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SECOND WORLD WAR (1939-45)

In one camp alone near a village called Belson, the British soldiers found 40,000 prisoners. Most of them were almost dead due to starvation, typhoid and tuberculosis. Great heaps of naked rotting corpses were found in many places. One such heap measured 80 yards in length, 30 yards in width and 4 feet in height. Almost all the living and the dead are utterly emaciated, and shrunken, their skin pulled so tight that they were hardly recognisable as human beings. Lampshades made from tattooed human skin were found there. Many prisoners had been used as guinea pigs to test drugs and subjected to operation without anaesthesia. The above account of the torture of human beings in a Nazi concentration camp is from *The chronicle*, a digest of the highlights of the twentieth century news papers.

The Chronicle

In the previous chapter we discussed the dominance of Fascist - Nazi parties in their respective countries through malicious propaganda and sabotage of democracy.

Emergence of Fascist tendencies in other European countries and their usurpation of power in Spain are some of the important developments of the 20th century. By slighting



Scene from a Nazi concentration camp

all democratic ideals and human rights and promoting aggressive nationalism, Fascism gained in strength.

What were the other distinctive features of the global situation that prevailed at that time?

- The global economic depression that followed the world war I
- The scramble for raw materials and markets.
- The growth of the Soviet Union and progress of the working class movements in capitalist countries.
- Failure of the League of Nations and of the treaties signed after the first world war.
- The antagonistic attitude of Britain and France towards Soviet Russia.

Fascist Colonialism in Austria and Czechoslovakia

Hitler annexed Austria to Germany in 1938 on racial grounds. The Nazis of Austria supported this. Though initially Mussolini opposed the aggression later he supported Hitler. This change of attitude was a sign of the emergence of a global Fascist alliance. The British Prime Minister Chamberlain justified Hitler's action on geographical grounds. Why did Britain indirectly take a pro - Fascist attitude?

Munich Agreement

Hitler believed that Germany needed the territories of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Russia to ensure their well being and fulfill their expansionist colonial interests. He claimed that

Germany had a right to occupy these areas. Hence everyone was sure that Hitler would interfere in the revolt of Germans in Czechoslovakia under the leadership of Henlein Konrad. Hitler justified this on the basis of the right of self determination .

National Self Determination

After the world war I certain new independent nations emerged in South Eastern Europe. These nations were created according to the provisions of the treaty of Versailles with regard to national self determination. There were Germans in the newly created states like Czechoslovakia and Austria. Hitler thought that the clause of the treaty can be exploited to annex them.

About 70 percent of the industries of Czechoslovakia were based in Sudatanland. It was in this rich area that the revolt broke out. Hitler, Lord Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister, Daladier, the French Prime Minister and Mussolini agreed among themselves to avoid war. It was Mussolini who presented the document known as the Munich Agreement. The signatories agreed to hand over Sudatanland to Germany. The agreement declared all previous treaties null and void. The treaty was a turning point in the history of the world and was favourable to the Fascist forces

Naturally there was widespread response to this Agreement. At a later stage Hitler said " We should have started the war in 1938. But they yielded to us everywhere. We missed a unique opportunity at Munich"

Why Britain and France took such an attitude?

Why Britain and France were disinclined to co - operate with the Soviet Union?

* *Write an article based on the details discussed in the previous chapter, about the global situation of that time. The article can be entitled "Preparing for the World War"*

Soviet-German Non-Agression Pact

By passing the course of the history of the world Germany and the Soviet Union signed a Non Aggression Pact on 24th August - 1939. This was a shock to all nations.

Why did the Soviet Union that followed an anti - Fascist policy enter into such an agreement?

This pact gave Russia breathing time for political and military preparations to resist Fascist attack

Outbreak of the war

After the aggression on Czechoslovakia and Austria, Hitler turned towards Poland. Two days after Germany attacked Poland, Britain and France declared war against Germany.

