. Some countries in Europe turned themselves to an extreme system of government called fascism. The word “fascism” derives from the Italian “fasces” which was a bundle of rods with a protruding axe carried before magistrates during the times of the Roman Republic to symbolise their authority as well as the importance of strength through unity. It is associated also with the word “*fascio*” which referred to small often left-wing political groupings which existed in Italy in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Elements of Fascism

Fascism is a **militant political movement** that emphasizes loyalty to the state and obedience to its leader. Key elements of Fascism are as follows:

- The individual should distrust reason and simply obey.
- Denial of equality – the strong have an obligation to destroy the weak.
- Violence is an essential tool.
- Government by an elite as the average person is incapable.
- **Totalitarian** – total state control of the lives of the individuals.
- Racism and Imperialism justified in that certain nations are elite and are obligated to control.
- **Permanent mobilization** – soldier valued above all other citizens.
- Anything is justified if it serves the state’s ends.
- Fascism emphasizes victory, glorifies war, is cruel to the weak, and is irrational and intolerant.
- By providing a uniform, someone to blame, someone to hate and a leader, fascism restores self-respect.

Totalitarianism and Vanguard Party

To achieve their goals, Fascists rely upon **Totalitarianism** and **Vanguard Party**.

- **Totalitarianism** refers to a political system whereby the state holds total authority over the society and all aspects of private as well as public life.
- **Vanguardism** refers to a strategy whereby an organization attempts to place itself at the center of the movement, and steer it in a direction consistent with its ideology.

Unlike communism, fascism had no clearly defined theory or program, yet most fascists share the following:

- They adopted an extreme form of nationalism



- They believed that the nations must struggle and the peaceful states were doomed to be conquered.
- They pledged loyalty to an authoritarian leader who guided the state.
- They wore uniforms of a certain color, used special salutes, and held mass rallies.

Similarities with Communism

Fascism was somewhat similar to communism as follows:

- Both systems were ruled by dictators and both allowed one-party
- Both denied individual rights.
- In both, the state was supreme.
- Neither practiced any kind of democracy.

Differences with Communism

- Unlike Communists, Fascists did not seek a classless society. They believed that each class had its place and function.
- Communism claimed to be a dictatorship of the working class but fascist parties were made up of aristocrats and industrialists, war veterans, and the lower middle class generally.
- Fascists were nationalists, and Communists were internationalists because they hoped to unite workers worldwide.

Rise of Mussolini

Italy had joined the WWI to win large territorial gains but it was disappointed at the Paris Peace Conference. There was a growing discontent in Italy over this as well as rising prices and unemployment. The upper classes were fearful of a communist revolution like Russia. The public of Italy was not satisfied with the democratic government and was looking forward to some strong leader.

- In such circumstances, a newspaper editor and politician named **Benito Mussolini** promised to give a strong leadership, revive Italian economy and its military power.
- He founded the Fascist party in 1919. Initially failed to gain widespread support, but his popularity increased with the fall of the economic conditions of Italy. He is known for skilled use of Fascist tools to gain some support – parades, propaganda, great speeches.
- Mussolini appealed to ex-servicemen, students, the middle class and to all anti-Communists.
- The groups of Fascists wearing **black shirts** launched a campaign of terror by starting attacking the Communists and Socialists.
- Mussolini played on the fear of the worker's class and that is why he was able to gain support from the middle classes, the aristocracy, and industrial leaders.



March on Rome, 1922

In October 1922, a crowd of 30,000 Fascists marched on Rome and demanded the King Victor Emmanuel III to put Mussolini in charge of the government. This was a relatively bloodless *coup d'état* whereby, the Prime Minister **Luigi Facta** was ousted and king invited Mussolini to form the new government. Hereafter, the King remained a mute spectator of the adventures of Mussolini.

Mussolini dreamed of building a colonial empire in Africa like that of Britain and France. He complained that Britain and France had left only “a collection of deserts” for him to choose from.

Mussolini was now the Il Duce or the Leader of the Government. He abolished democracy and outlawed all political parties except Fascists. By 1925, Italy was a **Totalitarian state**, ruled by a Fascist dictator, with all personal freedoms abolished, and all opposition eliminated. The opponents were jailed and murdered. The Radio stations and publications were forced to broadcast or publish only Fascist doctrines. Strikes were outlawed.

To control the economy, he allied the Fascists with the industrialists and large land owners.

Mare Nostrum

suraj_winner | rajawat.rs.surajsingh@gmail.com | www.gktoday.in/upsc/ias-general-studies

Italy had a small number of overseas colonies (3) and wanted more. Mussolini declared the Mediterranean Sea as “Mare Nostrum” (our sea). This would obviously threaten Britain and France’s trade routes. To show his newly found power, Mussolini decided to invade Ethiopia in 1935.

Rise of Nazism

In mid 1920s, when Mussolini was at zenith of power in Italy, Adolf Hitler was a little-known political leader. Born in a small town in Austria in 1889, he dropped out of high school and failed as an artist.

In early 1920, he joined a tiny right-wing political group, which shared his belief that Germany had to overturn the **Treaty of Versailles** and combat communism. The group later named itself the **National Socialist German Workers’ Party** (*Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*), called **Nazi** for short.

Nazi Policies

- Nazi Policies supported by people in the middle and lower middle classes, formed the German brand of fascism known as **Nazism**.
- They adopted Swastika as their symbol and set up a private militia called the storm troopers or **Brownshirts**.
- His skills of an organizer and speaker led him to be chosen as *der Führer* or the leader, of the



Nazi

Beer Hall Putsch of 1923 (Munich Putsch)

Inspired by Mussolini's march on Rome, Hitler and the Nazis plotted to seize power in Munich in 1923. This is called Beer Hall Putsch of 1923 (Munich Putsch). The attempt failed, and Hitler was arrested. He was tried for treason, but sympathetic judges sentenced him to only five years in prison. He served less than nine months.

Influence of Social Darwinism on Hitler

While in jail, Hitler wrote Mein Kampf (*My Struggle*). This book set forth his beliefs and his goals for Germany. This book became the blueprint for the Nazis.

In this book Hitler divided humans into categories based on physical appearance, establishing higher and lower orders, or types of humans. At the top, according to Hitler, is the **Germanic man** with his fair skin, blond hair and blue eyes. Hitler refers to this type of person as an **Aryan**. He asserts the Aryan is the supreme form of human, or master race.

While propounding his theory, Hitler was greatly influenced by the Social Darwinism.

He declared that non- Aryan "races"—such as Jews, Slavs, and Gypsies—were inferior or subhuman. But it is the Jews who are engaged in a conspiracy to keep this master race from assuming its rightful position as rulers of the world, by tainting its racial and cultural purity and even inventing forms of government in which the Aryan comes to believe in equality and fails to recognize his racial superiority. Thus, in this book, Hitler painted Jews as mightiest counterparts of the Aryans.

He called the **Versailles Treaty** an outrage and vowed to regain the lands taken from Germany. He also declared that Germany was **overcrowded** and needed more **lebensraum**, or living space. He promised to get that space by conquering Eastern Europe and Russia.

Seize of Power

Once leaving the Prison in 1924, he revived the Nazi party. The Nazi Party gradually increased its numbers in the Reichstag (German Parliament) between 1928-33. In 1928, the Nazi's held 12 seats, while in 1929, it was having 107 seats.

In 1932, President Von Hindenburg put Von Pappen in as Chancellor. In an election in the same year, Nazi's won 230 seats and Hitler demanded to be next Chancellor. In another election, Nazi's dropped to 196 seats and the Communists won 100 seats.

These were the years of the Great Depression. The German economy failed and nearly six million people, about 30 percent of Germany's work force, were unemployed in 1932. There was a civil unrest in Germany. The illusion Germans now look towards Hitler for security and firm leadership. Civil unrest broke out. Frightened and confused, Germans now turned to Hitler, hoping for security and firm leadership.



In the absence of an effective government, two influential politicians, Franz von Papen and Alfred Hugenberg, along with several other industrialists and businessmen, wrote to President von Hindenburg to appoint Hitler as leader of a government “*independent from parliamentary parties*”.

Von Papen and Hindenburg supported Hitler because they believed that only Hitler could stand up to the strong Communist party in Germany. Thus Hitler came to power legally. Immediately after coming into power, Hitler called for new elections, hoping to win a parliamentary majority.

Six days before the election, a fire destroyed the German parliament **Reichstag** building. The Nazis blamed the Communists and vice versa. The SA (Brownshirts) and the SS (SS refers to the Schutzstaffel or protection squad. It was an army loyal only to Hitler) organized terror and intimidation in the streets of Germany. By stirring up fear of the Communists, the Nazis and their allies won a slim majority.

Enabling Act

With majority control, Hitler demanded dictatorial, or absolute, power for four years. The act gave Hitler’s cabinet full legislative powers for a period of four years and (with certain exceptions) allowed deviations from the constitution.

Hitler used his new power to turn Germany into a **totalitarian state**. He banned all other political parties and had opponents arrested.

In 1934, the SS arrested and murdered hundreds of Hitler’s enemies. The Nazis quickly took command of the economy. New laws banned strikes, dissolved independent labor unions, and gave the government authority over business and labor. Hitler put millions of Germans to work. They constructed factories, built highways, manufactured weapons, and served in the military. As a result, unemployment dropped from about 6 to 1.5 million in 1936.

The government turned press, radio, literature, painting, and film into propaganda tools. Books that did not conform to Nazi beliefs were burned in huge bonfires. Churches were forbidden to criticize the Nazis or the government. Schoolboys had to join the **Hitler Youth** and schoolgirls had to join the **League of German Girls**.

Atrocities on Jews

Hatred of Jews was a key part of **Nazi ideology**. The Jews were less than one percent of the population, yet they were blamed by Nazis responsible for all of Germany’s troubles. Thus, there was a wave of anti-Semitism across Germany. Numerous laws were passed depriving Jews of their rights.

Night of the Broken Glass

On the night of November 9, 1938, Nazis attacked Jews in their homes and on the streets and destroyed thousands of Jewish-owned buildings. This rampage is called *Kristallnacht* (Night of the



Broken Glass). This process signalled the real start of the **Holocaust** or eliminating the Jews from German life.

Rise of Militarism in Japan

With the spread of Fascism and Nazism in Europe, Japan also moved towards a similar system. In the 1920s, Japan was a parliamentary monarchy. This system kept several limits on the Prime Minister and his cabinet. Moreover, the military was out of the control of the civilian leaders because military directly reported to the emperor and not the parliament.

Japan remained peaceful and prosperous till the Great Depression. The Government was blamed for all the problems during the great depression. Thus, the public support tilted more and more towards the Military.

However, the Military in Japan did not try to establish a new system of government. The objective of the military was to restore the traditional control of the government in the hands of the military and not the parliament. Thus, the military made King as symbol of their power instead of some radical leader such as Hitler or Mussolini of Europe.

However, the militarists of Japan were very much nationalists, who wanted to solve the country's economic problems by foreign expansion. Their dream was a Japanese Pacific empire which would include conquered China. This dream empire would provide Japan with raw materials and markets for its goods.

Major Events of World War II

Invasion of Manchuria

In 1931, the Japanese army invaded and seized Manchuria, a north east province of China where lot of Japanese had invested. The Japanese army placed a puppet government over there. This was the first direct challenged to the **League of Nations**, of which all the major countries except US were members. The members of League protested but there was no action against Japan, because the LON was not worth to enforce its decision. Japan ignored the protests and as a response withdrew from the League in 1933.

Japanese Invasion on China

In 1937, there was a full fledged war between China and Japan. Beijing and other northern cities as well as the capital, Nanjing, fell to the Japanese in 1937. In Nanjing, tens of thousands of soldiers and civilians were killed by the Japanese armies. The Chinese guerrillas led by China's Communist leader, Mao Zedong, also continued to fight in the conquered area.

Italy's Attack on Ethiopia

LON was unable to stop militarism of Japan. Encouraged by this, Mussolini ordered a massive



invasion of Ethiopia in October 1935. In this attack, the Ethiopians responded with spears and swords to the Italian airplanes, tanks, guns, and poison gas. The Ethiopian emperor Haile Selassie urgently appealed to the League for help. League condemned the attack and did nothing.

Britain also let the Italian troops and supplies pass through the Suez Canal (which was controlled by Britain) on their way to Ethiopia, because they believed that it might help to keep a peaceful Europe.

Hitler Defies Versailles Treaty

Germany under Hitler had already started re-arming itself despite the restriction imposed on it in the Treaty of Versailles. In 1935, Hitler formally announced that Germany would not obey these restrictions. LON issued just a condemnation.

Reoccupation of Rhineland by Japan & Policy of Appeasement

The treaty of Versailles had forbidden German troops to enter a 30-mile-wide zone on either side of the Rhine River (**Rhineland**), which was supposed to be a buffer zone between Germany and France.

Policy of Appeasement

Appeasement involved the governments of Britain and France tolerating Germany's territorial expansion and violation of the military terms of the Treaty of Versailles, in the hope of avoiding another war. Appeasement involved the governments of Britain and France tolerating Germany's territorial expansion and violation of the military terms of the Treaty of Versailles, in the hope of avoiding another war.

In March 1936, German troops moved into the Rhineland. The French were stunned but unwilling to risk war. A **policy of appeasement** was followed and British urged France to give that area to Germany, so that peace can be maintained. However, Hitler was just checking the level of water; he later admitted that he would have turned back if there was a challenge from France or Britain.

The German reoccupation of the Rhineland was a turning point. It strengthened Hitler's power and prestige within Germany. The balance of power once again was in Germany's favour. The weak response by France and Britain encouraged Hitler to speed up his military and territorial expansion.

The growing strength of Hitler convinced Mussolini that he should seek an alliance with him. In October 1936, the two dictators reached an agreement that was known as the **Rome-Berlin Axis**.

A month later, Germany also made an agreement with Japan. Germany, Italy, and Japan came to be called the **Axis Powers**. This was followed by German annexation of Austria in 1938, Czechoslovakia (September 1938 and March 1939). During the annexation of Czechoslovakia, the France and Britain again resorted to policy of appeasement.

In 1939, Hitler eyed Poland. He spoke before the Reichstag and demanded that the Polish Corridor,



along with its port city of Danzig, be returned to Germany. After World War I, the Allies had cut out the Polish Corridor from German territory to give Poland access to the sea. At this point, Great Britain and France decided to resist German aggression.

The Nonaggression Pact between Germany and Russia

On August 23, 1939, Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin signed a 10-year **nonaggression pact** with Hitler. Publicly, they promised not to attack each other, secretly, they agreed that they would divide Poland between them. They also secretly agreed that the USSR could take over Finland and the Baltic countries (Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia) without any resistance from German side. Thus, Germany was now free of any threat from East. Now it was time to materialize the plan to annex Poland.

Attack on Poland

Germany gave a surprise attack on Poland on September 1, 1939. At the same time, German tanks and troop trucks embarked into the Polish territory carrying 1.5 million soldiers.

There was a merciless Bombing on Warsaw. This was the beginning of World War II.

On 3 September 1939, France and Great Britain declared war on Germany. But Poland fell before those nations could make any military response. After the victory, the western Half of Poland was annexed by Hitler.

suraj_winner | rajawat.rs.surajsingh@gmail.com | www.gktoday.in/upsc/ias-general-studies

German invasion of Poland was the first test of Germany's newest military strategy called **blitzkrieg** or "lightning war." *This strategy involved use of fast-moving airplanes and tanks, followed by massive infantry forces, to take the enemy by surprise.*

Blitzkrieg

Blitzkrieg tactics involved coordinating ground and air forces, such as tanks and bombers, to strike extremely quickly and overrun the enemy. It also relied on slower moving ground forces moving in after the initial attack and 'mopping up'. The tactics were successful mainly because of their speed, the element of surprise, and the Allies' lack of experience in defending against fast moving coordinated land and air forces.

On September 17, after his secret agreement with Hitler, Stalin sent Soviet troops to occupy the eastern half of Poland. Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia and Finally Finland were taken by Stalin's forces.

The Phoney War

The fall of Warsaw was followed months of the so called **Phoney War**, in which the Allies built up weapons stocks, but made no move against Germany. After this boring period of Phoney war, Hitler attacked Denmark and Norway in April 1940 and occupied both these nations.



Surrender of France

On 10 May 1940, Hitler pushed west towards France, overrunning the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg. German forces broke through the Ardennes, and reached Abbeville on the northern French coast, trapping the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) sent to aid France.

As the German army surged towards Paris, the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill ordered the BEF, who were hemmed in around the port of Dunkirk, to evacuate. The German army entered Paris on 19 June, and three days later the French signed an armistice with Germany. Thus, France fell within days of German attack. A puppet government was established at Paris.

Operation Sea Lion & Battle of Britain

Having overcome France in June 1940, Hitler turned his attention to Britain, the one remaining country of significance that resisted him. Germany then turned its attention to defeating Britain. The plan to invade southern England under the codename **Operation Sea Lion**, but before they could be put into effect, the Germans needed to achieve dominance of the skies.

An aerial conflict raged between August and October 1940, which was known as the **Battle Britain**. Germans launched their air strike warfare **Luftwaffe**, under the command of **Herman Göring**, against the Fighter Command of the British Royal Air Force (RAF), led by Air **Marshal Hugh Dowding**. The problem with the Luftwaffe was that the German Aircraft, though superiority in number, were often close to their extreme flight range and so could operate for only a short time in British airspace.

On 12 August 1940, concerted German attacked on British air-fields, but attempts to overwhelm the RAF with a mass attack failed. The RAF survived the attacked and remained resilient. The German chances of destroying the RAF had ended within a month.

The Rats of Tobruk

Italy entered the war on Germany's side in June 1940. Its leader, Mussolini, planned to conquer Egypt from the Italian territory of Libya. However, they faced a British counterattack into Libya, capturing Bardia, Tobruk and Benghazi early in 1941.

Hitler sent General Rommel with German forces to support the Italians in Libya. Rommel drove the British back into Egypt, although Allied troops held on to Tobruk. German propaganda described these men as 'trapped like rats', but the 'Rats of Tobruk' proved very aggressive and successful, despite primitive conditions and a complete lack of air support. Finally, Rommel did capture Tobruk in June 1942.

Thus, '*Rats of Tobruk*' were a small force of Australian soldiers who captured and held the city of Tobruk in Libya in 1941. Despite a major German and Italian offensive to recapture Tobruk, the



Australians held the city until June 1942. The soldiers were described as being 'trapped like rats' in German propaganda, but the Australians adopted the nickname themselves.

German Invasion of USSR – Operation Barbarossa

Ever since the 1920s, Hitler had viewed the western USSR as a possible area for German expansion to provide *Lebensraum* or living space for a growing population.

The peak of the Axis campaign in Europe was the Blitzkrieg invasion of the Soviet Union, which began in June 1941. Code-named Operation Barbarossa, it is still considered to be one of the largest military operations of human history in terms of manpower, area covered and casualties. The Axis force was made up of over three million troops, 3600 tanks and 4300 aircraft. In 1939, Germany and the Soviet Union had signed a treaty, agreeing to remain neutral if either was attacked. The invasion in 1941 broke this agreement.

There were several reasons for the invasion.

- The large landmass of Eastern Europe was to provide Lebensraum ('living space') for ethnic Germans, and would provide useful resources for the war effort. The motivations were also ideological.
- The Nazis hated communism and considered Russia's Slavic peoples to be racially inferior to Germans.

Despite the fact that Hitler had outlined a plan to invade the Soviet Union in Mein Kampf, the invasion caught the Soviets unprepared. Germany won several major battles and captured huge areas of territory, while the Soviet army was forced to retreat.

By November 1941, German forces were within striking distance of Moscow, the capital of the USSR. However, the German forces were unable to capture Moscow. They were unprepared for the harshness of the Soviet winter and were met by stubborn resistance.

When the winter of 1941–42 ended and the Germans could manoeuvre again, Hitler directed his forces to southern Russia and its oilfields. Their advance eventually came to a halt at Stalingrad (now known as Volgograd) in September 1942, in a battle that would become one of the bloodiest in history.

Battle of Stalingrad

The industrial city of Stalingrad stood on the west bank of the Volga river in southern Russia, controlling the vital river and rail connections that carried oil supplies to the armament factories of central Russia.

Thwarted in his desire to capture Moscow the previous winter, Hitler ordered a thrust in the spring and summer of 1942 to capture Stalingrad and the oil reserves further south in the Caucasus.



Operation Blue and Operation Uranus

Operation Blue was a general German Offensive that began on 29 June 1942. The German army moved to secure Stalingrad. Sustained air attacks on 23 August began the main assault, and the same day German troops reached the Volga north of the city.

