

1

IMPERIALISM AND FIRST WORLD WAR

The application of science and technology in production led to the industrial revolution. This was followed by the emergence of capitalism and the establishment of colonies in different parts of the world. You remember that these facts were discussed in the previous classes. Now let us examine its impacts in the economic and political fields.

Competition among Capitalists

The capitalists and their products reached wherever man lived. What they could not sell in the home market, they sold in the colonies. To retain their markets they fought among themselves for colonies. As a result of these, competitions and conflicts arose among the capitalists. What were they?

- capitalist countries themselves.
- capitalists of the capitalist countries.
- capitalist countries and the colonies.
- capitalists and workers in the capitalist countries.

How did capitalism survive these crises which appeared in the late nineteenth century?

The stiff competition among capitalist countries and the capitalists themselves resulted in wars. War expenses increased. Wages had to be increased as a result of the strike by the workers. What were the consequences?

Profit diminished. The capitalists realized that the system of production in Europe and sale in the colonies was to be changed.

Emergence of Imperialism

Imperialism emerged out of the crises and contradictions which existed within capitalism. It was the developed stage of capitalism.

What were the features of imperialism?

- Production was extended to colonies also
- Capital was exported
- Technology and technocrats were exported.
- Banking system was expanded to facilitate the export of capital
- Monopolies were established in each sector.

Because of these features imperialism came to be called monopoly capitalism.

Colonisation was completed under imperialism. All available earth space was partitioned among the imperialist countries. They exploited the people and the natural resources of the colonies indiscriminately. To facilitate this exploitation they made the native people fight among themselves. Disparities were created among the followers of various religions. Colour discrimination and racial antagonism were inflamed.

- * *Organize a discussion on the colour discrimination abetted by the English in India and South Africa.*

Conflicts Generated by Imperialism

As a result of the imperialist exploitation the traditional social, judicial, educational and administrative systems of the colonies were destroyed. Reforms were introduced in the colonies with a view to foster affinity towards imperialism.

The traditional agricultural system was destroyed. The cultivation of cash crops was encouraged. Non edible crops like rubber, coffee, tea, tobacco etc., began to be cultivated. Agricultural land was converted for other uses and forests were cleared.

The imperialist countries competed among themselves for the colonies. A series of wars followed. Russia and Britain fought for Crimea. Russia and Japan fought for China. European countries and the U.S.A. fought among themselves for China. Britain, France, Germany, Belgium etc., scrambled for Africa. The anti-imperialist struggles within a colony were supported financially and militarily by other imperialist powers. They abandoned truthfulness, morality and sense of justice for the sake of profit.

Growth of Nationalism

When stiff competition emerged among the imperialist powers of Europe it was essential for each state to retain its home market. Each state imposed high tariff rates on the goods of other states to discourage import.

At the same time these states instigated the people to boycott foreign goods and encouraged them to buy indigenous goods. To achieve this aim the ruling classes exploited religion, language, racial consciousness, culture, heritage etc. They manipulated the emotion and sentiments of the people for this purpose. It was due to these facts that nationalism gained foothold in European countries in the 19th century.

Unification of Italy and Germany

It was on the basis of nationalism that Italy and Germany were unified. The desire of various nationalities which remained politically and economically disunited to come together was

exploited by the ruling classes. The unification of Italy was completed in 1870 under the leadership of king Victor Emmanuel, thinkers like Mazzini, prime minister Count Cavour and commander Garibaldi. Italy grew into an imperialist state after this.

Wars for Unification

The unification of Germany was completed after three wars. They were the Danish war of 1864, the Austro - Prussian war of 1866, and the Franco Prussian war of 1870. Germany was unified under the leadership of Prussia.

Germany, which consisted of 38 princely states, was unified under the leadership of Otto Von Bismarck and emperor Kaiser William II. Germany, which woke up belatedly began to grab colonies greedily and this led to certain crises in Africa and Asia.

Nationalism grew up in European countries as a pretext for conquering the neighbouring countries and colonies. This was branded as aggressive nationalism.

What is the difference between national consciousness and narrow nationalism? What are the dangers of narrow nationalism? Collect as much information as possible and record it in the Enquiry Note.