The Soviet Union annexed the Polish territories of Ukrain and Bylo - Russia which were parts of old Russia. Finland became the military head quarters of the Soviet Union. Soviet military bases were established in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. Note the above places in the world map. How would these annexations have helped the Soviet Union to resist the aggression of the Nazis? Though Britain and France had declared war on Germany they gave no help to Poland when Germany occupied it. After the declaration of war there was no active military movement for about the next seven months

War and Momentous Events

In April 1940 Germany conquered Denmark, Norway, Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg. In June she captured Northern France and Alsace-Lorraine. In 1940 Germany, Italy and Japan formed the Triple Axis. In October Italy joined the war by attacking Greece. In November Germany attacked Britain but had to face stubborn resistance. Meanwhile Britain and America issued a joint declaration known as the Atlantic Charter which inaugurated a new anti Fascist alliance.

In June 1941 Germany attacked Russia but could not gain anything on account of their stiff resistance. In the same year Japan joined the war and overran Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia. In December 1941 Japan attacked Pearl Harbour, an American naval base.

Fascist Programme of World Conquest

The 'Axis' bloc was formed to bring the continents of Europe, Africa and Asia under the Fascist order. The scheme of war was as follows. Germany would move to the East through central Europe and central Asia. Italy would move to the East by conquering Africa and west Asia. Japan was to proceed westwards after conquering Asia. The three armies would meet in Delhi. The strong resistance of the Soviet Union however foiled the scheme of Hitler.

In June 1942 America defeated Japan in Midland and in July the British defeated the German army at Alamaine in Egypt. In February



Pearl Harbour attack

1943 the Soviet Union expelled German soldiers from Stalingrad through a historic encounter. In 1943 both Italy and Germany had many more reverses in North Africa. With the surrender of Italy before the Allied forces in 1945 all the European countries were liberated from the clutches of Fascism. In the same year the Soviet army besieged the German capital Berlin on April 28. Realising his imminent fall Hitler committed suicide. The final blow came when America dropped atom bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima on August 6th and Nagasaki on August 9th. With that the war came to an end. Only the major events related to the war are recounted here. Classify them according to their

nature. How can they be classified according to their common features.

1. Early Fascist Advances

- Invasion of Poland.
- Surrender of Denmark, Norway, Belgium, Luxemburg, France etc.

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2. Towards Global War

- Britain invaded.
- The Soviet Union invaded.

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Hiroshima after the atom bomb explosion

3. Surrender of Fascism

- Atlantic Charter
- Britain retaliates
- Soviet Union retaliates
-
-

What other patterns of classification are possible?

The Ruinous War

War is disastrous for both the victor and the vanquished. In the world war II lakhs of human lives perished countless houses, industrial units and roads were destroyed. The progress that humanity had achieved so far and the

attainments of culture were devastated. Three fourth of the population of the time participated in the war.

Science and technology which ought to have been utilised for the welfare of the society was misused in the world war. Rockets, radars and the supremely destructive atom bombs were used for the first time. The two atom bombs that killed 1.5 lakh Japanese had the striking potentiality of 15 metric tones of gun powder.

* *After the world war II many literary works and films reminding of the horrors of war and conveying anti-war messages have been produced all over the world. Collect more information about them.*



Nagasaki after the explosion of atom bomb

Can war solve any problem?

Examine the graph given below.

The chart reveals the extent of human casualty suffered by the main participants of the war.

What were the other results of the war?

- European domination came to an end and the colonies of Asia and Africa became free.
- In the previous class we have discussed the impact of world war II on Indian national movement and the formation of the INA by Subash Chandra Bose

Nations got polarised in to two power blocs under America and the Soviet Union. Some countries including India remained non-aligned. Communism spread to more nations. It marked the end of Fascism.