But this was the limit of their success – an astonishingly tenacious Soviet resistance bogged the 6th Army down in house-to-house fighting.

On 19 November, the Red Army was still somehow clinging on to a small strip along the Volga when Soviet General Zhukov ordered a counterattack, **Operation Uranus**.

The Soviet forces crashed through the German army and within four days had the Axis side surrounded. There was a failed German attempt to revive victory. After that the remnants of German Army finally surrendered on 2 February 1943, at a cost of around 170,000 dead.

Tide of war turns in Europe

By 1943, the German tactics had lost the element of surprise, and their wartime success had peaked. At this point, Britain (including its Free dominions such as Australia), the USA, the Soviet Union and the Free French Forces formed an alliance to force Germany and its allies into an unconditional surrender.

suraj_winner | rajawat.rs.surajsingh@gmail.com | www.gktoday.in/upsc/ias-general-studies

From 1943, the Soviet army inflicted a series of defeats on Germany. By 1945, Germany had been forced out of most of Eastern Europe; with Soviet troops occupying Russia, Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia and the Baltic States. The Russians continued their advance into Germany, and reached the German capital, Berlin, in April.

In Western Europe, the Allies began major bombing campaigns on Germany from 1942, initially focusing on destroying air-fields but later bombing industrial cities. This campaign failed to significantly affect German morale or industries, and on its own could not win the war. The Allies developed a plan to invade France. On 6 June 1944, around 160 000 Allied troops landed on the beaches of Normandy, in Northern France. This operation, known as '**D-Day**', precipitated the **Liberation of France** in August 1944.

The end of the war in Europe

In September 1944, Allied ground troops invaded Germany from the west. The Allies continued bombing major German cities, including Berlin. In April, the Soviets encircled Berlin and launched an assault. Hitler remained in Berlin, to direct the defence of the city from his bunker. Although most of the city's population was mobilised, the Soviets seized Berlin after a week of fighting in the streets. Hitler committed suicide on 30 April, and Germany officially surrendered on 7 May 1945.

Japan's Entry and Attack on Pearl Harbour 1941

The event that symbolises Japan's entry into World War II was the attack on Pearl Harbour. When



World War II began in Europe, the attention of Britain, France and USA was diverted away from Japan. Despite evidence of Japanese aggression, there was still a belief that the Japanese did not pose a significant threat.

The attack on the American naval base at **Pearl Harbour**, Hawaii, on 7 December 1941 alerted the Allies to the nature of the Japanese threat. Japan hoped to destroy America's Pacific Fleet as a preventative strike to stop American interference in the Pacific.

Rather than preventing American intervention, the attack caused the Allies to declare war on Japan. Following the attack on Pearl Harbour, Japanese forces quickly occupied Malaya, Singapore, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Guam and Wake Island. They also conquered Burma in the west, and pushed south through French Indochina (Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos) and the Dutch East Indies to reach Australia's doorstep in New Guinea.

Britain and the USA had seriously underestimated Japan's military ability. This, together with the element of surprise and the imaginative use of combined naval and air forces by the Japanese, gave Japan an early advantage.

The fall of Singapore

The fall of Singapore was the largest surrender of a British-led force in history. It was a defining moment of the war in the Pacific. It also had major implications for India's freedom struggle.

At the time, Singapore was a British colony and the key naval base in the region. The 'Singapore Strategy' was also a key part of Australia's military defence planning which was based on British assurances that, should Japan ever attack South-East Asia, the main British fleet would be sent to Singapore to tackle the Japanese navy and protect Australia.

The Japanese first bombed Singapore on 8 December 1941, the day after the bombing of Pearl Harbour. On the same day, the Japanese landed forces on the north-east coast of Malaya (now Malaysia). Malaya and Singapore were defended by a force of around 85 000 Allied troops, including the 8th Division of the Second AIF, and the British believed that it could withstand any attack.

They also believed that the Japanese were incapable of fighting their way down to Singapore through the rugged terrain of the Malay Peninsula. Convinced that any threat to Singapore would come from the sea, the Allies focused their defences on the coast. Despite a strong Allied presence in Malaya, the Japanese army won a series of battles over six weeks. After being held in reserve, the Australian 8th Division was deployed to stop the Japanese advance in January 1942. It suffered heavy casualties before being ordered to retreat to Singapore.

The Japanese siege of Singapore lasted for just a week and, despite outnumbering their enemies, the Allies surrendered on 15 February 1942. In addition to the 50 000 Allied soldiers taken prisoner in



Malaya, around 80 000 were taken prisoner after the fall of Singapore.

Controversially, a small number of soldiers, escaped on ships to avoid capture. The vast majority of soldiers could not escape and one-third of them did not survive the Japanese prisoner of war (POW) camps. Under the **Bataan Death March**, the Japanese subjected prisoners to terrible cruelties

The Allies Strike Back

Due to the string of victories, the Japanese seemed unbeatable. However, the Allies— mainly Americans and Australians were anxious to strike back in the Pacific.

In April 1942, the United States wanted revenge for Pearl Harbour. So the United States sent 16 B-25 bombers under the command of Lieutenant Colonel **James H. Doolittle** to bomb Tokyo and other major Japanese cities. The bombs did little damage. The attack, however, made an important psychological point: the Japanese could be attacked.

This raid raised American morale and shook the confidence of the Japanese. At the same time, the Japanese had won a vast empire that was impossible to defend and control.

In May 1942, the **Battle of the Coral Sea** took place in which airplanes taking off from huge aircraft carriers from opposing ships did all the fighting. The battle was somewhat a draw but Japanese southward expansion could be stopped. The next battle was the **Battle of Midway** in which the allies won. This battle turned the tide of war in the Pacific against the Japanese. The Japanese were building an air base on the Island of **Guadalcanal** in the Solomon Islands. The allied strike this island and as many as 23000 Japanese men out of 36000 were killed. The Japanese abandoned the island saying it the Island of Death.” In fall of 1944, the Bloodiest battle was fought in Okinawa in which Japanese lost 110,000 troops, and the Americans, 12,500.

Atomic Bombs

To bring the war at a quick end and to make Japan surrender, the US president Truman had to make a decision whether to use the Atomic Bomb. It had been developed by the top-secret Manhattan Project, headed by General Leslie Groves and chief scientist J. Robert Oppenheimer.

The first atomic bomb was exploded in a desert in New Mexico on July 16, 1945. President Truman then warned the Japanese. He told them that unless they surrendered, they could expect a “rain of ruin from the air.”

The Japanese did not reply. So, on August 6, 1945, the United States dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, a Japanese city of 365,000 people. Almost 73,000 people died in the attack.

Three days later, on August 9, a second bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, a city of 200,000. It killed about 37,500 people. Radiation killed many more.

The Japanese surrendered to General Douglas MacArthur on September 2. The surrender took place



aboard the United States battleship *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay. With Japan's surrender, the war had ended. Now, countries faced the task of rebuilding a war-torn world.

Japan under US Occupation – Demilitarization of Japan

General Douglas MacArthur, now became the supreme commander for the Allied powers, accepted the Japanese surrender. He took charge of the U.S. occupation. MacArthur was advised to be fair and not to plant the seeds for a future war. However, to ensure that fighting would end, he began a process of **demilitarization**—disbanding the Japanese armed forces.

This was accomplished quickly. Japanese were left with only a small police force. The war criminals were brought to trial and out of 25 surviving defendants, former Premier Hideki Tojo and six others were hanged.

Democratization of Japan

In February 1946, MacArthur and his American political advisers drew up a new constitution for Japan. This changed the empire into a parliamentary democracy like that of Great Britain. The Japanese accepted the constitution. It went into effect on May 3, 1947.

Birth of United Nations

The term “United Nations” was first officially used on 1 January 1942, when 26 governments signed the **Atlantic Charter**, pledging to continue the war effort. So, the first “**Declaration by United Nations**” dates back to January 1, 1942, when representatives of twenty-six nations pledged their governments to continue fighting together to defeat the Axis powers and to obtain a “just” peace.

Thus, unlike the League, the UN started off as an alliance that came into being soon after the American entry to the war, following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour and Germany's declaration of war on the United States in December 1941.

After the war, United States and the Soviet Union emerged as the strongest nations on earth. Germany and Japan were occupied and militarily emasculated. In sum, the world was transformed and now there was a bipolar world order emerging very slowly. But the UN was created, in part, to manage the transformation of the World during the 1940s.

Yalta Conference / Potsdam Conference

The main allies of the World War II are also known as Big Three. The big three included the Soviet Union, the United States, and the United Kingdom. The First World War II conference between these Big Three was the **Tehran Conference** that was held from November 28 to December 1, 1943. **It was codenamed Eureka.** After this conference, the **Yalta Conference** followed on February 4 to 11, 1945 at Yalta in Crimea. So it was known as **Crimea Conference and was codenamed the Argonaut Conference.** *The participants of these conference were Winston Churchill,*



Franklin D. Roosevelt and Joseph Stalin. It was this conference in which the reorganization of Europe after the war was to be decided. Germany was made to accept that it would undergo demilitarization and denazification.

In the Yalta Conference, it was also decided that fight against the Empire of Japan to be concluded within 90 days after the defeat of Germany. The important conference after the Yalta Conference was the **Potsdam Conference**, which was held from July to August 1945. In this conference, Clement Attlee was there as PM in waiting and as soon as the Labour Party's got victory over the Conservatives, Atlee had replaced Churchill as Prime Minister of England. From US side, it was President Henry S Truman to participate in the conference. The major outcome of this conference was the "Potsdam Declaration" which asked Japan to Surrender.

Dumbarton Oaks conference

As mentioned above, akin to the League of Nations, UN was an initiative of the American president. This time it was Franklin D. Roosevelt, whose administration pushed for the creation of the UN during the last years of the war. In August 1944 delegates from China, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States met at **Dumbarton Oaks**, a private estate in Washington, D.C., to draw up the basic blueprint for the new international organization.

This was known as the **Dumbarton Oaks conference**. It was held from August 21, 1944 through October 7, 1944 at Washington DC and in this conference the text of the UN Charter was discussed. By October the outline for the UN Charter was ready. After the surrender of Germany in April of the following year (and the death of Roosevelt in the same month), the charter was signed in San Francisco on June 26, 1945. Japan was put on its knee by Atomic Bombs. It is said that Truman was not aware of the bombs prior to death of Roosevelt. President Truman ordered the dropping of an atomic bomb on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. On October 24, 1945, with the Pacific war also concluded, the United Nations officially came into existence.



suraj_winner | rajawat.rs.surajsingh@gmail.com | www.gktoday.in/upsc/ias-general-studies

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MWH-5: Cold War and Other Major Events of 20th Century

[Integrated IAS General Studies:2016-17](#)

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Model Questions

1. What was Cold War? How did Cold War originate? How it was spread? Discuss.
2. “Despite all the show of morality and democratic pretensions, the Truman Doctrine was far from being flawless.” Critically examine the statement.
3. What was Marshall Plan? What was response of Soviet Union towards Marshall Plan? To what extent, it was able to curb the rise of communism in Europe? Discuss.
4. Discuss the circumstances in which NATO was created. How creation of NATO was a new precedent for hitherto foreign policy of United States? Do you agree that NATO was aimed to establish by force Anglo-American domination over the world? Examine.
5. Discuss the circumstances that triggered Korean war? Despite taking close to three years, the Korean War technically never came to an end. Discuss while throwing light upon the path taken by two Koreas in the aftermath of Korean Armistice Agreement.
6. Why Europe and America could do nothing except offering moral support and condemnation of Russia during Hungarian Revolution? Discuss.
7. Discuss the events that led to the Suez Crisis in 1956? How did it deal a final blow to Britain’s self-image as a world power?
8. “There were several far reaching outcomes of Suez Crisis.” Explain.
9. “The Cuban missile crisis was a diplomatic triumph for the Kennedy administration and an embarrassment for the Soviet leadership.” Do you agree? Justify.
10. Critically examine the so called “new political thinking” presented by Gorbachev and his contribution towards end of Cold War.

Introduction

20th century can be divided into three distinct phases. The first beginning – 1900 A.D. to 1945 could rightly be classified as the period of the world wars, the second extending from 1945 to 1991-till the dissolution of the Soviet Union – is the crucial phase of the 20th century and it is the period of the cold war, the third spanning from 1991 and moving on into the 21st century is the period of the World Trade Organisation, the market and Globalisation.

Unipolar to Bipolar world order – Anti-imperialism and Anticolonialism

The year 1945 brought about great changes in the world order since it ushered in the nuclear age. The new world order that was to develop after the incalculable damage to life and property during the Second World War, was to be a bipolar world dominated by the two super powers, the United States of America and the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics. Till the end of World War II, a unipolar structure controlled by the United States was the order of the day, but the victory of



Communism over Nazism i.e. of the Soviet Union over Germany, clearly brought about a realignment of power after World War II. In the process a unipolar power structure dominated by the United States was replaced by a bipolar power structure. The new world order that emerged during the post – 1945 period was not merely bipolar, but it also witnessed the triumph of nationalism in major parts of the world like Asia, Africa and Latin America. Anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism were the most outstanding developments of the New world order after 1945. Many new nation-states were born during this period which asserted their independence and also tried to maintain a distance from the two super powers.

However, another major development, which became an integral part of the new world order was the race for nuclear and non-nuclear armaments. It is pertinent to observe that all post-war developments saw the two super powers locking horns against one another.

Cold War: Origin and Initial Factors

Cold war (1940s -1991) is characterised by a situation where there is neither a direct confrontation nor a lasting peace. It is a situation marked by mutual suspicion, jealousy, hostility and rivalry. The two super powers avoided a direct confrontation, but met each other indirectly through their respective allies.

Topical winner | rajawat.rs.surajsingh@gmail.com | www.gktoday.in/upsc/ias-general-studies

Was Cold War Initiated by USA and USSR?

A mistaken notion that has generally been accepted as a fact is that the cold war originated between the United States and the Soviet Union. Nothing could be more fallacious. The original players in the cold war were Great Britain and the Soviet Union with the Americans playing the role of mediators. Such a situation remained unchanged virtually till the end of World War II and the death of the American President FD Roosevelt. As long as Franklin Roosevelt was alive he thought in terms of a new world order where the Americans and Russians would cooperate for the maintenance of international peace and security. The end of World War II saw the relegation of Great Britain to a distant background depending upon the United States for its survival and the death of Roosevelt brought Harry S. Truman as the new President of the United States.

However unlike Roosevelt, Truman detested communism and the Soviet Union, just as much as the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill did. Roosevelt's political acumen lay in pacifying Churchill and Stalin, the Soviet Premier. But, Truman's ascendance to the Presidency saw the Americans to be the major opponents of the Russians and after 1945, the Americans replaced Great Britain as the major player in the cold war.

Views on origin of Cold War

Some historians believe that cold war had started as early as 1917, when the Bolshevik party under



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Lenin ousted Tsarist misrule from Russia in October Revolution. The Bolshevik victory in Russia led to the establishment of communism which appeared to be a direct challenge to the capitalist world. Hence, to nip communism in the bud, a sustained effort was made by western powers and therein lies the genesis of the cold war.

Another group of historians however, believes that the cold war originated during the course of the Second World War when Churchill and Stalin met for the first time during the Teheran Conference of 1943.

Whatever be the timing of the cold war, it remains the most complex political development of the 20th century. All international developments after 1945 took shape under the shadow of the cold war.

Cold War in East Europe

The basis of the cold war, in its initial phase undoubtedly was centred on developments in East Europe. For centuries East and West Europe had been struggling with each other for control of the huge area rich in human and industrial resources and one that was strategically vital to both sides, either to Russia: *as a buffer against the west* or to Germany and France *as a gateway for invasion of Russia*. Till 1940s, East Europe had sided with the west. But when East Europe faced devastation by the marauding Nazi troops, the Russians bore the brunt of the war and were finally successful in liberating East Europe. Russia after 1945 controlled East Europe and this crucial result of World War II destroyed the Grand Alliance between the United States, Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union and gave birth to the Cold War.

American view of 'Friendly' East European Governments

The West, with America leading the way, was unwilling to accept Russian domination of East Europe. Although the Anglo-Americans were willing to allow Stalin a major say in the politics of the region and realised that Russian security demanded friendly governments there, they were not prepared to abandon East Europe altogether. The Americans had a mistaken notion that it was still possible to have East European governments that were both capitalistic but friendly to Russia. The Russians on the other hand forcefully put forth their plea that a 'friendly' government in East Europe meant only a communist government.

British intervention in Greece starts the cold war

The first move in the cold war was, however, made by Great Britain when British Prime Minister Churchill intervened in Greece with the help of British ground forces. Though Greece had been liberated by Soviet troops and the Russian troops won the admiration of the Greeks, Churchill could never think of giving up Greece for fear of losing the entire Mediterranean zone.



Russian countermove in Poland and Romania

But the brazen British action in Greece had profound and far reaching consequences; and as retaliation to this action, Stalin brought Poland into the Russian fold by according recognition to the provisional Government there. Then it was the turn of Romania. Vyshinsky, the Soviet Foreign Minister on February 27, 1945, visited Bucharest, the Romanian capital and demanded the dismissal of the coalition government. On March 6, 1945, a communist dominated Government was sworn in there {*Soviet occupation of Romania*}. Neither the Americans nor the British could raise any objection since the Soviet action in Poland and Romania was an answer to the British action in Greece. Thus, the onset of the cold war led to the formal division of Europe and it was reflected in all parts of the world.

Turning Point in Soviet-American Relations

The real turning point in Russo-American relations came during the period December 1944 and April 1945. It was during this period that the American ambassador to the Soviet Union, Harriman, brought about a drastic change in his attitude towards the Russians. Till very recently, an ardent proponent of close Russo-American ties, Harriman, during March-April 1945 constantly advised the American foreign office to adopt a tough attitude towards the Russians. According to him the Russians had violated the spirit of the Yalta Conference of February 1945 to co-operate with the west for establishing a new world order, by their action in Romania. Hence Harriman believed that the only way of making the Russians stick to the agreements made by them was to force them to do so.

Death of Roosevelt and Ascendance of Truman

Another major factor was the death of Roosevelt and the entry of Harry S. Truman as the President of the United States. Truman was new to the international diplomacy and personally he had an intense dislike for communism and the Soviet Union. Whereas Roosevelt always tried to act as a mediator between extreme British and Soviet positions, Truman pushed aside Great Britain to make the United States the chief antagonist of the Soviet Union in the cold war.

Common Enemy collapsed after 1945

A basic factor which must be borne in mind was that there never was any cordiality in Russo-American relations. They had merely come closer during the World War II, since both found a common enemy in Hitler. With Hitler gone, the Grand Alliance between the East and West that had been forged during the war, also collapsed.

UN making exposed differences

The process of U.N. making also contributed to the growing suspicion between the parties. Stalin, never a proponent for having a strong United Nations, demanded certain built in devices in the UN



charter that would make the Soviet participation in the world body meaningful. Russian stubbornness led to the formulation of the 'Veto' formula in the Security Council ensuring that no issue could pass through the UN without the approval of all the five permanent members in the Security Council.

Hard Stance by Americans

President Truman's hostility towards the Soviet Union was further demonstrated when he stopped the supply of loans to the Soviet Union. These loans had been promised to the Russians for their help during the war. The Russians had been expecting a large American post-war loan for the purpose of reconstruction and this sudden stoppage at the end of the war in Europe convinced the Russians of American betrayal.

Potsdam conference and American Atomic Explosion

Nevertheless, President Truman was keen to meet the Russians for he needed their support to bring about the defeat of Japan. At the Potsdam Conference in July 1945, Truman was surprised to see the Russian readiness to enter the war in Japan but was desisted with their attitude when they opposed and defeated the President's favourite plan of internationalising the world's principal waterways. This by implication meant an American naval presence in the river network of East Europe which by now was under the Russian sphere of influence. The Russian refusal convinced the President that the Russians were bidding for world domination and that force was the only language they understood. The Potsdam Conference was doomed to failure since the very day the conference began, July 17, 1945, the United States made a successful test of the first atomic bomb in the history of mankind. Being the only nuclear power, President Truman walked out of the *Potsdam Conference* with the conviction that he could force the Russians to be amenable to his demands. Truman was equally determined that after the war in Japan he would not allow the Russians any foothold there. He detested the idea of any joint control of any territory in which the Russians participated.