Nationalism in the Colonies

The leaders of the colonies utilised religion, language, culture etc., to organise the people against imperialism. A sense of unity was generated among the people. It was a defence against exploitation and oppression. It can be termed as defensive nationalism.

Recollect the anti-imperialist struggle in India, South Africa and Latin America discussed in earlier classes.

Opium War

From the 16th century onwards the Europeans began to colonise China. The English East India Company imported opium into China and earned immense profit. Besides earning profit, the Europeans wanted to keep the Chinese under the intoxication of opium and thereby anti-revolutionary. The Chinese government opposed opium trade. A ship load of opium was seized at the port of Nanking. To retrieve the ship and to continue the uninterrupted opium trade England declared war on China. It was known as the 'Opium War' which lasted from 1839 to 1842. China was finally defeated. They were forced to allow opium trade.

Boxer Rebellion

The defeat of China in the Opium War was beneficial to the foreigners. They carved out bases on the coasts of China. Russia in the north and Japan in the East joined them. Colonial powers like the USA, Britain, France, Spain and Portugal acquired territories in China. The Chinese were defeated in a battle by Japan in 1895.

Resentment brewed up among the people against this. They organised revolutionary groups. The young people began to practice boxing. They began to fight against the foreigners to put an end to these foreign penetrations and protect the Manchu dynasty. The foreigners who practised modern techniques of warfare were confronted by the natives with their conventional style of boxing. So it was contemptuously nicknamed as the Boxer Rebellion.

Chinese Melon

The defenceless Chinese ports and coasts were partitioned among the foreign powers. Historians styled it as cutting the Chinese melon! Melon was an important produce of China.

Chinese Republic

The various revolutionary groups working in China were united together by Dr. Sun Yat Sen and he organised the Chinese Revolutionary League. Dr. Sun had obtained western education. He firmly believed in the principle of democracy, nationalism and tolerance. As a result of the work of Sun Yat Sen and his followers the protest against monarchy became stronger.

Monarchy was put an end to and China was declared a republic on first January 1912. Sun Yat Sen was the first president. However the Republic could not put an end to foreign rule.

Boer War

The Boers were the descendants of the Dutch settlers of South Africa. The English tried to capture the big plantations owned by the Boers. It led to a war. The English were victorious in the war. The black Negroes and the white Boers were suppressed and the English founded the colony of South Africa.

Gandhi in South Africa

Mohan Das Karam Chand Gandhi arrived in South Africa as an advocate for the Indians, who were employed in the plantations, mines and factories of the Boers and the British. He was in South Africa when the Boer war was going on.

Anti-imperialist struggles were also going on in African colonies like Angola, Mosambique, Somalia, Egypt etc.

Prepare a report on the anti-imperialist struggles in various countries by comparing and analysing the nature and character of these struggles.



Boxers butchered in public

Workers Unite

The labourers had to work for about eighteen hours a day in the mines and factories. They were given only low wages. It was quite common that they died in the mines out of suffocation or flood. They were crushed under heavy machines in the factories or became physically handicapped. Still they were never paid any compensation.

The workers organised themselves against these evils. Several organisations emerged during this period.

- Chartist Movement in England.
- League of the Just in Germany
- Communist League
-

First International (1864)

The working class of different countries realized that what the capitalists were doing was universal exploitation and that to resist it, an international organisation of the working class was inevitable. It is from this realisation that the First International was formed. It was an organisation of the various labour parties of Europe and America. Its real name was 'International Working Mens Association'. Marx and Engels were its leaders. But it could not function effectively. Gradually it disappeared. What were the causes?

- ✧ Ideological differences
- ✧ Denial of the right to function by government.