Iran and Soviet American rift

Meanwhile, the developments in Iran in early 1946 caused serious concern. Iran had been occupied on both ends by Russia and Britain in 1941, on the pretext that king Reza Shah had pro-Nazi sympathies. They occupied the country, its oil wells and its only railway line. At the London Foreign Minister's Conference both Britain and Russia had agreed to withdraw their troops from Iran not later than March 1946. But while British troops withdrew in time, Russian troops continued to stay there and laid claim to the Baku oil fields in Iran as a compensation for the destruction of the Russian oil fields by Nazi forces. This according to Americans was a serious breach of faith and President Truman issued an ultimatum to the Russians threatening to use US Navy and ground forces in case the Russians did not withdraw immediately.



By the end of May 1946, Iran was clear of the Soviet troops but the Russians felt bitterly humiliated and waited for an opportunity to retaliate against the Americans.

Hardening Soviet stance and Churchill's 'Iron Curtain' speech

Stalin now recognised the reality of the cold war which was becoming more and more intense. In a speech on February 9, 1946, he emphasised upon the inevitable conflict between communism and capitalism and wanted to shape his country's foreign policy accordingly. On 6 March 1946, Winston Churchill delivered his famous 'Iron Curtain' speech at Fulton, Missouri in the United States. Here, he exhorted Americans to wake up and realise that a cold war had really begun between the Russians and the Western Civilisation. He reminded the Americans that it was time they gave up their dreams of a united world and that it was their holy duty to protect the western civilisation from the dreaded evil of communism. His speech in nutshell was – from the north of Europe to the South “*an Iron Curtain had descended behind which all the ancient capitals of East Europe – Berlin, Warsaw, Budapest Bucharest, Belgrade, Prague, Sofia and Vienna – had vanished.*” If the Russians were not stopped things would soon overwhelm West Europe and that would be too dangerous a proposition for the United States.

Iron Curtain

suraj_winner | rajawat.rs.surajsingh@gmail.com | www.gktoday.in/upsc/ias-general-studies

Iron Curtain speech was delivered by Winston Churchill, the British PM at Missouri. It referred to the boundary dividing the Europe in two parts, from 1946 till 1991, in which the eastern part was pro-USSR and western part was Pro-US. The eastern side had a Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and the military Warsaw Pact, while the western side had European Community and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Berlin wall was one of the symbols of this Iron Curtain. Iron curtain fell with the collapse of Soviet Union and end of Cold War.

Kennan and the Doctrine of Containment

The United States responded by enunciating a policy by George F. Kennan in 1946, famous as the 'Doctrine of Containment'. This doctrine has governed American Foreign Policy, since 1946. George Kennan stressed that United States policy towards the Soviet Union must be that of a long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies. This doctrine was based on two assumptions:

1. the inherent expansive tendencies of Russian communism.
2. the basic unsoundness of the Soviet system.

In the light of these developments, the American Foreign Policy had to be geared up to contain the expansion of communism from the Soviet soil to other parts of the world. This could only be done



by raising, American 'counter forces and 'unassailable barriers' The cold war now assumed dangerous proportions, whose consequences for the future would be equally dangerous.

Failure of Moscow Conference and Division of Germany

Probably, the last link in the chain of events that worsened the cold war was the Moscow Foreign Minister's Conference in March 1947. Till the Potsdam Conference, the Soviet Union preferred a weak Germany which might not pose them any danger in future. But in the Moscow Conference, the Russians insisted upon a strong and industrialized Germany whose products could be used for Russian industrial revival. This, the western powers thought was too dangerous a scheme and in any case they had no intention of leaving West Germany just as the Russians had no design of moving out of East Germany. The rift between the West and the Russians led to the formal division of Germany and its capital Berlin. Its significance however, lay in the fact that the division of Germany implied a formal division of Europe into two hostile camps. The cold war thus, had the effect of dividing Europe and the world between two opposing camps. Ironically, reunification of Germany in 1991 brought about an end to the cold war. However, in Moscow in 1947, reconciliation was not possible since president Truman made an open declaration of the cold war by enunciating the famous Truman Doctrine.

suraj_winner | rajawat.rs.surajsingh@gmail.com | www.gktoday.in/upsc/ias-general-studies

During its course of more than forty-five years the cold war led to open hostilities in different parts of the world at different times. The very first such hostility was to be witnessed during the Berlin crisis of 1949 which kept on recurring in 1958 and 1961. There were other flashpoint areas in the world leading to serious conflicts like the Korean crisis, Kashmir crisis, Congo crisis, Suez crisis, Cuban Missile crisis; Arab-Israeli conflicts, conflicts in Afghanistan and Africa.

The Truman Doctrine

The American declaration of cold war came about on March 12, 1947, when President Harry Truman went before a joint session of Congress to deliver a truly epochal speech in American history. President Truman was provoked by the British who shocked Washington by declaring that an economically burdened Britain could no longer sustain a pro-western government in Greece.

Great Britain further warned that once they withdrew from Greece, communist guerrillas there would receive help from their communist patrons in the Soviet Union which would probably seize control of Greece. Greece would then gravitate within the Soviet orbit; the position of neighbouring Turkey which was already unstable would become untenable, leading to the strategically vital eastern Mediterranean falling into Soviet hands with dangerous consequences for the western world. It was imperative therefore, on the part of the United States as the champion of democracy, to intervene in



Greece and Turkey to not only save these countries from communist infiltration, but also to safeguard western interest in the Mediterranean zone.

Enunciation of the Doctrine

After hurried consultations with military and congressional leaders, President Truman outlined the situation in Greece, and spelled out what was to become known as the *Truman Doctrine*. What he said in essence was – “*It must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.*” A bolder statement, far more elaborate in scope could be interpreted when he said – “*wherever aggression, direct or indirect, threatens the peace, the security of the United States was involved.*” The President asked congress to appropriate \$400 million for economic aid and military supplies for Greece and Turkey and to authorize the dispatch of American personnel to assist with reconstruction and to provide their armies with proper instruction. Thus, United States began the policy of containment and its initial implementation was to be witnessed in Greece and Turkey.

Justification of the Doctrine

President Truman justified his position by emphasising that Soviet expansionist efforts left the United States with no choice but to adopt a countervailing policy. It was further stated that anti-communism had never been a major American policy during the Second World War, but hostile Soviet behaviour and words were the reasons for the gradual shift of American policy and public opinion from amity to enmity. Truman declared that despite, the universalism of the Truman Doctrine, its application was intended to be specific and limited, not global. In other words, containment was to be implemented only ‘where the Soviet state appeared to be expanding its power.

Critical Analysis of Truman Doctrine

Despite all the show of morality and democratic pretensions, the Truman Doctrine was far from being flawless. With all talk of democratic purposes, Truman Doctrine’s *first application was to Greece and Turkey, neither of which was democratic*. One had to shut off one’s reasoning capacity to call Greece of the day or Turkey as “free” countries – both had unpopular, fascist regimes against which the United States had so recently fought World War-II. Their strategic location was considered more important than their domestic problems. The doctrine had the impact of over simplifying issues by conveniently dividing the world into two hostile camps -the one free, and the other totalitarian and declared that every nation must now choose between the two. This was tantamount to drawing the battle lines. Henceforward, the American policy all over the world was geared to defining this split – ‘*one who is not with me is against me.*’ The United States firmly rejected the existence of a third and



middle course and in its anxiety to isolate the Soviet bloc, included all reactionary, undemocratic and unpopular regimes in the 'free' camp.

At home, the Truman Doctrine came in for severe criticism. It was stated that the scheme would cost too 'much *since communism could not be fought with dollars*. Rich though America was, it would bankrupt herself by helping bankrupt governments all over the world. Americans by poking their noses into the internal affairs of foreign governments might unite the world against them. Although Truman had been careful not to mention Soviet Russia by name, there could be no doubt that he was aiming his doctrine at Russia, with the imminent danger of provoking her into war. Nevertheless the Truman Doctrine was approved in the House on May 15, 1947.

The Truman Doctrine was of incalculable significance. Through it the United States seized the tactical offensive in the cold war to contain communism. Although limited for the present to Greece and Turkey the new policy was actually general in scope and led by direct steps to the vastly more important Marshall Plan and the North Atlantic Pact.

The Marshall Plan

The commitment to Greece and Turkey was only the first act under the American project of containing Soviet expansion {Policy of Containment}. Soon, however, the United States realised that aid for only Greece and Turkey was quite inadequate. The war in Europe had devastated the economies of all the countries and Western Europe particularly was not making the necessary economic recovery. The deepest fear was that the Soviet Union would be able to exploit Europe's post war economic collapse and if the situation was allowed to prevail, the communists would probably seize control of Italy and France.

American and European interests were interlinked

The collapse of Europe posed once again the basic question whether Europe was vital to U.S. security. The answer was obvious since American's two previous interventions had been made to protect Europe. During both the world wars the United States had been drawn by Germany and both wars had been fought to uphold democracy in Europe. Europe's vital importance became quite evident since it ranked second only to the United States in its potential power- in industry, productivity, skilled manpower, scientists and technicians. If these vital assets moved toward the Soviet side, the strategic military balance would swing sharply toward 'the Russians and U.S. security would be endangered. Given its huge potential and its strategic geographic position, it became apparent that Europe's security was indeed inseparable from U.S. security. Moreover, the United States could never allow the Soviet Union the control the Western approaches to the Atlantic. Hence, it was imperative for the U.S to find a way to help Europe recover.



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With Europe on the verge of not only economic ruin, but also a complete social and political breakdown, everything seemed to force it into dependence upon America. Almost every item needed for reconstruction like wheat, cotton, coal, sulphur, sugar, machinery and trucks, could be obtained in sufficient quantities only from the United States. Tragically enough, Europe in 1947 had lost her capacity to buy. The only cure for Europe's sick state was a massive injection of dollars since only a tremendous programme of economic aid could restore Europe's economy and enable it to surpass its pre-war agricultural and industrial production.

Enunciation of Marshall Plan

To come to Europe's rescue, Secretary of State George C. Marshall announced a policy in his address at the Harvard University on June 5, 1947, which eclipsed the Truman Doctrine in importance. The essence of his speech was that, if the nations of Europe would get together and devise far-visions plans for economic recovery, concentrate on self-help and mutual assistance, and present to Washington a specific statement of their needs, the United States would support them with financial help so far as it may be practical. In other words, American aid to Europe was made conditional upon economic co-operation among the European states and it put the burden of initiative on Europe's shoulders. However, it soon became apparent that the Marshall scheme, unlike the Truman Doctrine which aimed at military aid or temporary relief to Greece and Turkey, was an all-inclusive plan looking toward long-range rehabilitation of Europe.

Acceptance by Europe

Secretary of State Marshall stressed upon the economic cooperation required by the United States. He thus called upon the European States to work out a plan for their common needs and common recovery. He further emphasized that the United States would provide the funds, but the Europeans had to assume the initiative and do the planning. Great Britain and France, releasing the breathtaking implications of the Marshall Plan called for a conference of twenty-two European countries. As expected, the satellites of the Soviet Union in Central and Eastern Europe turned down the invitation. Thereupon a sixteen-power conference met at Paris from July to September 1947 and finally worked out individual "shopping list" of desired items into an integrated programme. The Marshall Plan appropriation passed the House on April 3, 1947.

Criticism by Russians

The Marshall aid scheme was bitterly criticised by the Soviet Union, and its response to the Marshall Plan was the *nine-nation Communist Information Bureau (Cominform)*, announced on October 5, 1947. This agency was designed to promote communism by fighting the economic recovery of Europe under the Marshall Plan. At the same time, through the *Counter Molotov Plan*, Moscow made an attempt for economic integration with its satellites.



ERP and American Victory

Secretary Marshall's efforts resulted in the creation of the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC). President Truman asked for an aid of \$17 billion, which the Congress cut to \$13 billion. Britain, France and West Germany received more than half of this amount. The Marshall Plan, officially known as the *European Relief Programme* was approved just in time to influence the Italian election.

Given a choice between the concrete economic aid of the Marshall Plan and the vague benefits of communism, the Italian people returned on overwhelming verdict against the communists. This was the first decisive victory of the West and the U.S. over Communism in the post war years and it marked the turn of the tide in the cold war in favour of the United States.

Foundation of NATO

After the initial success of the Marshall plan, it became increasingly evident that the plan by itself would not be enough. Soviet infringement in East Europe became overtly aggressive and it was well demonstrated in some of the events as follows:

- **Czech coup, 1948:** In 1948, Soviet engineered and backed a coup d'état in Czechoslovakia. In this, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, with Soviet backing, assumed undisputed control over the government there and marked the onset of four decades of Communist dictatorship in the country.
- **Berlin Blockade (1948-1949):** The Berlin Blockade (24 June 1948 – 12 May 1949) is seen as first major international crises of the Cold War. During the multinational occupation of post-World War II Germany, Soviets imposed a blockade on Berlin aimed at dislodging the western powers from there. It blocked Western Allies' railway, road, and canal access to the sectors of Berlin under Western control. The Soviets offered to drop the blockade if the Western Allies withdrew the newly introduced Deutsche mark from West Berlin.

From these events, it suddenly became too apparent that a basic necessity for Europe's recovery was not merely economic but also military security.

Initiative by European Powers

The first move in this direction had already been made by the Europeans themselves when in March 1947 France and Britain signed the *Treaty of Dunkirk* for their mutual defense against a threat to their security. An extension of this treaty was made in 1948 when through the *Brussels Pact*, Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg signed a collective treaty of self-defence. The Brussels pact was established as a military counterpart to the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation, OEEC. Just as the success of the OEEC depended upon American capital the



pact members expected their alliance to attract American military support too.

Formation of NATO

US did not disappoint the Europeans. To stop the rising tide of communism, US was irresistibly drawn toward this new European alliance. In April 1949, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal and the United States created the historic *North Atlantic Treaty Organisation*. The signatory powers stipulated that an *attack by an aggressor on one was an attack on all*, and that each of the other nations, individually or together, would take “such action as it deems necessary,” including “armed force.”

American justification of the NATO

Unquestionably, for the United States, the NATO commitment set a new precedent. This was for the first time in its history that Americans had committed themselves to an alliance in peacetime. Europe thus became America’s ‘first line of defence’. Yet despite this drastic departure from tradition, the pact met with wide spread public favour. There was a general feeling that if another world war broke out, America would be sucked into it from the beginning and since this was so, it might be able to avert it, unlike as in 1914 and 1939, by issuing a warning on potential aggressors that they would have to face American opposition from the very outset. Thus, it was precisely intended to give a clear message to the Soviet Union that the United States would fight to preserve Europe’s freedom. Europe’s vital importance to American security had been proved beyond doubt with the American participation in the two world wars. Instead of again allowing the balance of power to be upset and once more getting drawn into war after it had started the United States now wanted to prevent such an outbreak by committing herself to the preservation of Europe in peacetime.

It was presumed that the fear of meeting stiff American resistance and fighting an all out war with the United States would deter a potential aggressor. The North Atlantic Pact was approved by the American Senate.

Criticism to NATO

It is interesting to note, that as the name itself suggests, all members of the NATO belonged to the northern flank of the European continent on the North Atlantic Ocean. But the inclusion of Greece and Turkey in 1955 made a mockery of the term since neither of them belonged to the northern flank of Europe nor did they belong to the Atlantic zone. Greece and Turkey were situated on the southern fringes of Europe and they belonged to the Mediterranean zone instead. After the end of the cold war, however, and particularly-with the disintegration of the Soviet Union, NATO has vastly expanded’ in scope and action. NATO’s tentacles have spread far to include countries of East Europe which not so long ago had been important satellites of the Soviet Union.

Soviet Union bitterly denounced NATO as an aggressive coalition “*to establish by force Anglo-American*



domination over the world” and charged that “it is a factor undermining the United Nations Organisation”. The United States, however, justified its position by insisting that it was the militancy of Russian communism that had brought about a major change in the American Foreign Policy.

It had adopted such a policy with great reluctance but basically in response to the instinct of self-preservation. Despite criticism, United States maintained that the new American policies were defensive in their purpose and were authored more by the men in Moscow rather than by the men in Washington.

Important Historical Events during Cold War

Korean War (1950-53)

Korean War (1950-1953) was the first hot war of the Cold War, fought between the armies of the North Korea and South Korea.

Background

From 1910 till end of the WW-II, Korean Peninsula belonged to Japanese Empire. Even while war was on, the allies were discussing what should happen to Korea if they win. In November 1943 at the Cairo Conference, allied decided that the peninsula should become a free and independent country.

When Japan surrendered in 1945, a provisional government was set up in Korea, with the Soviet Union exercising control over the northern half and the United States exercising control over the southern half {US and Soviet Union were allies}.

A boundary between the two zones was set at 38th parallel, which was also called the Demilitarized Zone or DMZ.

Initially, there was a plan to unite the two halves. However, US and Soviet Union could not agree upon what kind of the government the new Korean nation should have. Naturally, the Soviet Union wanted a communist-leaning government while US wanted a democratic leaning pro US government. When they did not reach at an agreement, Southern half of the Peninsula was declared as *Republic of Korea* in August 1948. In next month, the Soviet zone of occupation was declared as *Democratic People's Republic of Korea*. These two states are now South and North Korea. While South Korea was backed by United States and other democratic states; North Korea was backed by the Soviet Union and communist China.

The North Korean leader Kim Il-sung was determined to rule a united Korea. Since negotiation went nowhere, he decided to use force to achieve his aims.

Key Events of War

The two sides of Korean peninsula kept engaged in occasional border skirmishes throughout the late 1940s. On 25 June 1950, a full-fledged war broke out when one lakh North Korean soldiers crossed



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the DMZ and attacked South Korea. The North Korean forces advanced rapidly and within 3 days (28 June) Seoul fell.

Meanwhile on 27 June 1950, United Nations convened and passed a resolution 83 which authorised the member states to provide military assistance to South Korea. On the same day, US President Harry Truman authorised the use of US force to liberate South Korea. The war was now fought between United Nations forces {which were predominantly American} and North Korea's Korean People's Army (KPA).

The decisive battle in this war was **Battle of Inchon (1950)**, which was an amphibious assault at the port of Inchon. The battle resulted in a decisive victory and strategic reversal in favor of the United Nations. The operation involved some 75,000 troops and 261 naval vessels, and led to the recapture of the South Korean capital of Seoul two weeks later.

After the Battle of Inchon, the Chinese forces intervened to assist the struggling KPA. Chinese were able to give a series of defeats to UN forces. United Nations and South Korean forces were commanded by General of the Army Douglas MacArthur of the United States Army. MacArthur had increasingly called for an aggressive approach and advances into North Korea, and even into China. However, his boss Truman wanted a cautious approach. In 1951, MacArthur was relieved from the job and Korean War was settled into a stalemate around the 38th parallel.

Since neither side was unable to gain advantage, a **Korean Armistice Agreement** was reached on July 27, 1953. The agreement resulted in a ceasefire, the exchange of prisoners of war (POWs), and the establishment of a Demilitarized Zone (DMZ).

We note here that technically, the Korea War is never over because no official peace treaty was ever signed. Interestingly, North Korea maintains they won the war. Occasionally, small-scale conflicts continue to erupt along the DMZ.

In North Korea, the Communist dictator Kim Il Sung established collective farms, developed heavy industry, and built up the country's military power. At Kim's death in 1994, his son Kim Jong Il ascended to power. Under Kim Jong Il's rule, Communist North Korea developed nuclear weapons. Although the country is well-armed, it has serious economic problems. It continues to struggle with shortages of energy and food. On the other hand, South Korea prospered, thanks to massive aid from the United States and other countries. In the 1960s, South Korea concentrated on developing its industry and boosting foreign trade. A succession of dictatorships ruled the rapidly developing country. With the 1987 adoption of a democratic constitution, however, South Korea established free elections. During the 1980s and early 1990s, South Korea claimed one of the highest economic growth rates in the world. Political differences keep the two Koreas apart, despite periodic



discussions of reuniting the country. In a show of force in 1996, for example, North Korea sent troops into the demilitarized zone that separates the two nations. And the United States still maintains large troops in South Korea. In 1997, however, South Korea joined several other countries in sending food to North Korea. Although talks continue, the Communist North Koreans remain firmly opposed to reunification.

Hungarian Uprising / Hungarian Revolution of 1956

Since 1945, Hungary was controlled by Soviet Union. Thousands of Russian troops and hundreds of Tanks were deployed, and it was a kind of rule by force. The Hungarian leader Rakosi was a stooge of Stalin of Russia. The people from Hungary wanted freedom from Soviet and Stalin's death in 1953 gave them some hope.

In 1956, the new Russian leader Khrushchev made criticized the harsh policies of Stalin. This was followed by resignation of Rakosi was forced to resign. However, Hungarians expected something better than this. The bad harvest, fuel shortage and cold weather prepared a recipe for a revolution. In October 1956, the students, workers and soldiers attacked the Russian soldiers and smashed the statue of Stalin. In the same month, Imre Nagy took over as prime minister and asked Khrushchev to move Russian troops out. Khrushchev agreed and Russian army pulled out of Budapest in same month.

For five days, there was a freedom in Hungary. The new government in Hungary introduced democracy, freedom of speech and freedom of religion. On 3 November 1956, Imre Nagy announced that they would leave the Warsaw Pact. However, Russia would not let this happen. He claimed that he received a letter from communist leaders of Hungary seeking help.

On the very next day, some 1000 Russian Tanks rolled into Budapest and destroyed the Hungarian army; captured Hungarian Radio. The Hungarian civilians including children fought with Russians and got killed in thousands. Khrushchev put the Russian supporter Janos Kadar as new prime minister.

Causes of the Hungarian Revolution

- Khrushchev's policy of 'de-Stalinisation' caused problems in many Eastern European Communist countries, where people hated the hard-line Stalinist regimes that Russia had put in place. There was also trouble in Poland in 1956, and Khrushchev had to send in Russian troops.
- The Hungarians were patriotic, and they hated Russian control, especially:
 - The secret police called the AVH in Hungary.
 - Russian control of the economy, which had made Hungary poor.



- Russian control of what the schools taught.
- Censorship and lack of freedom.
- The Hungarians were religious, but the Communist Party had banned religion, and imprisoned Cardinal Mindszenty.
- Hungarians thought that the United Nations or the new US president, Eisenhower, would help them.

Effects of the Hungarian Revolution

- Repression in Hungary – thousands of Hungarians were arrested and imprisoned. Some were executed and 200,000 Hungarian refugees fled to Austria.
- Russia stayed in control behind the Iron Curtain – no other country tried to get rid of Russia troops until Czechoslovakia in 1968.
- Polarisation of the Cold War – people in the West were horrified – many Communists left the Communist Party – and Western leaders became more determined to contain communism

Role of Europe and America in Hungarian Revolution

Europe and America could do nothing except offering moral support and condemnation of Russia during this event. There were several reasons for the same. *Firstly*, the Geographical location of Hungary was such that any support to it could not be given without entering into a full-fledged war with Soviet. *Secondly*, Hungary was a member of Warsaw Pact. *Thirdly*, any economic blockade of Soviet Union would not be successful because it was already getting what it needed from territories it occupied. Last but not the least, west was more occupied in Suez Crisis (1956) which occurred almost same time, and was more relevant for Britain, US and France. Thus, they used their resources to that crisis instead to alleviate the sufferings of Hungary.

Warsaw Pact

The Soviet Union viewed NATO as a threat. In response, the Soviets developed an alliance system in 1955 as part of their own containment policy. It was known as the *Warsaw Pact*. This alliance included the Soviet Union, Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, and Albania. Not every country joined the new alliances, however. India, for example, chose to remain unallied with either side. And China, the world's largest communist country, came to distrust the Soviet Union. Like India, it remained unallied.

The pact was signed in Poland in 1955 and was officially called '*The Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation and Mutual Assistance*'. It was a military treaty, which bound its signatories to come to the aid of the others, should any one of them be the victim of foreign aggression.



Initially, it was stressed that the Warsaw treaty was based on total equality of each member but soon it became a powerful political tool for the Soviet Union to hold sway over its allies and harness the powers of their combined military. When Hungary tried to leave Warsaw pact, it was crushed. Similarly, in 1968, the Soviet troops invaded Czechoslovakia (with support from five other Pact members), after the Czech government began to exhibit 'Imperialistic' tendencies.

Following the diminishing power of the USSR in the 1980s and the eventual fall of Communism, Warsaw Pact became redundant. It was officially dissolved in Prague in 1991 after many countries withdrew from it.

Suez Crisis (1956)

Suez Canal had opened in 1869 connecting the Mediterranean and Red Seas. Initially, it was a private organization co-owned by French Investors and government in Egypt. However, in 1875, Egypt sold its shares to Britain. Though Suez Canal was primarily a commercial venture, Britain secured permission from Egypt to maintain a military presence in the Canal Zone just for the sake of reinforcing its status as World's supreme naval power.

In 1952, Egyptian monarch King Farouk was overthrown by a bunch of disgruntled army officers led by Lieutenant General Muhammad Naguib. This is called the **Egyptian Revolution of 1952**.

General Muhammad Naguib led this revolution along with **Gamal Abdel Nasser**. But later, there were disagreements between Naguib and Nasser and this led to Naguib's forced removal from office.

From June 1956 to 28 September 1970, **Gamal Abdel Nasser** remained the second president of Egypt. During this period, while Naguib remained in jail, Nasser emerged as a charismatic leader of not only Egypt but also the Arab world. He was not only instrumental in the establishment of the Non-Aligned Movement but was also known for his nationalist policies and version of **Arabic Socialism** which is also known as **Nasserism**.

In the advocacy of his pan-Arab nationalism, Nasser took steps to strengthen his own country's position in world, and accepting aid from any side if it would benefit some of his goals, regardless of who may become anger of these. Apart from that, in 1954, he brokered a seven-year treaty removing Britain's military presence from the Canal Zone. He also cut off Israeli shipping through the Suez Canal and the Straits of Tiran; and supported rebels fighting French colonial forces in Algeria. Moreover, he bought weapons from both Britain and the USSR as his troops engaged in sporadic conflict with Israeli forces along their border.

In 1956, USA had agreed to give a loan to Egypt for construction of Aswan Dam on Nile River. The objective was to stop Soviet Influence in the region and increase US influence. However, within 6



months, USA backed out from the deal and prompted Britain and the World Bank also to withdraw their loans.

The furious president Nasser, seeing an opportunity to assert his independence from the colonial empires, announced that Egypt was taking over the Suez Canal and would use its income to finance construction of his dam. He was backed by Soviets and his own people.

Meanwhile, British Prime Minister Sir Anthony Eden quickly organized an international conference to find a diplomatic solution to the problem. They offered Egypt a seat on the board of the Suez Canal Company, among other concessions. Nasser refused. The United States made its own proposal to the United Nations, creating a new international consortium to operate the canal. The Soviet Union vetoed it.

European nations recalled how appeasement had led directly to World War II and didn't want to make that same mistake again. Britain was ready to deal with Nasser by force, but the United States would not condone unjustified military action. So Britain, France and Israel secretly agreed on a plan. Israel would attack, and as soon as the battle was within ten miles of the water, Britain and France would 'intervene' and seize the canal to protect it from the fighting. They also hoped to depose Nasser, while Israel wanted rights of passage through the waterways.

The Suez Crisis Unfolds

Israel attacked first on October 29, 1956. A few days later, Britain and France entered the fray. By the morning of November 6, British and French troops had successfully invaded the Canal Zone. Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev threatened nuclear strikes on Europe if the hostilities did not end immediately. Canada's Prime Minister Lester Pearson desperately tried to intervene, to no avail. Till now US was in background, but after the Soviet threat of Nuclear strike, US jumped into fray and new US President Eisenhower reacted to this as that "*if those fellows start something, we may have to hit 'em—and, if necessary, with everything in the bucket.*"

However, the position of United States was delicate. Britain was a strong ally, but Eisenhower had distanced himself from European colonial conflicts throughout his re-election campaign. Yet, he was clearly concerned about the Soviet Union; just a few days before the Suez Crisis, the US had condemned Soviet intervention in a Hungarian revolt. Eisenhower had no desire to see Soviet influence spread into the Middle East.

Although British military advisors assured Prime Minister Eden that they would control the entire length of the canal within 24 hours, he backed down. His economy was slipping and America wouldn't help, and public support even within Britain was deeply divided. Eden called a ceasefire the night of November 6. British and French forces withdrew in December, and Israel fell back in



March. In the meantime, the first United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) was authorized and deployed to the region. By 1957, the occupation of Suez Canal ended.

Implications of 1956 Suez Crisis

There were several far reaching outcomes of Suez Crisis. *Firstly*, despite his military defeat, Egyptian President Nasser was a hero in the Arab world – the man who had called the bluff of the imperial powers. His nation won operational control of the Suez Canal, although he had to pay reparations. *Secondly*, Soviet Premier Khrushchev was emboldened, writing in his memoirs that nuclear brinkmanship was a successful tool against Western powers. He also avoided serious repercussions for his actions in Hungary and strengthened Soviet influence in the Middle East. *Thirdly*, France and Britain were humiliated, showing that they were no longer world powers, and rapidly lost control of their remaining colonies in the coming years. In reality, this crisis gave a final blow to Britain's self-image as a world's mightiest naval power. British Prime Minister Eden resigned, but in his memoirs, claimed he had averted a much larger crisis in the Middle East in which Egypt planned to invade Israel while the Soviet Union invaded Syria. *Fourthly*, Israel regained access to the Straits of Tiran. But historians point to the lack of a distinct peace treaty as paving the way for the 1967 Six Day War between Israel and three Arab neighbors.

Fifthly, the United States Congress approved the so called **Eisenhower Doctrine**. This provided funding and presidential authority to assist Middle East nations fighting Soviet influence. The U.S. also improved its relationship with Egypt.

Aftermath

UN peacekeepers remained in Egypt for nearly a decade, until expelled by Nasser on the eve of his next invasion of Israel.

Cuban Missile Crisis

The Cuban Missile Crisis (called October Crisis in Cuba and Caribbean Crisis in Russia) was a 13 day standoff among the Soviet Union, Cuba and the United States in October 1962, during the Cold War. The crisis started when in October 1962, the American spy planes took photographs of what appeared to be mobile missile launchers in remote areas of Cuba (only 90 kilometers from Florida). Upon analysis, it was found that the missiles on the launchers were Soviet made medium range ballistic missiles (MRBMs). These missiles could be launched without warning and to any strike target in United States. United States perceived it as a threat.

Background

There was a revolution in 1959 in Cuba. The much hated dictator, **Fulgencio Batista** was overthrown and was replaced by **Fidel Castro** in this revolution. While Batista was a strong ally of



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United States, his successor was seen with suspicion by US. This suspicion was confirmed on Dec. 19, 1960, when Castro openly aligned with the Soviet Union. Thus, a communist ally of Soviet was on doorstep of United States.

United States had earlier declared to not to intervene in internal matters of Cuba. However, later US president Kennedy backed out of this stand. In April 1961, around 1400 Cuban exiles {the anti-communists who had fled when Castro took over} landed at the coast of Cuba at a place called **Bay of Pigs** trained and armed by US Central Intelligence Agency. The mission of Cuban exiles was to lead a popular uprising against Castro.

However, what happened was a fiasco and embarrassment for Kennedy administration. The Cuban military stopped the exiles cold; most were captured sent back to the United States. This made Castro a folk Hero in Cuba and Kennedy had to accept the responsibility of all the mess.

By 1962, the situation was tense. There was a mass proliferation of nuclear weapons and a newly communist Cuba was sitting with missiles right off America's shore.

US President faced a difficult time and choice. If he did nothing, then Soviets under **Nikita Khrushchev** would be convinced that he had backed down, and they could advance their gains in other areas. If he did what many in US military wanted, which was to invade Cuba outright and finish the job from two years earlier, it would certainly mean war; and the Soviets had promised a full retaliatory response, which would involve nuclear weapons. The situation got much more complicated after finding the missiles could reach anywhere in the continental United States.

Key Events

On October 20, 1962, US President Kennedy and his advisors call for a **quarantine** of Cuba, in which the US Navy would block the coast and prevent any ship from reaching port. This would stop any new missiles from reaching Cuba, but it wouldn't remove the ones already there. This was technically not an act of war (the word 'quarantine' was used since 'blockade' would be an act of war), so Kennedy could claim that he wasn't escalating the conflict.

On October 22, 1962, Kennedy announced the quarantine of Cuba on television. The US military forces were moved to DEFCON 3 {DEFCON refers to the 'global defense condition'; DEFCON 5 is peace, DEFCON 1 is active war}.

On October 23, US Navy ships took position on the 'quarantine line,' 800 miles from Cuba. Kennedy received a letter from Khrushchev calling the situation 'a serious threat to peace and security. However, the **Organization of American States** (OAS), a group of Latin American nations and the US, approved the quarantine, giving Kennedy some legal justification for his actions.

On October 24, the Soviet ships en route to Cuba begin to slow down or change course. U.S. military



forces go to DEFCON 2.

On October 25, Kennedy sent a letter to Khrushchev in which he claimed the USSR is responsible for the current crisis. The President's advisors come up with a possible way out of the standoff: the US would remove nuclear missiles from Turkey, an ally nation, which were 'due for replacement,' in exchange for Soviet removal of the missiles in Cuba. These missiles in Turkey had been seen by the USSR as a threatening presence, similar, in their view, to the Cuba missiles. However, Kennedy was concerned that if US removes the missiles, the Soviets might believe that they could try similar attempts at blackmail in the future.

On October 26, the CIA reported that the Soviets seem to be accelerating their construction of missile sites in Cuba and are now trying to camouflage the missile launchers. At the same time, a letter arrived from Khrushchev in which the Soviets pledge to dismantle the missiles in exchange for an American pledge never to invade Cuba.

On October 27, a second letter from Khrushchev arrived, now insisting on a trade for missiles: US missiles in Turkey for the Soviet missiles in Cuba. Kennedy's advisors worry that Khrushchev may have been overthrown by elements in his own government. The same day, an American plane was shot down over Cuban airspace by a Soviet missile. The Soviets claim it was an error. At the same time, another US plane accidentally violated Soviet airspace near Alaska.

On October 27, **Robert Kennedy**, the Attorney-General and the President's brother, met with **Anatoly Dobrynin**, the Soviet ambassador to the US and told him that US government will pledge not to invade Cuba, and that the missiles in Turkey will be removed within six months. Also, if any information about this pledge leaked prior to the six-month deadline, the Kennedy administration would deny the deal.

On October 28, Khrushchev announced, over Radio Moscow, that he has agreed to remove the missiles from Cuba.

Conclusion

The Cuban missile crisis was a diplomatic triumph for the Kennedy administration and an embarrassment for the Soviet leadership. The only major concession by both sides, after the crisis, was the creation of a 'hotline' phone link between the two capitals, to ensure direct communication between the two nations' leaders in the future. The degree, to which this form of **brinkmanship** may have encouraged future aggressive military action by the U.S., particularly in Vietnam later that same decade, is a matter of considerable debate by historians.

End of the Cold War

The Key events that led to end of Cold War are discussed as follows:



Detente and easing of tension

Detente or a relaxation of tension, in the relations between the two super powers was a new development in the cold war during the period 1969 to 1978. This phase in the cold war was crucial for the future shaping of international politics since this phase witnessed a better understanding of the two super powers' compulsions and necessities in a faction-ridden world. Hence it led to a spirit of compromise and gave both a respite from confrontation. Relations between the USA and USSR appeared relaxed and normal with an increasing number of mutual visits, cultural exchanges, trade agreements and cooperative technological ventures. Undoubtedly, the spirit of detente was the handiwork of President Richard Nixon of the USA and his national security adviser Henry A. Kissinger. It was enthusiastically responded to by the Soviet leadership.

Collapse of detente

The decade of detente, however, was abruptly shattered in 1979 and there was a return to the old habit of confrontation rather than accommodation. International developments with grave consequences for the future coincided in 1979. The Iranian Revolution of 1979, the Kampuchean crisis lead to the Sino-Vietnamese war of 1979, the US involvement in El Salvador and finally the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979 {discussed in next module} gave an ominous pointer that something had gone terribly wrong somewhere. While the Americans came to suspect the Russians of trying to impose communist dictatorship in different parts of the world the Russians were convinced of a sinister American campaign to destabilise the Soviet Union. All this and many more were a perfect recipe for the beginning of Cold War II.

Revival of Detente Gorbachev's contribution

Though many interpreted the end of detente and the beginning of Cold War II would eventually lead to the outbreak of the Third global war, it was a great boon for mankind that the new cold war did not last long and the process of detente revived during the early eighties of the twentieth century. The credit for restarting the process of discussion and understanding undoubtedly goes to the new Soviet leadership that came to power in 1985. Milhail Gorbachev reversed the 'historical process of confrontation between the U.S.A. and the USSR and sought to replace it by a spirit of conciliation and coexistence. Gorbachev realised that the Soviet Union faced an economic breakdown of an unparalleled magnitude and that it could no longer afford a confrontation with the United States. In his view, the US had clearly emerged victor in the military and economic fields, and for the Soviet Union to survive, it had to integrate itself with all other leading economics of the world, particularly the United States. Gorbachev thus presented a "*new political thinking*" to the world which emphasised integration rather than annihilation. The first reaction of the United States was one of scepticism and suspicion, but soon the US and the west realised Gorbachev's sincerity of purpose.



Soviet-U.S. Understanding the INF Treaty

The earliest evidence of the gradual defusion of the cold war is to be witnessed in the revival of the summit level talks between Ronald Reagan, the American President and Gorbachev. The talks that had been discontinued in the wake of the Afghanistan crisis of 1979 were resumed in November 1985. The world leadership saw in Gorbachev a man committed to peace and peaceful coexistence, which only could lead to the realisation of the idea of a global family. Since November 1985, a series of Russo-American summits were held which created conditions conducive to cordial relations between the two. These talks led to a reduction of the arms race and created a healthy atmosphere for the signing of the Geneva Accords in 1987 leading to the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. The high watermark of the revival of the spirit of detente was marked by the signing of 'the most significant treaty on nuclear disarmament. The Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces [INF] Treaty signed in 1987 gave a tremendous boost to nuclear disarmament -since for the first time in the history of post-war disarmament a specific nuclear weapon was eliminated forever.

The 'end of cold war

The signing of the INF Treaty ironically enough coincided with the collapse of communism in East Europe. One after the other Soviet satellite states in Eastern Europe discarded communism and opted for new regimes which were not under the control of Moscow. The Soviet Union itself under dire economic crisis was unable to stem the rot while its empire disintegrated fast and forever. The victory of communism in Russia in 1917 had engendered the cold war and with its collapse, which was marked by the withering away of the communist East European bloc in 1989, it became all too apparent that the cold war had ended. The end to the fifty year long cold war was marked by, the signing of the historic Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty [START] between Gorbachev and President George Bush [Senior]. It pledged the reduction of their strategic nuclear arsenals by about 30 per cent. In December 1991, the Soviet Union, the only other super power to challenge the United States throughout the period of the cold war, disintegrated and the vast Soviet Union was fragmented to numerous independent states. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics [USSR] ceased to exist and in its place was born the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS]. The year 1991 also witnessed an event of immeasurable consequences when that hateful relic of the cold war – the Berlin Wall- was dismantled. It signified not only the reunion of [Communist] East Germany with West Germany, but also symbolised the reunion of Europe. In February 1992, President Bush and the President of the Russian Federation, Boris Yeltsin formally declared an end to the cold war. Not a drop of blood had been shed, yet the fifty-year old cold war had come to an end. It indeed marked a triumph for American Foreign Policy. The disintegration of the Warsaw pact, brought into existence in 1955 as a counterpart of NATO, was an unmistakable pointer to the fact that, the cold war had indeed ended.



suraj_winner | rajawat.rs.surajsingh@gmail.com | www.gktoday.in/upsc/ias-general-studies

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Modern World History-6: Select Events of 20th Century

[Integrated IAS General Studies:2016-17](#)

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Model Questions

1. To what extent, the Treaty Of Versailles was responsible for the Great Depression? What were implications of World War-II on the same? Examine.
2. Discuss the impacts of the Great Depression upon British India.
3. “We are not going to join a war if we can help it: we are going to join the side which is to our interest when the time comes to make the choice.” Do you think that Nehru was able to achieve this objective? Discuss.
4. It is always alleged that despite its policy of Non-alignment, India could not keep herself non-aligned practically as it moved closer to USSR and became its ally. Why did this happen? Was it a failure of Nehru’s dogma?
5. Discuss the circumstances in which USA entered into Vietnam War. What factors led US to sink further and further into this conflict?
6. Discuss the importance of Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution Decade in context with China’s history in 20th century.
7. What role was played by policies of Glasnost and Perestroika upon fate of USSR in later half of 20th century? Discuss while elucidating their meaning.
8. Why is Crimea so important for Russia that Putin used military intervention when he knew that he would be inviting harsh criticism and could be tagged as aggressor? Discuss.

The Great Depression (1929-1940)

Depression is commonly defined as a severe and prolonged downturn in economic activity. It is a sustained recession lasting for two or more years. A depression is usually characterized by high unemployment rates, drop in available credit, bankruptcies, diminishing trade and commerce, volatility in currency values, and sovereign debt defaults.