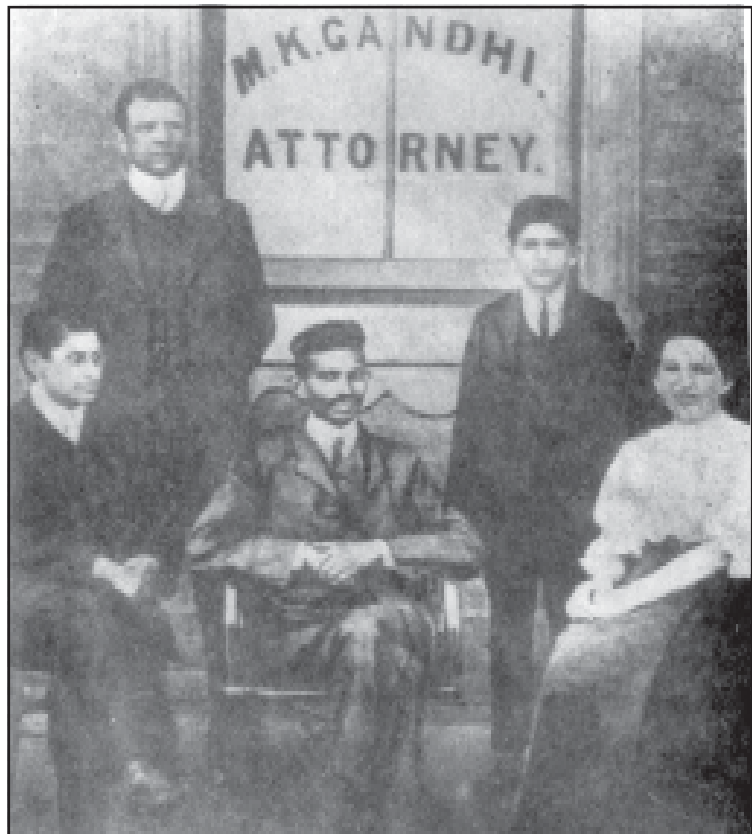
- ✧ No centralised headquarters.

✧

Second International (1889)

The failure of the first International was a disappointment to the workers. But it encouraged the capitalists. Exploitation continued uninterrupted. They suppressed the strikes of the workers cruelly. You have already read about the firing on the workers at Chicago in America in the previous classes.

When exploitation and oppression became severe the workers understood that they should form an international organisation. It was in this context that the leaders of the working class of various countries assembled at Paris in 1889 and formed the Second International.



Gandhiji in his office in South Africa

Indian Delegate

The Paris conference was attended by a delegate from India. He was Dadabhai Naoroji who was a fighter against the exploitation of the British in India. The delegates welcomed him with a loud applause. It was he who introduced the drain theory which brought to light the draining of Indian wealth by the British in the form of profit, interest and tax.

FIRST WORLD WAR (1914 - 18)

Several militant nationalist movements emerged in European countries. Which were they?

- The Slav people of East Europe were organised by Russia. Thus Russia became the exponent of the Pan Slav movement.
- Germany came forward with the Pan German movement and tried to bring under her control portions of central Europe and the Balkans where Germans lived in large numbers.
- France desired to retrieve Alsace-Lorraine which were captured by Germany in the Franco- Prussian War of 1871. This gave rise to the Revenge Movement.

A tense situation prevailed in Europe. The imperialist countries, in their eagerness to amass as much profit as possible, entered into wars on flimsy reasons. They purchased sophisticated weapons of war, strengthened their forces and formed military alliances.

Military Alliances

After the Franco - Prussian war military

alliances divided the European countries into two hostile camps. In order to retain Alsace - Lorraine and avoid the French threat, Germany entered into an alliance with Austria in 1879. In 1882, Italy also joined this. This was called the Tripple Alliance.

As a counter move against Germany's alliances, France began to seek allies. In 1894, she entered into a secret alliance with Russia. Britain joined them in 1904. Thus the Tripple Entente came into being.

These alliances worsened the situation. Let us examine the activities of the countries which entered into alliances.

- They followed secret diplomacy. This led to suspicions and enmity.
- The scientists of these countries engaged themselves in researches to invent deadly weapons.
- Majority of the European countries spent a lion's share of their national income on researches and arms.
- Each state joined either of the alliances for fear of becoming victims of attack.
- All European countries encouraged espionage.
- The news papers promoted a situation of war by distorting news, wrongly interpreting the moves of the neighbouring countries, suppressing the attempts for peace or by inflaming national feelings.
- To get higher grades and honours and to exhibit their abilities, military officers scuttled peace efforts and fuelled war hysteria.
- Arms manufacturers also longed for war. The Kruffs company of Germany, the Shinders of France and the Vicker -

Armstrong company of Britain joined together and evolved strategies for the promotion of the sale of arms.

The first World War (imperialist war) was also caused by certain international crises which occurred during this time.