The Great Depression

The Great Depression is regarded as the greatest and longest economic recession of the 20th century and according to some in the whole modern world history. After years of prosperity, U.S. fell into depression, which soon engulfed nearly the whole world. After a short depression of 1920-21, the US economy experienced a robust growth accompanied by an unprecedented asset price growth and increased money supply due to the relatively new Federal Reserve System.

Black Thursday

The Great Depression owes its beginning to the U.S. stock market crash on October 24, 1929, also known as Black Thursday. The depression reached Europe with the collapse of the Boden-KreditAnstalt, which was the most important bank of Austria in 1931.



Potential causes

The Great Depression was caused by a combination of several factors.

Rampant investor speculation on the stock market

Stock market speculations were rampant in the US throughout the 1920s. Many investors purchased massive shares of stocks financed mainly through the loans. They anticipated a rise in stock prices so that they can pay back their loans while left with a net profit. They shared their methods and encouraged others to follow suit. With the influx of more money, the stock market became too saturated. With market saturation, creditors who supplied loans to the investors started demanding repayment of loan money. This led to a widespread loan defaults and as a result the whole financial structure of the United States crumbled.

Over-availability of consumer credit

The 1920s experienced a boom in the durable consumer goods, such as vacuum cleaners, refrigerators, radios, and automobiles in the U.S. But most of the Americans were not able to afford these goods. As a result, the banks and businesses stepped in to offer credit to the people for buying these goods. Over time, many Americans were unable to pay back their loans and defaulted on them. The matter became worse when the Federal Reserve Board curtailed the credit and raised the interest rates on current consumers. As a result of this misguided decision, Americans struggled a lot to pay for the goods and items.

Treaty of Versailles

Treaty of Versailles which ended the World War I between Germany and the Allied powers, impoverished Germany. The harsh conditions imposed on Germany made it owe extremely high debts. To pay off the debt, the country borrowed from the United Kingdom, which in turn paid Germany by borrowing from the United States of America. This arrangement created an environment wherein all the European nations became dependent on the United States of America. Many countries financed their investments through the loans provided by the US. In the first half of 1928, the overseas loans of US were roughly \$1 billion. Eventually, with the collapse of stock markets, America stopped providing loans to foreign nations and thus leading to a global depression.

Agricultural overproduction

Agricultural overproduction accompanied with falling agricultural prices remained a problem. As the prices fell, the agricultural income also fell. This made farmers to produce even more and bring a larger volume of produce to the market in order to maintain their overall income. This move pushed the prices further down.

Ill-conceived Policies

Economists agree that the ill-conceived policies and events that took shape in 1930s in both the U.S. and the Europe were responsible for prolonging the Great Depression. The policies followed by the



Presidents Harding, Coolidge and Hoover had general disregard for the American economy. For instance, President Hoover's policies damaged the economy's ability to adjust and reallocate resources.

First World War

Some people also consider that the first world is also a reason for the depression. According to them, the post war period caused deflation due to the excessive manufacturing activities carried out during the First World War. This resulted in the pile up of huge stocks of unused items. In addition, the wartime expenditure impoverished many European countries.

Impacts of Great Depression

The depth and impacts of the Great Depression are shocking. By the twentieth century, the global economy became integrated so much so that the impact of the crisis in one part of the world was able to quickly spread to the other parts of the world, affecting lives, economies and societies.

Impacts on America

The US was the most severely affected industrial country.

- The employment rate in the US declined from 3.2% in 1929 to 24.9% in 1933. Despite huge government spending under both Hoover and Roosevelt administrations, the unemployment rate continued to remain high.
- Real GDP started to decline and was below 1929 levels.
- US banks curtailed their domestic lending and called back loans. Ultimately, the US banking system itself got collapsed as they were not able to recover the investments and loans. They went bankrupt and many banks were closed down. It is estimated that around 4,000 banks closed down by 1933 and 110,000 companies collapsed between 1929 and 1932.
- The consumerist prosperity of 1920s disappeared, and many people were forced to give up their homes, cars and consumer durables.
- Farmers were unable to sell off their produce and the businesses collapsed.
- The negative effects of the depression also affected the society, politics, and international relations.

Impact on rest of the world

Although the timing and impact varied, the Great depression left most parts of the world with catastrophic declines in production, employment, incomes and trade. In general, the agricultural regions and communities were the most affected due to the prolonged fall in agricultural prices.

The withdrawal of US loans adversely impacted many countries of the world. Those countries which depended on US loans faced a huge crisis. In Europe, it led to bank failures and collapse of currencies such as the British pound sterling. In Latin America, widespread slump was experienced in



agriculture and raw material prices. Making the matters even worse, the US imposed hefty import duties to protect its economy. This also dealt a severe blow to the world trade.

Impact on British India

International trade

The colonial government had transformed India into an exporter of agricultural goods and importer of manufactures by the 19th century. The depression had halved the India's exports and imports between 1928 and 1934.

Farmers

As international prices slumped, prices in India also slumped. The peasants and farmers faced a huge loss and the worst affected were the jute producers of Bengal. But, the colonial government refused to reduce its revenue demands. As a result, peasant indebtedness across India increased. To pay back their debts, Indians began exporting precious metals like gold and as per the famous economist John Maynard Keynes, Indiangold exports promoted global economic recovery. This is especially true for the speedy recovery of Britain.

Urban dwellers

The depression became a boon for the Indian urban dwellers with fixed incomes. They found themselves better off as everything cost less. It is estimated that the price decline from late 1929 to October 1931 was 36% in India as compared to 27 % in the UK and 26% in the US.

Industrial investments

The government, under pressure was forced to extend tariff protection to industries. This led to increase in industrial investments.

Economic policies of the colonial government

The colonial government intensified its existing imperialistic economic policies. The policies adopted were aimed at protecting the Britain's economy. For instance, UK adopted a protective policy prohibiting imports from India. These policies caused widespread poverty among the Indian masses. In these situations, the most recommended approach would be to devalue the currency. The depression affected countries like Australia, New Zealand, Brazil, and Denmark reduced their exchange value of their currency. But, the colonial government in India refused to do so. Also, instead of increasing the government expenditure, the government was more interested in accumulating wealth.

Establishment of the Central bank

The narrow-minded policies followed by the colonial government were hugely criticized from all the parts of the country. With the intensifying national struggle and protests, the government was made to concede some of the demands of the nationalists. This led to the establishment of a central bank. Subsequently, the Reserve Bank of India Act in 1934 and the central bank came into existence on



April 1, 1935.

World War II and the depression

The economy of the US rebounded after it entered into the Second World War. Some economists believe that the active engagement of the US in the World War II increased the industrial and labour production. The war increased the demand for setting up of new industries. The US government also founded the Defense Plant Corporation (DPC) in 1940. According to some estimates, with the setting up of DPC, the government spending accounted for the 67% of the US capital investment. In one stroke, the government made available the necessary manufacturing and infrastructure capacity and lead the country out of the depression. The private capital investments once again found a place to be profitably invested. The Aerospace and other important sectors developed during this period continued to boom even after the World War II.

However, some economists do not approve of this view and they believe that the depression could have very well ended even in the absence increased military production.

Non-Alignment Movement

After 1945, the international scenario underwent major political changes. A very important development with immense consequences for the future was the growth of a number of liberation movements that gained momentum in Asia and Africa. The birth of so many independent nations in Asia and Africa implied a retreat of imperialism and a collapse of colonialism, which for centuries had oppressed millions and had kept them in bondage. After winning freedom: from the colonisers, leaders of Asian and African countries consciously responded to the new international developments which were characterised by the bitter cold war, competitive bloc politics, strategies of military alliances and neo-colonialism.

However, it was in the context of cold war politics that non-alignment was proclaimed as an alternative to big power rivalry and competition. The newly emerging Afro-Asian nations were categorised as third world countries which were either developing or underdeveloped, found they had a common interest in peace and disarmament. They considered peace and disarmament extremely essential for their economic development and nation building. It was rightly perceived that any involvement in the arms race and bloc competition would have perpetuated underdevelopment, and the foremost task of national reconstruction would have suffered a, set back.

Jawaharlal Nehru's contribution to NAM

It was evident that the policy of non-alignment was *anti-cold war* and *pro-development and freedom*. Though the concept of non-alignment gained currency in 1955 at the Bandung conference, it was enunciated by the Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as early as September 7, 1946, in a broadcast over All



India Radio. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the doctrine of non-alignment was in every sense a brain-child of Pandit Nehru. He had no doubt whatsoever in his mind about what free India should do while stepping on to the world stage. But for Nehru, nonalignment might not have been India's inevitable choice as foreign policy. Thus, the essence of non-alignment – steering clear of the two power blocs, judging each issue on merit and maximising one's options by maintaining good relations with both the super Powers – was dear from Nehru's words as well as deeds. Nehru further emphasised that non-alignment was not to be misunderstood as “neutralism” as was being done by United States. He pointed out sharply that whereas neutralism was a passive concept, non-alignment was a “positive and dynamic one”. In a speech delivered in the United States, Nehru declared that “*where aggression takes place or freedom is threatened, India cannot and shall not be neutral*”.

Almost instantly his doctrine was accepted and adopted by all other countries which were emerging from the bane of colonialism to the boon of freedom.

Bandung Conference, 1955

The Bandung Conference was a meeting of Asian and African states, which took place on April 18–24, 1955 in Bandung, Indonesia. The conference was organised by Indonesia, Burma, Pakistan, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), and India. The conference's stated aims were to promote Afro-Asian economic and cultural cooperation and to oppose colonialism or neo-colonialism by any nation. The conference was an important step toward the Non-Aligned Movement. However, NAM was formally launched at Belgrade Conference, 1961.

Belgrade Conference (1961) and Launch of NAM

As a movement, however, non-alignment was formally launched at the Belgrade conference in 1961. The movement indeed was a Post-war development when the Cold war dominated international Politics and the World was divided into two Power blocs. Newly born Countries of Asia and Africa rightly visualised the dangers to their hard won independence in aligning with either of the two blocs. Involvement in the Cold war would have crippled their social, economic and Political development. The only way to conserve their scarce natural and capital resources for reconstructing their backward economies lay in maintaining a distance from super Power rivalry and the Cold war.

The founding fathers of the Non-Aligned Movement were: Jawaharlal Nehru of India, Sukarno of Indonesia, Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia, Gamal Abdul Nasser of Egypt and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana. Their actions were known as ‘*The Initiative of Five*’. Later, the idea gathered much support and popularity and within a span of three decades, the movement which started with only 25 members at Belgrade, rose to more than four times that number. Thus, non-alignment, as a foreign policy option for most new nations, and as an international movement, remained a potent factor in contemporary



international relations for many years.

Basic Premises of NAM Movement

The basic premise of the NAM revolves round 4Ds viz. Decolonisation; Development, Detente and Disarmament. Anti-colonialism undoubtedly was the fundamental thrust of the movement since liberation from colonial rule and imperial stranglehold could ultimately lead to the independence of numerous Afro-Asian nations. The process of decolonisation could be successful only when socio-economic development of the newly born countries would, become a reality. Such development was possible in an atmosphere of detente or an understanding between the two super Powers when peace could prevail. Detente would lead to disarmament and when the arms race would end, world peace would prosper. To sum up, the struggle for world peace, anti colonialism -and positive intervention to influence world events for the extension of the areas of peace and freedom are essential components of the concept of non-alignment. In an inspired moment, the Indian Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi described NAM as the 'largest peace movement in the world.'

Objectives of NAM in dynamic geopolitics

In the initial years, the main planks of NAM included *nationalism and opposition to military alliances* such as NATO, CENTO, SEATO, Warsaw Pact etc. It opposed cold war, called for disarmament, and called for settlements of disputes through negotiations.

In 1970s, as the *detente* between super powers was becoming effective, the major concerns of NAM were economic freedom and development. This was also a time for emergence of dangers of neo-colonialism and the NAM countries gave a bold call for a New International Economic Order {NIEO} which would mark fall of neo-colonialism. When detente collapsed by the end of the seventies and the New cold war was suspected to begin, the NAM countries found themselves in very critical situation. By that time, most NAM countries were forced by circumstances to choose between the super powers. This development intensified the regional conflicts and dangers to freedom of many countries. By eighties, the NAM countries besides attempting to peaceful settlements of regional disputes such as Iran-Iraq war, Afghanistan Crisis, Kampuchean Conflict etc. also made plea to hold arms control talks. NAM also demanded early end of racialism and apartheid in South Africa. The early nineties witnessed a great transition in global geopolitics. Communism collapsed in the Soviet Union and East Europe and their bloc vanished and with that military alliances disintegrated, ideological factors receded to the background and the cold war came to an end. In the changed circumstance it was felt that NAM had outlived its utility in the post-cold war era. There were proposals to change NAM Movement to Third World movement. But in the Jakarta Conference of 1992 it was reiterated that though political struggle was over with the end of the cold war, NAM's



economic struggle would continue.

Achievements of NAM

- The most important achievement of NAM movement was that it initiated an active international struggle for global peace at height of cold war and militarism. It played significant role in prevention of some of the regional conflicts and also made efforts towards end of cold war.
- Since NAM had greater acceptance among the newly emerging independent nations, it prevented bipolarisation of world to great extent.
- It's clear call to end colonialism and dismantle the imperialism led people of different colonized countries demand for right of self determination and end of all kinds of neo-colonialism. It also paced up the decolonization of the world. NAM countries made bold calls to end all racial discrimination and apartheid in South Africa leading ultimately to the triumph of the African National Congress under the leadership of Nelson Mandela.
- One of the most outstanding contributions of the NAM was its consistent support for strengthening the United Nations Organisation. On the basis of their numerical strength, the non-aligned countries exercised a considerable influence on the decisions of the General Assembly. These countries have supported UN in all of its peace-keeping efforts in different parts of the world.
- The countries campaigned for general recognition for a *New International Economic Order* {NIEO} based on political and economic equality.
- NAM had also successfully ended the monopoly of western agencies over the news dissemination services. Western control over mass media led to the projection of a distorted image of non-aligned third world countries. But with the setting up of a non-aligned Newspool such distortions have been greatly rectified. This indeed was a great achievement.

NAM Movement and India

NAM Movement had special significance for India. The phrase “non-aligned” was first used by V K Krishna Menon at the United Nations General Assembly in 1953 and by Jawahar Lal Nehru in 1956. But as early as in late 1940s, Nehru had spelt out the strategy behind the phrase, first in Constituent Assembly debates and later in Parliament. In a radio broadcast in 1946, Nehru said, “*We shall take full part in international conferences as a free nation with our own policy and not merely as a satellite of another nation.*”

Thus, via NAM Movement, India propagated her passion for peace and cooperation *rather than war or confrontation.*



Via Nonalignment, Nehru proposed that India should avoid entering into “other people’s quarrels”, unless, and this is important and “our interest is involved”. Nehru once said that “*We should either be strong enough to produce some effect or we should not interfere at all*”, which demonstrates a realistic awareness of the limits of India’s ability to influence events. Nehru also did not rule out entering into an alliance if that proved necessary: “*We are not going to join a war if we can help it: we are going to join the side which is to our interest when the time comes to make the choice.*”

The way Jawaharlal Nehru conceived Nonalignment was a strategy and not a doctrine. For Nehru, the non-alignment was a strategy designed to maximise newly independent India’s gains from the world system. Nonalignment did not mean to choose isolation to become a hermit kingdom. Nehru kept the West open for trade and aid, while on the other hand, avoided alienating the two communist powers in India’s immediate neighbourhood, China and the Soviet Union. By adopting a policy to be friendly to all, Nehru hoped to receive critical necessary foreign aid at that time.

However, the following questions arise here:

- *To what extent Nehru was successful in his strategy?*
- *It is always alleged that despite its policy of Non-alignment, India could not keep herself non-aligned practically as it moved closer to USSR and became its ally. Why did this happen? Was it a failure of Nehru’s dogma?*

Nehru had made it clear that India would act in her interests first rather than the interests of Washington, Moscow, or Beijing (Peking). But at that time India needed crucial foreign aid, particularly in terms of food grains. This critical aid actually forced India to approach United States. India was viewed by United States as a weak and backward country which was in dire need of Financial Resources. USA also over expected from India that she would accept the American Line of policy, but Nehru’s policy of Nonalignment and strategic-independence was a different approach. India perhaps over expected from US taking it as a champion of democracy that would support the largest democracy.

Thus, Nehru had first approached the West and it was only after the West refused that, India asked the USSR for its projects such as Steel Units. On the Defense front also, US and UK were often reluctant to sell or extend lines of credit to India.

Nonetheless, the United States remained India’s largest provider of aid (to less propagandistic effect than Soviet aid) throughout the Cold War. In the decade of fifties, India initiated its friendly relationships with USSR. Indian Prime minister’s visit to Russia and return visit of Soviet leaders irked USA. In Late 50s USA came in open support to Pakistan on Kashmir Issue. The chances of bright India-US relations were almost lost and the chances of bright India USSR relations appeared.



By the end of 50's decade, US had started regarding India as a Pro-soviet country.

To sum up, India was fairly successful in receiving aid from both the blocks; and neither took India as a threat. However, India found herself moving closer and closer to the Soviet Union. However, the biggest failure of this policy was the *India's failure to deal with China in 1962*. It was said that India could move closer to US to counter the abject poverty, grim state of economy and problems in foreign trade. However, these were problems of India as a state and not India as a country with independent foreign policy. The failure was not of non-alignment, but of an economy spiralling out of control (the concurrence with the China war/ pushing of India's Five Year Plans off schedule).

Differences among members and challenges for NAM

Since its inception there had been remarkable changes in the world and such changes were bound to have a significant effect on the NAM. The views of later entrants into the movement tended to differ from the perspectives of the founding fathers. Thus within the nonaligned group contradictions began to develop.

Among individual members these have been shifts of emphasis on and implementation of nonalignment. On the other hand, from an initial attitude of hostility by the big powers towards non-alignment, there was a keenness on their part to accept the movement and the super powers even seriously tried to influence the movement.

Following were the specific challenges faced by NAM:

Firstly, though the policy on non-alignment had its general features, it could never be immune from specific national issues. Thus, while a large number of Afro-Asian nonaligned countries viewed threats from western imperialism as a world reality, Yugoslavia in Eastern Europe viewed threats from the Soviet Union as real. Interestingly, within the movement there were countries like Indonesia or Egypt which openly admired the United States while Cuba, a major non-aligned country asserted that the Soviet Union was 'a natural ally' of the non-aligned countries.

Secondly, non-alignment was not only a political or diplomatic response to world affairs; it was also an assertion of independence of the poor countries from the control of the rich and powerful countries. Such an assertion demanded self-reliant economic development. But most NAM countries were facing economic challenges in those times.

Thirdly, NAM countries suffered and faced local / regional wars and undue influence from super powers. The Arab-Israeli conflict, the struggle in Southern Africa and events in Afghanistan intensified big power rivalry, thereby destroying the spirit of detente of the seventies. The behaviour of the big powers had a direct bearing on the policies of developing countries and this put a great burden on functioning of NAM.



Development of nuclear weapons by India, Israel etc. also led to mockery of NAM Movement.

NAM in post-cold war period

It was unable to set the so called New International Order under the auspices of the United Nations; Restructuring and democratisation of the UN by increasing the number of permanent members in the Security Council; Strengthening of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) etc.

In the post-cold war period, the NAM has become almost defunct as most of its foundational ideologies such as national independence, territorial integrity, and the struggle against colonialism and imperialism have become irrelevant after end of colonisation.

Despite, NAM had tried to remain relevant by emphasising on multilateralism, equality, and mutual non-aggression in attempting to become a stronger voice for the *global South* {South-South Cooperation}.

Vietnam War

Vietnam War (1950s to 1970s) was the longest and most polarizing conflict in the history of United States. This conflict was basically a **proxy war** but it took life of some 58,000 American soldiers and 1.5 million Vietnamese. For United States, the war was a complete disaster.

Historical Background

To understand Vietnam War, it is necessary to understand a few events in Indo-China before 1945. Indo-china refers to the *mainland part of South East Asia* and currently, the countries in Indo-China are Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam are part of it. In 19th century, Indo-China comprised of three main bodies of land viz. Cambodia, Laos and Empire of Annam, which consisted of some smaller territories of Tonkin, Annam etc. This region is a potpourri of different cultures and ethnicities. It was known for abundant production of rubber, rice, opium and was located strategically on marine trade routes.

Historically, this region has faced different kinds of foreign invasions. The longest tenure of colonisation in the region was recorded by French {from 19th century till 1954 Geneva Conference}. France had completed conquest of the region by 1870s. At that time, Cambodia, Laos, Annam and Cochin China were part of French Empire. In 20th century, the region suffered badly under French – economic conditions worsened, societal development negligible, infrastructure collapse. In this period, suppression of the Vietnamese also increased.

Struggle of France and Japan over Indochina

At the onset of WW-II, Japan threatened French occupation of Indochina. By 1938, both Japan and France had mobilized forces for control in the region. In 1939, Japan gave an ultimatum to French in



an effort to avert war. The demands of Japan were:

- Termination of French and Chinese relations
- Establishment of Japanese garrisons between French Indochina and China
- Reduction of supplies to China.
- Supply the Japanese forces with war material for operations in the Pacific.

In turn, Japanese agreed to allow France to continue to run the daily operations of Indochina, but under their close supervision. However, since this ultimatum came at a time when WW-II had just begun in Europe, the leaders of French Indochina were left to take their decisions on their own. The local leaders accepted the Japanese conditions and agreed on a joint defense treaty with Japan. This Japanese occupation decimated the Vietnamese. Prices skyrocketed and individuals started getting killed due to starvation {because of shortage of rice which was now used by Japanese forces}, shortage of medicine {this led to increase in smallpox and typhus fever}. Moreover, new taxes were imposed on Vietnamese by the French to raise money for the empire.

French was fearful that Japan would unite all Asians against Europeans. They started a propaganda called “National Revolution” under which they promoted deceptive equality of French and Vietnamese. Vietnamese were deceived into believing that they were societal and political equals. However, those who spoke against the French or refused to adopt French policies were imprisoned. Thus, French further created problems for Vietnamese.

On March 9, 1945, Japan launched a coup against French Government in Indo-China. After a short battle which claimed 4000 lives {of French and Vietnamese}, Japan declared Indo-China free of Western Rule and placed **Bao Dai**, the emperor of Annam in control of new Japanese puppet state. This new state was named *Empire of Vietnam*. The French rule had come to an abrupt end, temporarily.

Opposition by Vietnamese

However, both French and Japanese failed to realize that various ethnic groups that comprised Indo-China had a deep rooted tradition of struggle against odds. The same mistake would be done by America later. In fact, the Vietnamese struggle *represented an ideological struggle* and for them, peace meant a unified Indochina under the leadership of one *native leader*. The initial waves of dissent against both French and Japanese came for religious reasons from Buddhist and Cao Dai sects. However, French had brutally cracked down upon them and suppressed them. Second wave of resistance was led by Vietnamese nationalists, particularly, **Ho Chi Minh**. He sparked a nationalist emotion within the Indo-China. Supported by communist group **Viet Minh** {literally *League for Independence of Vietnam*}, he encouraged Vietnamese to oppose the Franco-Japanese occupation of



their country. The members of Viet Minh distributed anti-French pamphlets, created booklets on conducting guerrilla warfare etc. Viet Minh also created geographical subdivisions called **National Liberation Committees**, headed by nationalists such as Vo Nguyen Giap and Chu Van Tang. They were also able to secure anti-Japan funding from US, USSR and China. It campaigned for a revolution that would bring freedom to Indo-China.

After defeat of Japan in August 1945, the leader Ho declared Indochina an independent republic and forced Bao Dai to abdicate. He subsequently renamed the region as **Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV)**. However, this freedom was short-lived as French regained control soon afterwards.

About Ho Chi Minh

Ho Chi Minh {originally *Nguyen Sinh Cung*} was born in 1890. He was heavily influenced by his father's involvement in the Vietnamese nationalist campaign to win independence from France. His indoctrination in anti-colonial ideas was expanded during his schooling. Instead of completing his education, he embarked on a journey around the world in 1911 and visited US, Britain and France. Appalled by the destruction of WW-I, he sought to remove the Western Influence from Indo-China. In 1919, he had pleaded with Wilson to accept his request for Vietnamese independence from France, but Wilson declined Ho's proposal. Displeased, he started engaging in communist party ideologies and visiting communist nations. He founded the Revolutionary Youth League of Vietnam, which later became Indochinese Communist Party. After two decades of studying, campaigning for communism and speaking out against colonialism, Ho returned to Indochina in 1941.

About Viet Minh

Once returned in 1941, Ho sparked a nationalist campaign to win Vietnamese independence from France. His efforts led to birth of the *League for the Independence of Vietnam*, or **Viet Minh**. Viet Minh recruited Vietnamese citizens with a broad range of beliefs such as socialists, communists, nationalists and democrats. Their overarching goal was to assimilate people in a purely nationalistic cause and win freedom from France. Ho became the leader of the massed led the Viet Minh engagements against the French and Japanese. When France was reeling from war and Japan was on verge of defeat, Ho organized the **August Revolution** and claimed Vietnamese independence. He established DRV on September 2, 1945. This date also marked Ho's adoption of his final name, *Ho Chi Minh*, which translated to 'he who enlightens.'

War Against France

The freedom thus gained was short-lived because French returned to Indo-China in 1946. They rejected DRV and attempted to consolidate power. After a series of failed negotiations and minor



conflicts, Ho orchestrated a large scale war against France. This was the First Indo-China War that lasted from 1946 to 1954.

In the long duration war, France realized that it was not so easy to combat the guerrilla tactics of Viet Minh. So, they tried to win political support and created an anti-communist state called **State of Vietnam** under Emperor of Annam **Bao Dai**. In 1950, this State of Vietnam managed to gain the support of the United States.

However, Viet Minh forces were relentless and continued their fight. Finally, France succumbed to Viet Minh after a devastating defeat at the **Battle of Dien Bien Phu** in May 1954. Vietnamese gained the advantage at the **Geneva Conference** immediately following the French capitulation. The Geneva Agreements favoured Ho's quest for independence, as it officially recognized the DRV after the nation was split at the 17th parallel, called for reunification elections in July 1956, eliminated the French from Indochina and ended the war.

However, at this point, United States refused to sign the agreements. Instead, US supported State of Vietnam and its premier **Ngo Dinh Diem**. Within a year, in October 1955, the State of Vietnam was renamed the **Republic of Vietnam (RVM)**, or South Vietnam. Diem rejected the reunification elections and gained the support of the United States in his battle against the communist DRV. Disheartened by the failed reunification effort, Ho launched the protracted and costly Second Indochina War, which is called Vietnam War against the RVM and the United States.

We note here that between the First Indochina War and the Geneva Conference, Viet Minh had become the dominant Vietnamese political party within the region. Yet, by 1951, the Viet Minh yielded to the newly formed Vietnam Workers Party. And while aspects of the Viet Minh eventually re-emerged following Geneva, the dominant entity that it had become during the 1940s ceased to exist during the Vietnam War.

Ho and the Vietnam War

During initial years of Vietnam War (1955-60), Ho remained as Supreme Leader of DRV. He oversaw the daily operations of the state, travelled to communist countries, presided over the construction of the **Ho Chi Minh Trail** and dictated military strategy, including the creation of the **People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN)** and the **National Liberation Front (Viet Cong)**. As he aged in 1960s, he limited his responsibilities to make public appearances {to boost morale of Vietnamese people who were struggling to stem the tide against the American war effort}. This revered leader died on September 2, 1969. The mourning people renamed Saigon, the capital of the RVM as **Ho Chi Minh City** following the communist victory in the Vietnam War in 1975.



American Involvement

1961 and 1962 represented a change in the American strategy in the Vietnam War when President John F. Kennedy decided to enlarge the American effort in South Vietnam in a multitude of ways. He introduced thousands of military advisors to the region to help train and equip the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) and the Republic of Vietnam Air Force (RVNAF). He switched ambassadors to provide Ngo Dinh Diem with a more supportive network. Kennedy poured American planes and war equipment into South Vietnam.

He approved of the establishment of the Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG), the Strategic Hamlet Program and the beginning of Operation Ranch Hand. Kennedy continued to enlarge the effort in Vietnam through the reorganization of the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) into the Military Assistance Command-Vietnam (MACV). Yet, with the influx of personnel and materials, the National Liberation Front (NLF) continued to expand and earn victories over the South Vietnamese forces.

However, 1963 marked an important turning point for the United States in the **Vietnam War**. It began with a significant defeat of the **Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN)** at the **Battle of Ap Bac** on January 2. Then, over the period of several months, the Buddhist Crisis arose within South Vietnam. After **Ngo Dinh Diem** rejected the Buddhists request to fly their respective flag, protests arose in cities such as Saigon and Hue. Diem attempted to suppress the Buddhists, but this led to the United States distancing itself from the embattled leader.

There was a general consensus in Kennedy's administration about the consequences of losing Vietnam to communism; there were others who feared the worst. Undersecretary of State George Ball told Kennedy that within five years there would be 300,000 U.S. soldiers in Vietnam. However, Ball was incorrect: within five years nearly 400,000 soldiers were in Vietnam. Even with his advisers calling for escalation, Kennedy proceeded cautiously. By the middle of 1962 he had increased the number of military advisers from 700 to 12,000. He added another 5,000 in 1963. As the number of casualties increased, the prospects of withdrawing became increasingly difficult. In the face of so many problems, Kennedy gave the order to overthrow Diem. On November 1, South Vietnamese military officials, with the assistance of the U.S. embassy in Saigon, arrested Diem and his brother. While in custody, both were assassinated.

But this plan backfired and a number of inexperienced military officers took command in South Vietnam with little support and were unable to govern effectively. The country sank deeper into trouble and the role of the United States increased. Within few days, President Kennedy was also assassinated on November 22, 1963; and the issue of Vietnam fell to President Lyndon B. Johnson;



who was deeply troubled over Vietnam and had been for some time. During the rest of the months leading up to the November 1964 election, Johnson tried all he could to keep the issue of Vietnam in the background, fearing it would hurt his chances of being elected. In many of his conversations with Robert McNamara, secretary of defense, Johnson discussed doing all he could to keep the public thinking that he had made no final decisions on Vietnam.

Some advisers were trying to give Johnson suggestions for getting out of Vietnam and still saving face; meanwhile, the Joint Chiefs of Staff were advising him that preventing the loss of South Vietnam was of overriding importance to the United States.

Robert McNamara visited Saigon. He reported to Johnson that conditions had worsened there since General Khanh took over power in January 1964. Many officials there favoured increased pressure on North Vietnam, including air strikes. McNamara, aware of Johnson's wish to be ambiguous to the public regarding his stance, offered to take a lot of the heat. Johnson, knowing the conditions in Vietnam, understood that in order to achieve the ambitious conditions set out in McNamara's policy statement, an escalation of military power in the country would have to be undertaken.

Gulf of Tonkin Crisis and Resolution

On August 2, 1964 North Vietnamese gunboats had attacked the USS Maddox in the Gulf of Tonkin. On August 4 the Maddox and another vessel, the USS Turner Joy, reported being under attack. Many doubts exist about whether or not the second attack actually took place, but the Johnson administration used it as a pretext for retaliation. Johnson ordered the first U.S. air strikes against North Vietnam. On August 6, Johnson went before Congress and urged American congressmen to issue a counter to the North Vietnamese actions. After witnessing that roughly 85% of the American public supported Johnson's airstrike, Congress overwhelmingly approved of the **Gulf of Tonkin Resolution** on August 7. The resolution was essentially a blank check for conducting war in Southeast Asia. It gave Johnson the unregulated power to take action in Vietnam in order to protect American strategic interests and personnel. Additionally, the motion provided Johnson with the ability to defend members of the **South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO)** from communist insurgency.

The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution became a dangerous protocol in the hands of Johnson. This ultimately provided him with the window he needed to expand the war in Vietnam, which translated into a devastating air war and the introduction of American combat troops in 1965. Since the resolution could only be nullified by presidential consent or by a congressional declaration of termination (which congressman failed to achieve a majority), Johnson, and eventually President **Richard Nixon**, were free to conduct the war effort how they saw fit. While there was a



burgeoning opposition to the conflict in Vietnam between 1965 and 1969, it was not until June 1970 that the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution was officially repealed.

Importance of Gulf of Tonkin Crisis

The Gulf of Tonkin Crisis was an extremely significant event because with this, US got more and more involved in the conflict. The US President introduced American combat troops in 1965. It also marked congressional acceptance of a heightened state of war in Southeast Asia to do what was necessary to protect American forces and interests.

Climax of War

After July 1965 the war escalated into a major international conflict. The North Vietnamese army numbered in the thousands, and they supported an estimated National Liberation Front force of 80,000. From 6,000 U.S. troops in Vietnam in July 1965, the number increased to over 536,000 by 1968, with an additional 800,000 South Vietnamese troops. Both sides played to their own strengths. The United States had great wealth, modern weapons, and a highly trained military force under the command of General William Westmoreland. Using bombing raids and search-and-destroy missions, it sought to force the opponent to surrender.

At the same time, the National Liberation Front and the North Vietnamese army, under the exceptional direction of Vo Nguyen Giap, used a different strategy altogether. They were lightly armed and knew the area. They relied on the guerrilla warfare tactics of stealth and mobility. Giap wanted to wear down the United States and its allies by harassment missions. Between 1965 and 1967 the United States did untold amounts of damage to Vietnam. Bombing increased from 63,000 tons in 1965 to over 226,000 tons in 1967. Despite this, the US military strategy failed to produce clear results. The war dragged on, and opposition to the conflict in the United States intensified. Countless protests took place in cities and on college campuses. Troops who returned home were often treated poorly, quite the opposite of the heroes' welcome experienced by returning veterans of World War II.

Tet Offensive of 1968

The Tet Offensive of 1968 brought a new phase of the war. In late 1967, the North Vietnamese launched operations in remote areas to draw U.S. forces away from cities. On January 31, 1968, the National Liberation Front launched massive attacks on the unsecured urban areas. They led strikes on 36 provincial capitals, 5 major cities in the south, and 64 district capitals. They also attacked the U.S. embassy in Saigon and captured Hue for a period. Although the Tet Offensive failed overall, it had a profound psychological effect on the people of the United States. Protests increased, and murmurs that the war was unwinnable became much more audible. As a result of developments in Vietnam and widespread unrest across the country, Lyndon Johnson announced that he would not



seek re-election in 1968. We note here that the social activism and antiwar movements of the late 1960s spurred many protests against the Vietnam War.

Richard Nixon and Cambodian Affair

After the Tet Offensive, ensuing peace talks failed to produce any agreement. The problem of Vietnam fell to the fourth U.S. president involved in the Vietnam conflict, Richard Nixon. In 1969 he expanded the war into neighbouring Cambodia, a move that he kept from the press, further increasing the gap in the people's trust in the government when he went public about the decision in 1970. The domestic backlash led to a new wave of protests, during which four students died at Kent State University in Ohio, and two more at Jackson State University in Mississippi. Nixon's involvement in Vietnam was marked by increased domestic opposition.

After the Cambodian affair, Congress repealed the Tonkin Gulf Resolution. The trial of Lieutenant William Calley, commander of a unit that murdered 500 South Vietnamese civilians at My Lai, raised fundamental moral questions about the war. Finally, the Pentagon Papers were published in 1971, which deepened public distrust in the government. Polls showed that more than 70 percent of Americans felt that the United States had erred when it sent troops into Vietnam. During 1972–73 the US phase of the war ended.

Peace Agreement

A peace agreement was signed in Paris on January 27, 1973, which allowed for the extraction of U.S. military forces from Vietnam and the return of U.S. prisoners of war but did not address the fundamental issues over which the war had been fought. North Vietnam was allowed to leave 150,000 troops in the south, and the future of South Vietnam was not directly and clearly spelled out. Fighting broke out between the north and the south, and US Congress drastically cut military and economic aid to South Vietnam.

When Richard Nixon resigned because of the Watergate scandal, the Vietnam War issue was passed to its fifth president, Gerald Ford. Congress rejected his request for \$722 million in aid for South Vietnam, agreeing to only \$300 million in emergency aid to extract the remaining US personnel from the south. The climax of this came on May 1, 1975, with a harrowing rooftop helicopter evacuation.

The total cost of the war was extensive. South Vietnamese military casualties exceeded 350,000, and estimates of North Vietnamese losses range between 500,000 and 1 million. Civilian deaths cannot be accurately counted but ran into the millions. More than 58,000 U.S. troops were killed, and over 300,000 were injured. The total financial cost of the war exceeded \$167 billion. Many of Johnson's Great Society reforms were cut back because of the increased military expenditures. Veterans returning home experienced long-lasting effects, which ranged from flashbacks to posttraumatic



stress disorder to the effects of exposure to chemicals. Furthermore, the war saw no tangible results. Once the United States evacuated Saigon, the north overran the south and Vietnam was united under communist rule.

China in 20th Century: Summary of Events

Before we move to 20th century, we look at some older events of China. In 1279, Mongols under Kublai Khan (grandson of Genghis Khan) had established the Yuan dynasty in China. Kublai Khan made Beijing as the capital city of a united China. As per the accounts of Marco Polo, Kublai Khan's empire stretched from the north of Mongolia into Central Asia and at times included parts of Vietnam. Marco Polo had served as Kublai Khan's court official for 17 years (1275-1292). In 1368, Zhu Yuanzhang overthrew Mongols and established the Ming Dynasty. The Ming Dynasty was known for the establishment of sophisticated agricultural economy with strong centralized bureaucracy and military. The main accomplishment of the Ming Dynasty is the completion of Great Wall of China in the form seen today. The Ming Dynasty was overthrown by the Manchu Qing Dynasty in 1644.

Qing Dynasty (1644-1912)

The Qing dynasty was the last imperial dynasty of China which ruled till 1912. It was succeeded by the Republic of China. Under the Qing dynasty, China reached its zenith. During its period, Tibet, Mongolia and present day Xinjiang were annexed with the Chinese empire. The empire laid down the territorial base for the modern Chinese state. However, in the 19th century the Qing Dynasty began to decline.

Opium Wars and Gunboat Diplomacy

Between the 17th and 19th century, China had developed a relatively advanced and self-sufficient civilization and did not need to import much of the items. However, there was a great demand of the Chinese items such as Silk, Tea, Spices, and Porcelain in Europe. However, Chinese insisted on barter with Silver for these items. Most of the European powers did not have much of Silver to make payments to. Due to high custom duties and a trade imbalance, the Europeans started searching for something which could replace silver to trade with China. Their search ended with Opium, the highly addictive drug which British produced in India. The British exported opium to Chinese and made them addicted to it. Henceforth, Chinese willingly traded silk, tea and other items for Opium. However, the Qing Government in China soon recognized the harm of opium and attempted to ban its trade. British would not let this happen, so they resorted to a form of intimidation called Gunboat Diplomacy.



Gunboat Diplomacy

Gunboat diplomacy refers to accomplishing foreign policy aims through an impressive show of naval power backed up by the threat of war. Basically, it's pure intimidation. Gunboat diplomacy was characteristic of British imperialism in China.

The Opium Wars

To curb opium use, the Qing government confiscated 20,000 cases of British opium and destroyed it in 1838. This sparked the first Opium war, fought between China and Britain in 1839-1842. British easily defeated the Chinese and forced upon them a humiliating treaty called Treaty of Nanking. As per this treaty, China ceded control of Hong Kong to Britain; opened up five trade ports and made payments of reparations to British. Since China did not get anything substantial in return, this treaty was called "unequal" and thus could not last longer. On the other hand, British grew greedier and demanded more concessions. They demanded that all of China should be opened to trade and trade of opium should be full legalized.

The difference grew and triggered the Second Opium War (1856-1860). In this war also British won and forced another humiliating treaty in Chinese called Treaty of Tientsin. This treaty opened additional ports for trade, removed restrictions on activities of Christian missionaries, legalized the use of opium, and granted foreigners permission to travel freely throughout China.

Open Door Policy

After losing two Opium wars to British, the Chinese also lost a war to Japan in 1895. By the end of 19th century, it appeared that China would be partitioned and colonized by imperialist powers such as France, Britain, Japan and Russia. However, United States did not want this to happen. United States not only wanted equal rights of trade with China but also recognized the benefit of an independent China. Thus, United States proposed the so called Open Door Policy with China. It proposed:

- Keeping China open to trade with all countries on an equal basis.
- China was permitted to collect tariffs and engage in open and equal trade.

Outcome of Open Door Policy

This policy was outlined by US Secretary of State John Hay and was principally in place between the late 19th and early 20th century. However, it was just a principle, never formally adopted via treaty or international law. This is why; it is also called a "Pseudo-treaty". All European powers accepted it in principle but it was never an official / written agreement. Open Door Policy arguably allowed China to remain an independent country and saved it from imperialistic powers taking over.