- The conflicts between France and Germany over Morocco worsened the situation
- The conquest of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria from Serbia in 1908 led to the Bosnian crisis. The annexation of these provinces which were predominantly inhabited by Serbs made Austria a bitter enemy of Serbia.
- The Balkan wars of 1912 aggravated the bitterness between Austria and Serbia.

The absence of an international organisation to settle the disputes among nations left the world exposed to war. A nation could take any action against any other.

The enmity between Austria and Serbia which grew out of the Balkan crisis suddenly led to the first world war.

The Austrian Arch Duke Francis Ferdinand and his wife were assassinated in the Bosnian capital of Serajevo on 28th June, 1914. On July

28 Austria declared war on Serbia on the ground that Serbia had a role in the assassination. Soon the European nations rallied on either side.

Declarations of War

- 29th July, 1914 : Russia declared war on Germany
- 1 August, 1914 : Germany declared war on Russia
- 4 August, 1914 : Britain entered war
- 6 August, 1914 : Austria - Hungary declared war on Russia

Which were the sectors where the war was fought?

In April 1917 when Germany intensified naval blockade, the British Prime Minister Lloyd George sought US assistance. The US helped the Allied forces to lay mines all along the German coast. In the same month the USA declared war on Germany and in December she declared war on Austria. Bulgaria surrendered to Britain in September, 1918. Kaiser William II fled to Holland following a civil war in Germany. The new republican government of Germany signed a cease-fire agreement on 11th November, 1918. Thus the first World War came to an end.

Sector	Events
Western Front	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The German army which crossed through Belgium reached the neighbourhood of Paris. The French defeated the Germans in the battle of Marn.
Eastern Front	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Austria and Germany faced Russia - after the Revolution Russia withdrew from the war.
Outside Europe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consequences in north Africa and West Asia. On the basis of a treaty between Britain and France in 1916 the Arab nations were shared between them.

When the war came to an end France, Britain and the USA met in Paris in January, 1919 and initiated peace conferences. See the chart on peace treaties.

Examine the disasters which were brought about by the war.

- Heavy toll of death of soldiers and civilians
- Financial crises
- Increase of unemployment, poverty and diseases
- Decline of Agriculture and Trade.
- Disruption of communications. What were the other consequences of the First World War?
- Devaluation of currencies.
- Intensification of the freedom struggles in the colonies of Asia and Africa.
- Disintegration of the monarchies the Romanovs of Russia, Hohenzollens of Germany, Hapsburgs of Austria - Hungary, and the Ottomans of Turkey.

- Emergence of the new states of Poland, Romania, Hungary, Albania, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.

○

Look at the graph which shows the loss of human life during the first world war.

Get the pictures of the Prime Ministers and Presidents who formulated these treaties. Collect information about them and prepare an edition.

Did these treaties do justice to the defeated countries? Organise a debate in your class on this.

★ *Prepare a wall poster showing the furies of war and anti-war slogans as group work.*

An International Organisation comes into being

The League of Nations was formed on February 10, 1920, with a view to ensure world peace and security, to promote international co-operation, to prevent war etc. It was founded on the ideal outlined by Woodrow Wilson, the

Treaty/Agreement	Clauses
Versailles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alsace-Lorraine and the coal mines of the Saar basin were ceded to France by Germany. • Certain territories of Germany were given to Denmark, Holland and Belgium. • German colonies were partitioned among the victors. • Disarmament of Germany • Imposition of war reparations on Germany
Treaties of St.Germain and Trianon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The creation of the new states of Austria and Hungary
Treaty of Neuilly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Territories which were occupied by Bulgaria after the Balkan war were to be ceded to their original owners.
Treaty of Sevres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turkish territories outside Asiaminor were to be given back.

US president. Its headquarters was at Geneva in Switzerland.

But the USA did not become a member of the League. Let us examine the structure of this organisation.

- Assembly
- Council
- Secretariat

The other two organs were the Permanent Court of International Justice and the International Labour Organisation.

Achievements of the League

The League was able to intervene in many international crises and became successful in solving them within a short period. What were they?