China's view on Open Door Policy and Boxer Rebellion

However, China maintains that neither it's Government nor its Citizens were involved in deciding



what was good for China. Due to this, the Chinese scholars regard this policy as an offensive gesture of US. They argue that US imposed it on them without even consulting them. This policy created more resentment towards foreigners in China. This also triggered a uprising called **Boxer Rebellion** in northern China in 1900, in which 300 foreigners and Chinese Christians were murdered.

Fearful that other countries would use the Boxer Rebellion as an opportunity to declare war, the United States responded preemptively. This time, Secretary of State Hay issued another 'note' to European countries, in which he reaffirmed that China should be open. Only this time, the note hinted at American willingness to use force to maintain that openness in China.

Boxer rebellion/Boxer uprising, 1900

Boxer rebellion was aimed at ousting all the foreigners from China. The uprising was led by a Chinese secret organization called the Society of the Righteous and Harmonious Fists. The rebels named as Boxers by the westerners were involved in killing foreigners and Chinese Christians. The origin of the rebellion can be traced back to the fact that western countries and Japan made the Qing dynasty to accept larger foreign control over the economic affairs of the country. China had already suffered millions of casualties in the Opium Wars (1839-42, 1856-60), and the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) while trying to resist foreigners. The uprising was subdued by an international force which also included the American troops. The rebellion officially ended in 1901 and China was made to pay around \$330 million in reparations.

The Republican Revolution of 1911

The indifference and failure of reforms and the failure of the Boxer rebellion made many Chinese to launch an outright revolution to crush the old order and establish a new one patterned preferably after Japan. Sun Yat-Sen assumed leadership for the revolution. He was a republican and anti-Qing activist.

The republican revolution began on October 10, 1911 in Wuchang. Later, the revolt quickly got spread throughout the country. The support to the revolt was overwhelming so much so that by November, 15 out of 24 provinces declared their independence from the Qing dynasty.

In 1912, at the time when the Sun was to be made as the provisional president of the new Chinese republic, it was known that the power had already passed into the hands of commander-in-chief of the imperial army, Yuan Shikai. In order to check the intervention of foreign powers and the civil war, Sun agreed to the Yuan Shikai's demand and the later was sworn in as provisional president of the Republic of China.

Republican China

The power wielded by Yuan Shikai was manifold. At times, he began to outstrip the parliament and became dictatorial. He even went to the extent of promulgating new constitution which made him



President for life. At the end of 1915, Yuan Shikai made an announcement that he would re-establish the monarchy. This resulted in the widespread rebellions and various provinces started to declare independence. In 1916, Yuan Shikai died of natural causes.

Warlord Era (1916-28)

The period from 1916 to 1928 is commonly called as the Warlord Era. This period was marked with a great chaos as the country got disintegrated into hundreds of states. The infighting between the generals made the lives of the ordinary peasants hard. The division of the country continued even after the Warlord era until the fall of the Nationalist government at the end of the Civil War.

Rise of the Communists

The communist party was founded in the year 1921. In its initial years, it was cooperating with the *Kuomintang (KMT)* in its struggle against the warlords. With the growing prominence, KMT was thinking it to be strong enough and started to crush the communists. The Communists under Mao Zedong reacted vigorously and established a new power base in northern part of the country.

Mao Zedong was having an unlimited faith in the revolutionary potential of the peasantry. He converted the local peasants into a politicized Guerilla force.

Chinese Civil war (1927-1950)

The Chinese civil war was the result a difference in thinking between the Communist Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the Kuomintang (KMT). Both the parties were fighting intermittently for achieving legitimacy. The fighting between the two parties did not even stop during the Sino-Japanese war. As a result of these fighting, around 2 million people fled to Taiwan in 1949. The war finally ended in 1950. At the end of the war, People's Republic of China (PRC) was established in mainland China and the Republic of China (ROC) in Taiwan. These both at times claim to be the China's legitimate governing power.

Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945)

The increase in population and the quest for power made Japan to begin pushing into the northern China and into the coastal provinces. It also initiated seizure of Manchuria and established an puppet regime in 1932. The growing Japanese influence and economic losses incurred by them made Chinese infuriated which resulted in the second- Sino-Japanese War. However, the defeat of Japan in the hands of the allies in 1945 ended its occupation of China.

Chinese takeover of Tibet

On October 7, 1950, Chinese P.L.A. troops crossed the upper Yangzte River and entered into eastern Tibet. There was a very feeble resistance initially offered by the Tibetan forces. This made China to easily takeover the region. However, Tibetans believed that they are essentially independent. Eventually, China made Tibet to agree to its seventeen point agreement under pressure in October



1951.

In 1959, Tibetan Uprising began in Lhasa when the Tibetan rebels started revolting. The anniversary of the uprising is celebrated by the Tibetan's living in exile as the Tibetan Uprising Day. Eventually, the Dalai Lama fled into exile. Later, the Government of Tibet was dissolved.

Great Leap Forward, 1958-60

The Great Leap Forward is the economic and social campaign led by Mao Zedong. The campaign aimed to rapidly transform the country from agrarian to Socialist society. It aimed to achieve this transformation through rapid industrialization and collectivization. Under this campaign, private farming was prohibited and agricultural collectivization was made mandatory. However, the many consider the campaign to be the primary reason for the occurrence of the Great Chinese Famine.

Cultural Revolution Decade, 1966-76

Mao Zedong also launched another movement called as Cultural Revolution to reassert his authority over the Chinese government. The revolution is also known as the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. He called upon the youth of the nation to cleanse the nation from the impure elements of the Chinese society. He revived the revolutionary spirit through this movement as he believed that the Communist leaders of that time were taking China in the wrong direction. The revolution continued in various phases until the death of Mao in 1976.

The Post-Mao Period, 1976-78

Mao's death resulted in a power struggle between main three contestants: Hua Guofeng (named by Mao as his successor), Deng Xiaoping, and the Gang of Four (led by Jiang Qing, Mao's widow. Out of them Hua was made the party chairman and Deng Xiaoping was made the vice chairman.

The Cultural Revolution which was started by Mao was formally ended. The National Party Congress stated that the fundamental task of the party was to build a modern, powerful socialist country by the end of the twentieth century. The party also undertook reforms to reorganize the bureaucracy and policy initiatives of the government. extensive educational reforms were instituted and the impositions made during the Cultural Revolution on literature, art, and intellectuals were overturned.

In 1978, there emerged bitter differences between two factions represented by Hua Guofeng (leftists) and Deng (moderates). The leftists were supporting strict adherence to the Mao's political thought. The period saw the increased political activism by the students who tend to attack the Deng's opponents and sometimes the Mao himself.

China and the Four Modernizations, 1979-82

In 1963, Zhou Enlai came with the Four Modernization goals. These goals were later enacted by Deng Xiaoping from 1978 onwards. The four goals were aimed at strengthening the fields of



agriculture, industry, national defence, and science and technology. These goals were aimed at rejuvenating the Chinese economy after the death of Mao. Unlike under Mao's tenure, Class struggle was not given the central focus. The government now aimed at creating a society of civilized and productive citizens. The government also relaxed its firm hold on the cultural affairs. The importance was also given to the rebuilding of educational institutions which were dismantled during the Cultural Revolution.

The Arab-Israeli Wars (1948-present)

In order to understand the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine, one has to go back more than 3,000 years. Both these two groups have historical ties to the land they are fighting to control.

Ancient History of Israel

Jews

Around 3,000 years ago, Jewish tribes in 1300 B.C.E. settled down in the eastern Mediterranean region, called Judea. But, most of the Jews were forced to leave the land after repeated invasions, starting with the Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans. Finally, the Roman Empire destroyed their capital in 70 C.E. and renamed the region as Palestine. As a result most of the Jews left the region.

Arabs

In the 7th century C.E., the Islam was founded. Six hundred years after the Jews left the region many Arab Muslims began to settle in the region. They also built a shrine directly above the Jewish site (known as the Dome of the Rock at present). In the 16th century, the region came under the Ottoman Empire which lasted for nearly four centuries.

Anti-Semitism and Zionism

Even though the Jews got scattered throughout the world they remained attached to Israel through prayers, scriptures among others. With the rise of Nationalism as a concept in the 19th Century, many Jews who felt oppressed with rising *anti-Semitism* (anti-Semitism is hostility and prejudice towards Jewish people) started to return to their homeland. This Jewish migration is called as *Zionism*.

Contention

The primary focal point of the returning Jews was their temple whose only surviving Western wall was located below the Arab Muslim's holy shrine. This became a major point of contention between the Jews and Arab Muslims at that time.

World War I

In the World War I, the Ottoman Empire fought against the Allied Powers. Britain tried to woo



both the Jews and Arabs by promising sovereignty if they helped the Allies win the war. The *Hussein-McMahon (1915)* correspondence recognized and supported the independence of Arabs in the region. Similarly, the *Balfour Declaration (1917)* supported a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine.

Mandate of Palestine

With the victory of the allies and end of the World War I, Ottoman Empire was carved up into 'mandates' (non-permanent colonies). Britain oversaw the Mandate of Palestine. In 1922, Britain attempted to partition the mandate. It designated nearly 3/4th of the mandate for Arab settlement. Britain created an independent Arab nation on the east side of the river Jordan called as Transjordan. The remaining 1/4th was made open for Jews. But Arabs also migrated into the Jewish portions from the neighbouring countries. The population increased rapidly in the remaining 25% of the land and both the Jewish and non-Jewish people kept on fighting to control the territory.

Conflict

With the rise of Hitler to power in 1933, the immigration of Jews increased in the region. Arabs, too, started to settle in the mandate from the surrounding countries attracted by the relatively prosperous economy.

The occurrence of a bloody Arab Revolt in 1936 made Britain to investigate and paved way for the first official two-state proposal. The *peel commission* constituted for the purpose recommended that about 20% of the remaining mandate should be reserved exclusively for the Jews, while the remaining 80% exclusively for Arabs. But both British government and Arabs rejected the recommendations of the commission.

Attainment of statehood by Israel

After the end World War II, Britain referred the question of Palestine to the United Nations. The UN approved resolution 181 divided the remaining land and created independent Arab and Jewish states. Hence, the modern state of Israel was created in 1948. The resolution also maintained Jerusalem as an international mandate. Though, Jews was unhappy over the allotment of unviable desert for them, they did accept the partition plan. On the other hand, the Arabs refused.

Arab-Israeli war of 1948

Shortly after the passage of the resolution, civil war broke out as the non-Jewish residents tried to prevent Israeli statehood. The troops from Arab states of Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Transjordan (Jordan) supported the non-Jews in their resistance effort. Finally, Israel won the war. Even though the Arabs' had superiority in the number of troops and firepower, they failed to put forth a coordinated war effort. Eventually, Iraq withdrew from fighting and the other Arab states were forced to enter into armistice agreements. In the dealings, Israel was able to take control of some of the land designated for Arabs. Jordan was able to take control of some of their territory



known at present as the west bank and Egypt acquired the control of the Gaza Strip.

Refugee crisis of Palestinians

Back in 1947, immediately after the announcement of the partition plan, a massive population exchange began in the Middle East. While 650,000 Jewish refugees from Muslim countries migrated to Israel, approximately 720,000 Palestinians fled from Israeli territory. Of late, the non-Jewish residents in the mandate began to call themselves as Palestinians. Out of the emigrated Palestinians, half of them were welcomed by neighboring Arab countries and the rest of them found themselves in the refugee camps. More importantly, the Palestinians never attempted to organize a government in the land designated to them by the UN.

Seeds for future conflicts

The obstacles for political peace in 1948 continued to be the obstacles in Arab-Israeli conflicts in the future as well. These factors were: rejection of the existence of the Jewish state by the Arab world; Israel's philosophy of increasing military strength, its disregard for partition boundaries and its policy of conquering the additional territory whenever it could; and finally the Palestinian Arab refugee problem.

Suez crisis/Tripartite Aggression

In 1956, Egyptian President Nasser angered France and Britain by nationalizing the Suez Canal. It is to be noted that the France and Britain were previously controlling the shipping lanes. Israel too, was concerned about increasing Egyptian strength in the region. So, Britain, France and Israel secretly planned to attack Egypt. Israel launched the attack on Egypt in October 1956. While the Soviet Union took the side of Egypt, the US was not fully supporting its western allies. Finally, Britain and French forces withdrew in December following international pressure while the Israeli forces fell back in March.

Effects of the Suez crisis

- Egypt and Soviet Union strengthened their positions in the world. Soviet Union was able to strengthen its position in the Middle East.
- Egyptian President Nasser was hailed as a hero in the Arab world. Egypt got the right to operation Suez Canal, although it had to pay reparations.
- Israel was able to regain its access to the Straits of Tiran.
- France and Britain were humiliated and lost their international prestige.
- Eisenhower Doctrine: The doctrine provided funding and presidential authority to assist all the Middle East nations which are involved in fighting the Soviet influence.
- The first United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) was created by the UN to police the Egyptian-Israeli borders. UN peacekeepers remained in Egypt for nearly a decade until they



were expelled by Nasser.

Six Day War of 1967

A plot made by the Egypt to destroy Israel backfired. Israel attacked Egypt and within 4 days it took control of Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula from Egypt. Convinced by the false reports of victory reported by President Nasser, Jordan and Syria agreed to strike Israel from their respective borders. Finally, within six days, Israel was able to destroy the forces of Egypt, Syria and Jordan.

Effects of Six Days War

- Israel was able to recapture of Jerusalem and the Western Wall of their holy shrine in more than 2,000 years.
- Israel took possession of the Golan Heights from Syria.
- Victory of Israel united the Arab nations. They signed the *Khartoum Resolutions*, pledging that until Israel withdrew from the territories it acquired in the Six-Day War, there would not be any recognition or peace with Israel.

Yom Kippur War, 1973

After many failed attempts to take revenge for their 1967 defeat and repossession of the territory they had lost, Syria and Egypt planned an invasion of Israel on the Yom Kippur, the holiest Jewish holiday. The assault by the two nations along with the men, money, weapons sent by at least 9 Arab nations began on October 6, 1973. Finally, the war ended in Israeli victory. A ceasefire was put on place on October 25, 1973.

Effects of the Yom Kippur war

- Syria could not regain Golan Heights. Instead, it lost even more territories to the Israel.
- Arab oil producers unilaterally stopped oil shipments to the United States and some other Western European countries.
- The US, using shuttle diplomacy negotiated and led Israel to return most of the territory gained by it. However, only after a series of agreements, Israel eventually vacated the Sinai Peninsula in April 1982.

Camp David Accords, 1978

Following 12 days of secret talks, two framework agreements were signed between Egypt and Israel at Camp David on 17 September 1978. Out of the two, the second framework agreement (Framework for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel) eventually led to the conclusion of Egypt-Israel peace treaty.

Egypt-Israel Peace treaty/ Land-for-Peace Deal

The Egypt-Israel peace treaty was signed on March 1979 following 1978 Camp David Accords. The main provisions of the treaty were mutual recognition, normalization of ties, and the complete



withdrawal of Israeli forces and civilians from the Sinai Peninsula (Israel captured it during the Six Days War, 1967). Also, Egypt agreed to leave the Sinai Peninsula area demilitarized. The agreements also granted the right of passage for Israeli ships in the Suez Canal and made the Strait of Tiran and Gulf of Aqaba as international waterways. Most importantly, the agreement made Egypt as the first Arab state to officially recognize Israel.

The Palestine Liberation Organization

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was created by several Arab governments in 1964. Many independent groups such as the PLO, Fatah (secretive body which fought Israel without the help of the Arab League), and Hezbollah were created at different times to fight for the destruction of Israel and creation of Palestinian state. Yasser Arafat took over the PLO and became the first influential Palestinian leader. In 1974, Arafat grabbed the international attention over Palestinian demands by delivering a special speech in the United Nations General assembly (UNGA).

First Lebanon War

In 1982, the PLO members who were active in South Lebanon attacked various towns of Northern Israel and also shot dead the Israel's ambassador to Britain. Israel launched retaliatory attacks on PLO. This conflict is known as the First Lebanon War. A new group called Hezbollah emerged in Lebanon in the aftermath of the war.

First Intifada

In 1987, Palestinians rebelled against the Israeli authority in the Gaza Strip and West Bank. These uprisings are known as the first Intifada. The uprisings finally came to an end after 6 years after the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993.

Oslo accords, 1993

An agreement was reached between Israel and Palestine in Norway (1993). The outcomes of the Oslo accords are:

- Mutual Israeli-Palestinian recognition.
- Israel fully recognized the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people.
- Creation of the self rule by the Palestinian authority in Gaza and part of the West Bank.
- Palestinians to renounce terrorism.

However, the Oslo and other solutions failed to buy peace in the region with both the sides pointing the other as the problem.

Camp David Summit, 2000

In 2000, the US took the initiative and invited both the sides to discuss peace at Camp David. According to the US, the Israel's offer to withdraw from most of the West Bank and recognize a Palestinian state with capital Jerusalem was rejected by the Palestinians. Palestinians wanted to have



the whole of the West Bank. But, as per the negotiations, Israel was in control of 9% of the area in the west bank.

Second intifada

When Israel's Prime Minister Ariel Sharon asserted that Jewish Temple Mount (holiest sites for both Jews and Muslims) would forever remain under the control of Jewish authority, a second Intifada was ignited. It resulted in causing heavy civilian casualties on both the sides.

Gaza blockade

In 2006, the radical Hamas party acquired the power of the Palestinian Authority. Western countries considered Hamas as a terrorist organization. So, Israel and Egypt after obtaining approval from UN imposed a complete blockade of Gaza. They involved in inspecting all the ships entering the area for weapons and other banned materials. As a consequence of the blockade, several underground tunnels were built to connect Gaza with its neighbours. Now, the tunnels have become the new point of contention between both the sides.

Latest developments

Though, the 2003 Roadmap for Peace and the 2007 Annapolis Conference was able to inspire confidence, none was able to overcome the historic obstacles. The peace did not last long. The year 2014 is being labeled as one of the deadliest in recent years with violence and killings.

Unless the original demands of the Palestinians are fulfilled, the Palestinian leadership won't stop fighting. Similarly, Israel will also not concede the land demanded by the Palestinians until they feel safe. It is also unlikely to allow Palestinian refugees to stay in its territory as it fears that terrorists may enter its territory.

Crimean Crisis

So far there have been *four Crimean crises* in recent decades viz. those of 1994, 2003, 2006 and 2014. Not only that, the historic Crimean Wars of 1853-56, 1941-42 and 1944 find an important place in the modern world history. This article is primarily focusing the 2014 crisis which led annexation of Crimea into Russia. As of now, Crimea has been fully integrated into Russia.

Collapse of USSR and Birth of CIS Countries

On 24 December 1991, the USSR ceased to exist and it broke up into 15 independent states. This collapse, as well all know, signaled the end of the Cold War between the Soviet Union and the United States. The collapse was not sudden but was result of a number of events that took place in 1980s.

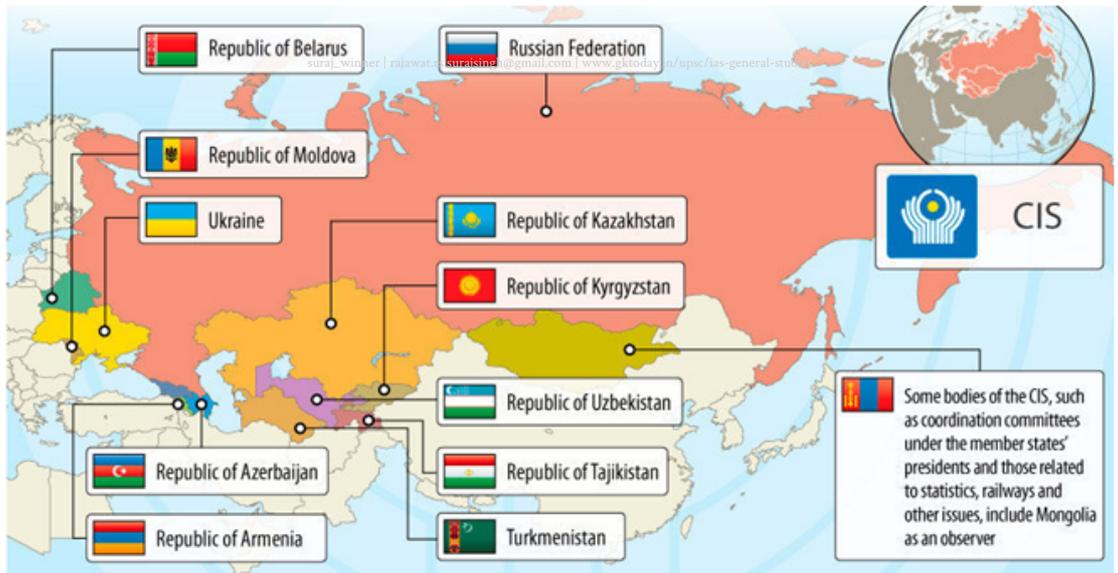
Among various reasons for collapse, the most important is economic one. The Soviet Union economy was in bad shape and Mikhail Gorbachev, elected General Secretary of the Soviet Union in



Modern World History-6: Select Events of 20th Century

1985, had proposed to reform the economy and modernize the political situation in the country. There were two major platforms of the economic reforms of Gorbachev. The first was the so called **Glasnost**, which literally means **publicity** or **openness**. *Glasnost called for increased openness and transparency in government institutions and activities in the Soviet Union.* It allowed more freedom of speech. Via this, it was held that the government officials would be held accountable to the people for their actions. Thus, Glasnot was good for the people of USSR as it allowed people to protest and allowed the media to report on various issues. But one of the fallouts of Glasnost was that many states used it as a newfound tool to acquire freedom.

The another major reform was the so called **Perestroika**. Perestroika literally meant “restructuring”. Gorbachev meant to restructure the Soviet economy so that it works more efficiently. Via Perestroika, the government there allowed some private ownership and released some of the tight control the government had on the economy. But that was no panacea for a country where people were habitual of seeing the government doing everything. In summary, these two tools of Gorbachev made things worse before they could be better.



CIS Countries

However, the people and economy of the Soviet Union were used to the government doing everything. Things got worse before they got better. The first states which wanted freedom from USSR were the Baltic States of Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia. Soon more states such as Armenia, Moldova, Ukraine, and Georgia joined the league. The communist government in Russia, which was



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a monopoly state power, felt the pressure. In August 1991, the Soviet hardliners kidnapped Gorbachev and announced to the world that he was too sick to govern. They virtually took over the power. When the Soviet people started to protest, they were shut down by the military. But the soldiers refused to shoot and arrest their own people. Thus without support of military, the attempt coup failed. The decisive actions of Boris Yeltsin were crucial for the failure of the coup.

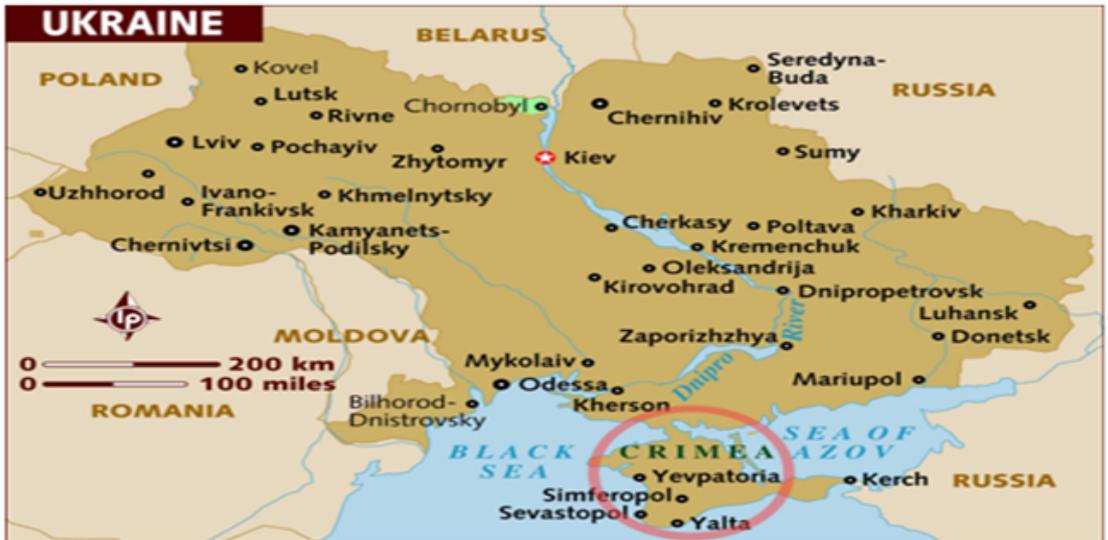
Russia was considered to be the successor state of USSR by international law. Thus, it kept the nuclear weapons and the Soviet Union's seat on the Security Council of the United Nations. After the breakup, Boris Yeltsin was the first President of Russia.

However, the Soviet Union got dissolved on December 24, 1991. With this Soviet Union divided up into 15 separate independent countries. These countries were: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. Out of the, 9 countries viz. Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan are the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States).

About Ukraine

suraj_winner | rajawat.rs.surajsingh@gmail.com | www.gktoday.in/upsc/ias-general-studies

With an area of around 6 Lakh Km² (including Crimea), Ukraine is the largest country entirely within Europe and a very crucial location. It borders Russia on east and north east, Belarus in North West; Poland, Slovakia, Hungary on West, Romania and Moldova in South West and Black Sea and Sea of Azov in South and South East respectively.



Ukraine Neighborhood; Image Source: nbcnews.com



Among the 4.5 crore people that inhabit this country, 77.8% are Ukrainians, 17.3% Russians and 4.9% others. Ukraine is an ethnically diverse country with 18 recognized regional languages and many ethnic groups. We note here that all these ethnic groups are recognized by the Constitution of Ukraine as Ukrainians only. The largest population of ethnic Ukrainians outside of Ukraine lives in Russia where about 20 Lakh Russians consider themselves ethnic Ukrainians, while millions of others (primarily in southern Russia and Siberia) have some Ukrainian ancestry.

Tussle over Ukraine

The geography and demography of Ukraine is such that right since its birth, it has witnessed intense tussles between Europe and Russia. America has been trying to lure Ukraine into Western camp since the fall of Soviet Union in 1991.



Cartoon by PATRICK CHAPPATTE, source www.politicalcartoons.com

West's interests

One of the major interests of the west is *Ukraine's location as a transit state of energy*. Roughly 25 per cent of European Union's natural gas comes from Russia, and 80 per cent of that gas comes from Ukraine. The EU is struggling to revive its economy and Ukraine provides an attractive market for European goods due to its high per capita income second only to Russia in former Soviet Union states.

Apart from economic reasons, Ukraine is vital to the geopolitics of the region as NATO membership of Kiev would bring Moscow within striking distance of NATO missiles. The distance between Moscow and Kiev is 425 km and that would mean a big strategic victory for West in the



containment of Russia.

Russia's interests

Ukraine's transit role is likewise important to Russia, but Russia also values Ukraine because of economic industries, like steel and agriculture, that serve as vital inputs for Russia's economy. Russia is closely attached to Ukraine by history and cultural contacts. The Russian speaking population forms a substantial part of the society in Ukraine. It is a multi ethnic country with its festivals and traditions shared across the borders. Thus, Ukraine is intertwined with Russia sharing common culture and people.

But Russia's interests in Ukraine go far beyond the economic and cultural sphere. Ukraine is indispensable for Russia for military reasons. There is deep collaboration of arms manufacturers from both sides of border. The Black Sea region is controlled mainly through Crimean city of Sevastopol and any loss of influence there limits the Russian Navy's blue water capabilities to secure its interests in Mediterranean Sea and Arab region.

Thus a strong Russia allied with Ukraine gives Moscow confidence and strength, particularly dealing with Europe and US while a Russia without Ukraine would turn very weak.

2014 Crisis in Crimea: Historical Background

Crimea is located on the northern coast of the Black sea and is separated from Russian region of Kuban by the Sea of Azov. The Kerch Strait connects the Sea of Azov and Black Sea and separates the Kerch city of Crimea from Tamar peninsula of Russia. The territory was annexed to Russian Empire in 1783. The peninsula became part of Soviet Union from 1921 until 1954, when **Nikita Khrushchev** transferred the control to Soviet Republic of Ukraine. This self governing region had voted to join Independent Ukraine in 1991 after collapse of USSR. Thus, it became the Autonomous Republic of Crimea within newly independent Ukraine in 1991, with Sevastopol having its own administration within Ukraine but outside of the Autonomous Republic. It is majorly inhabited by Russian speaking population, with minority of ethnic Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars. The current Crimean crisis has its genesis in the tussle between EU and Russia over greater influence in the Ukrainian economy and the subsequent events.

On 21 November 2013, President Viktor Yanukovich refused the deal with EU for a political association and a free trade agreement. He signed a similar agreement with Russia in December instead. EU's deal was a loan of \$838 million subject to conditions of major changes to the regulations and laws in the Ukraine. Russia was ready to provide \$20 billion loan and cheaper gas prices with no conditions like EU. Yanukovich chose Russia over EU and few knew what was going to unfold after that pact.



The snapping of Ukraine-EU deal led to protests in Western Ukraine. The rallies were initially peaceful but eventually became violent in January 2014 after parliament, dominated by Yanukovich's supporters, passed laws intended to repress the protest. **The showdown between protesters and police forced Yanukovich to sign a deal on 21 February 2014 with opposition** in presence of EU leaders and Russian mediator.

The 21 February deal had following components

- restoration of Constitution of 2004;
- constitutional reform to be completed by September;
- presidential polls by December 2014;
- an investigation into the violence conducted under joint monitoring of the authorities, opposition, and the Council of Europe;
- a veto on imposing a state of emergency; amnesty for protesters arrested since 17 February; surrendering of public buildings occupied by protesters;
- the forfeiture of illegal weapons;
- “new electoral laws” to be passed and the formation of a new Central Election Commission

On 22 February 2014 the Right Wing radical groups took control of the capital city Kiev and Yanukovich had to flee from Kiev. The deal became redundant and Ukrainian parliament voted to restore the 2004 version of the Constitution of Ukraine. The Right wing radical groups had now taken charge of Ukrainian revolution with backing from West. Thus, the tussle between West and Russia over Ukraine seemed to be tilting towards West.

The struggle between Russia and West over Ukraine needs to be understood in wider perspective of the implications of any side gaining influence in the country. Why is West and Russia engaging in such an intense tussle?

Crimea's Annexation

In the light of Ukraine's importance and the steady shifting of it towards West made the situation precarious for Russia. The new regime passed a decree abolishing Russian as an official language. Also, West did not push for a systemic reform in Ukraine as decided in the deal of February 21. There was a sense of betrayal among the Russian side and Putin took an audacious decision to intervene militarily in the Crimean landmass to secure Russia's interests.

Military intervention

Early morning of 27 February, men in military uniform in Simferopol, the capital city of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, seized the Crimean parliamentary building and the Council of Ministers building and replaced the Ukrainian flag with the Russian flag. They ousted the prime minister appointed by the President of Ukraine and installed a pro-Russian politician, Sergey



Aksyonov, as Crimea's prime minister. On March 1, 2014 both the houses gave approval to Putin to use military in Crimea for securing Russia's interests. The military made sure that Pro- Russian protesters did not lose ground in Crimea.

Referendum

On March 16, 2014, a referendum was held on the status of Crimea by the legislature of Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the local government of Sevastopol. The referendum asked the people of Crimea whether they wanted to join Russia as a federal subject, or if they wanted to restore the 1992 Crimean constitution and Crimea's status as a part of Ukraine.

The official result from the Autonomous Republic of Crimea was a 96.77 percent vote for integration of the region into the Russian Federation with an 83.1 percent voter turnout. The very same day Russia recognised the referendum results.

Inking of annexation

Defying Western sanctions Putin signed the treaty of annexation in Moscow on 18 March 2014 making Crimea part of Russia. The act invited hostile reaction from West and Kiev. The annexation marked a major diplomatic victory for Russia securing its interests in the region.

Crimea's importance

One wonders how a small piece of land can be so important for Russia when Ukraine had switched sides from Russia to West. Why is Crimea so important for Russia that Putin used military intervention when he knew that he would be inviting harsh criticism and could be tagged as aggressor?

The intervention in Crimea was caused by a multitude of factors. Though it's a small piece of land, Crimea is vital for strategic reasons.

Strategic location of Crimea

The city of Sevastopol in Crimea has been a special port as the base of Russian Black Sea Fleet. It was through this port that Russian Navy made its presence felt through the Istanbul strait into the Mediterranean Sea. It is important for Russia as a marine trade route to Arab countries of Africa and Asia. Thus, control over Crimea ensures that the West's plan to contain Russia by squeezing it out of Black Sea and Caucasus (the region comprising of Georgia, Turkey, Azerbaijan) is neutralized. The map below shows the strategic importance of Crimea.

Message to West calling for a bipolar world

The Russian intervention in Crimea is also intended to send a strong message to West that the bipolarity of world is intact and Russia is still a World Power. Events in Libya signalled decline of Russian influence in world. That has sought to be corrected by President Putin by taking strong stance against West's efforts to engineer a regime change in Syria. Russia also took exception to US'



demand to extradite NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden and brokered an agreement between Iran and West over the nuclear programme of Iran. All of these efforts are a deliberate effort on Russia's part to redeem itself as a World Power as it was before the fall of Soviet Union. Crimea is even more important for Russia as explained above and thus it had become a diplomatic imperative for Russia to intervene in Crimea militarily.

Personal agenda of Putin

Many analysts pointed towards a personal agenda of Putin in the intervention. His popularity had been dented by a sluggish economy, rising living costs and ire among the middle class over a series of heavy-handed laws and policies aimed at muffling the opposition. The Crimean annexation has skyrocketed his popularity again and established him as a strong and decisive leader capable of protecting Russia's interests.

Moreover, he may seek a re-election in 2018 Presidential polls. Although more than four years remain until the next presidential election, the ground is already taking shape and the first noises have been made about who might enter the 2018 race. In that scenario, Putin would like to present himself as the face of Russia in the time of crisis.

His legitimacy restored by this diplomatic victory over West also helps him to quell the pro-democracy demonstrations that had engulfed Russia during the period of 2011-13. Thus, the Crimean ploy puts Putin on the brink of becoming the greatest leader of Russia putting him on par with Stalin.

Crimea was never a part of Ukraine

Another justification given by Russian side is the Crimea was never a part of Ukraine anyways. It was 'gifted' by Russia to Ukraine as a gesture of friendship in 1954. Many had called it a historical wrong. It was only correct to regain the territory which belonged to Russia as Ukraine had shifted loyalties from Russia to West. Thus, the question of disrespect of territorial integrity doesn't arise at all.

West's Reaction

Annexation of Crimea evoked strong reactions from US and its allies. Leaders from US, UK, Germany and Japan condemned Russia's annexation and called for restoration of territorial integrity of Ukraine. Sanctions were imposed to prevent Russian and Crimean officials and politicians to travel to Canada, the United States, and the European Union. Japan announced milder sanctions than the US and EU. These include suspension of talks relating to military, space, investment, and visa requirements.

On March 15, 2014, US sponsored a Security Council resolution describing the referendum of Crimea illegal. The resolution was blocked by Russia which used its veto power. The fate of



resolution was pre decided but it was still proposed aiming at isolating Russia and showing the strength of opposition against the Crimean annexation. China abstained from voting on the resolution with the rest three powers of Big-5 voting for the resolution. On March 27, 2014, The UN General Assembly approved a resolution describing the referendum leading to annexation of Crimea by Russia as illegal. Russia was unmoved of these. In 2015, Russia declared that it has “fully integrated” Crimean in itself.

War in Afghanistan

The War in Afghanistan began in 2001 after the September 11 attacks. United States and NATO coalition forces attacked Taliban and Al Qaeda forces. As of 2014, United States personnel are withdrawing from the country, ending over a decade of fighting.

The War in Afghanistan

For almost the entire first decade of the 21st century, the United States of America has been at war. Hundreds of thousands of United States armed forces personnel have been sent abroad to the Middle East to engage in what the administration of President George W. Bush referred to as the ‘War on Terror.’ In many ways, the central fight of the War on Terror has taken place in the isolated and mountainous nation of Afghanistan. Let’s learn more about the War in Afghanistan, the longest war in the history of the United States.

Causes of the War

For centuries, Afghanistan has been an unstable place, especially over the last century. In the early 1900s, Afghanistan was established as an independent country, no longer under the yoke of foreign powers.

Starting in the 1970s, there were a series of coup d’états, where power changed from one group to another. In 1978, a civil war began within Afghanistan’s borders between pro- and anti-communist forces. The Soviet Union sent in military forces to support the communists, and a bloody conflict began. During this fight, the United States provided money and military assistance to those fighting the Soviets. Some of these were known as the **Mujahideen**, composed of Islamists who were staunchly opposed to the Soviet invasion. Over one million Afghans died during this conflict, but the Soviets were repulsed.

After fighting the Soviets, Afghanistan saw various warlords and extremist groups vie for control of the country over the coming years. By the mid-1990s, a fundamentalist group called the **Taliban** took control of the country. The Taliban ruled according to Islamic Sharia law and instituted extremely harsh restrictions on the country.

The Taliban created an environment in Afghanistan that bred terrorists. **Osama Bin Laden**, a



veteran of the fight against the Soviets, became a leading figure in the **Al Qaeda** terrorist organization, one of the largest and most sophisticated Islamic terror groups in the world. It was from within Afghanistan that Bin Laden and his followers plotted to strike against the United States. On **September 11, 2001**, Al Qaeda terrorists launched attacks against the United States. Terrorists flew two planes full of innocents into buildings in New York City and one into the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. A fourth plane was brought down by brave passengers in Southern Pennsylvania. Almost 3,000 Americans were killed in these terrorist attacks.

Timeline

Following the attacks of September 11, the United States government responded with military force. It was clear that Al Qaeda was behind the attacks, and knowing that Al Qaeda and Osama Bin Laden were based in Afghanistan, **President George W. Bush** gave the Taliban an ultimatum: either hand over Bin Laden and his organization or the United States would strike with full force. Congress passed legislation authorizing the use of force in striking against terrorist targets, and when the Taliban did not cooperate in handing over Bin Laden, United States forces began a bombing campaign in Afghanistan in early October 2001, just weeks after the September 11 attacks.

With assistance from Coalition nations, such as the United Kingdom, NATO forces, and the Northern Alliance, American Air Force and Navy planes bombed significant Taliban and Al Qaeda targets across Afghanistan. Special Force troops were sent in, and in November, the first ground base was established. Much of the Taliban had been destroyed or driven away by the end of 2001.

While the initial offensives were successful, Coalition forces had to pivot from attacking to rebuilding. While the Taliban was virtually destroyed, Al Qaeda still held on in parts of the country. The International Security Assistance Force was created in 2003 by the UN to help rebuild. Despite this, in 2003, an insurgency began against the American and NATO forces. Insurgent attacks and American counteroffensives continued on and off for several years, with many Afghan civilians being caught in-between, some ultimately losing their lives. During all this, a new, democratic government was established in Afghanistan. Coalition, NATO, UN, and American forces attempted to support it in the interest of preventing Afghanistan from returning to a state that supported terrorism.

When **President Barack Obama** took office in 2009, he sent thousands more troops into Afghanistan. Death tolls on both sides began to rise in 2009 and 2010. By the end of 2011, President Obama began withdrawing United States forces from Afghanistan, relinquishing control to the Afghan government and its newly trained security forces.

In an attempt to end U.S. involvement, an agreement was reached in 2012 between Obama



and **Afghan President Hamid Karzai**. The **U.S. Afghanistan Strategic Partnership Agreement** set guidelines for how to continue forward after U.S. forces had left, including promises from the United States to continue helping Afghan security forces in training to fight insurgents throughout the country.

Controversies

The War in Afghanistan was certainly not short on controversy. While initially it enjoyed widespread support from the American public in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, over time, support began to erode. With United States forces also engaged in a war in Iraq starting in 2003, the American public became increasingly war weary. Through 2011, the U.S. government spent over 500 billion dollars on the war. Many began to believe it impossible for democratic government to ever exist in Afghanistan and saw the death of Bin Laden in 2011 as a signal to end the U.S. involvement in the region.

Summary

The War in Afghanistan was and is a messy and complex affair. It started as a result of terrorist groups residing within the country who struck the United States and killed thousands on **September 11, 2001**. **President George W. Bush** responded by launching military strikes and destroying the **Taliban** in Afghanistan. After the fall of the Taliban, terrorist forces launched an insurgent war against the United States and coalition troops, which has lasted for over ten years. Thousands of American lives, and tens of thousands of Afghan lives, have been lost during the conflict. While successfully driving the Taliban out of Afghanistan, the war has become the longest in U.S. history, generating plenty of controversy along the way.



suraj_winner | rajawat.rs.surajsingh@gmail.com | www.gktoday.in/upsc/ias-general-studies