- Dispute over the Allandi islands of the Balkans

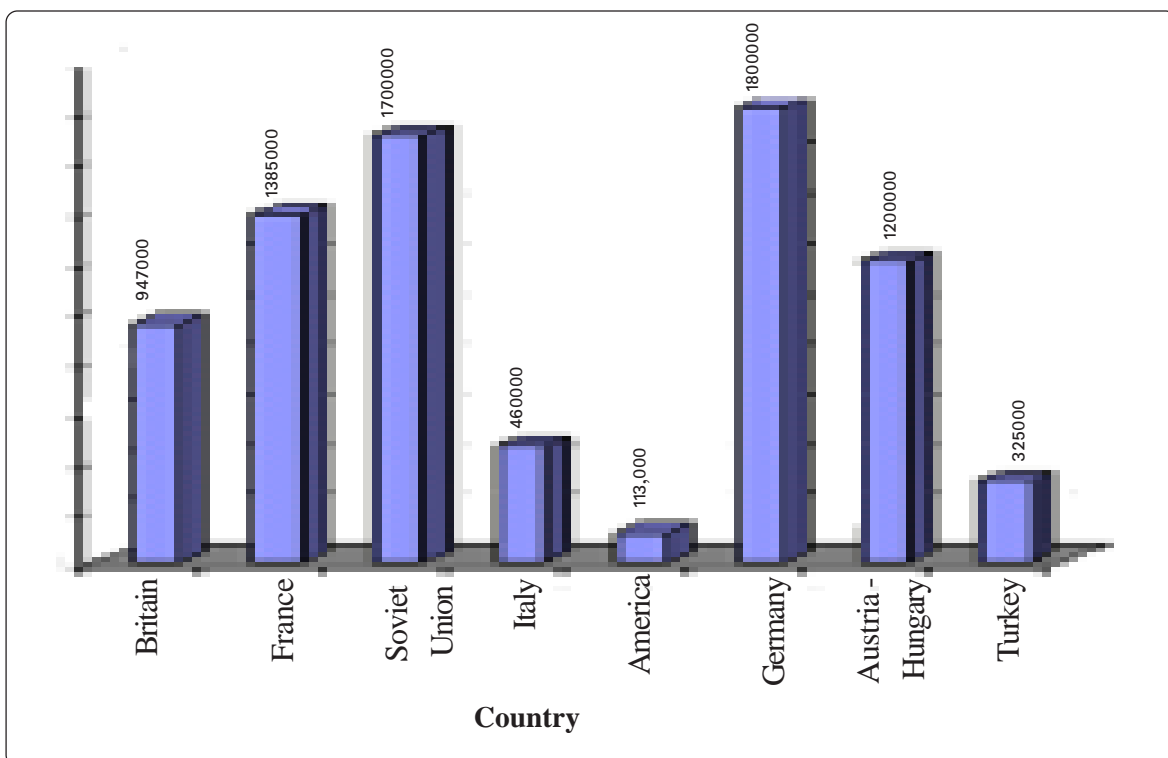
- Anglo-French dispute
- Bulgarian-Greek border dispute

Gradually the League began to decline. What were the causes for this decline? Conduct a discussion in the class.

Project

A project titled "Why do wars repeat themselves?" may be prepared on the basis of the first four chapters. What are the facts to be collected from this lesson for the project?

- Growth of capitalism
- Growth of imperialism
- Competitions
- Aggressive nationalism
- Formation of alliances
- Development, collection and use of modern weapons of war.



Loss of life in the first world war

Our Times

Reports and pictures related to the furies of the first world war, the organisations which worked for peace, pictures of great leaders of the war etc can be included in "Our Times".

Summary

- Competitions for markets and colonies arose along with the growth of capitalism.
- Imperialism grew up after the industrial revolution.
- Aggressive nationalism was fostered to promote the interest of imperialism.
- Anti-imperialist struggle became stronger in the colonies.
- Struggle between the capitalists and workers became severe, workers became organised.
- Various alliances came into being after the unification of certain countries.

- First world war broke out in 1914.
- League of Nations was founded at the end of the war.

Questions

- What was the aggressive nationalism fostered by imperialism?
- What is meant by export of capital?
- How was the Boer war related to South Africa?
- What were the grounds for the unification of Germany?
- Explain the importance of the First International.
- Explain the circumstances of the first world war.
- Why was the first world war also known as the imperialist war?