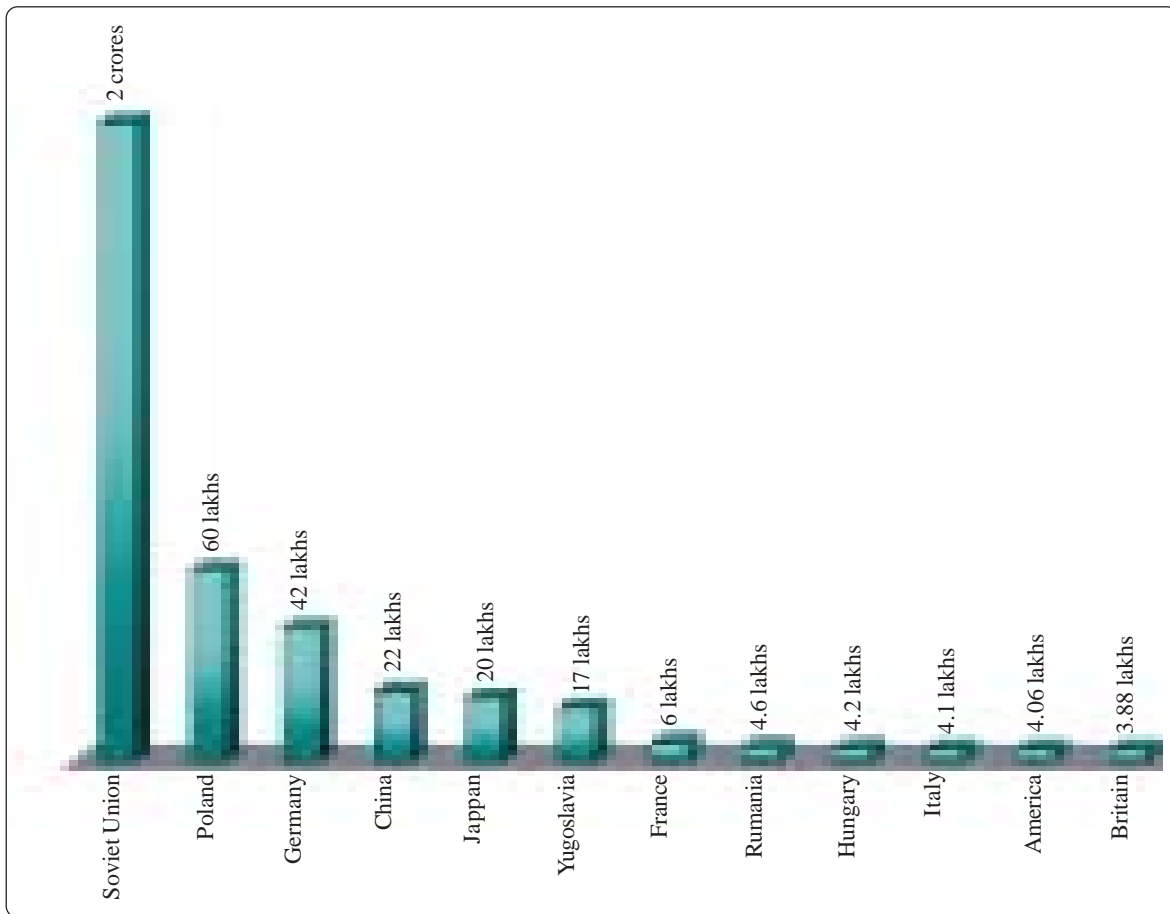
Project

The project 'Is war solve problems' must be completed in the next chapter. For that will you collect informations about the points given below from this chapter.

- The environment created the war
- Consequences of the war
- Meaningless peace treaties.

Efforts for peace and the United Nations Organisation

The horrible impact of war spreading more and more widely and so also was a longing for peace. Even as the Allied Powers were strengthening their war efforts they were also discussing post war world and the prospect of lasting peace. The United nations Organisation



Loss of human life in world war II

Year	Name/Place	Participant nations leaders	Important decisions
1941	Atlantic charter	Winston Churchill F.D.Roosevelt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nations must have independent governments • Free trade must be permitted • Freedom of seas must be recognised, Governments must reflect the aspirations of the people
1943	Moscow Conference	Foreign ministers of Britain, America, Russia and China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After the war there must be an international organisation for peace
1944	Dambarton Oaks Conference	Representatives of Britain Russia and America	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The name United Nations Organisation was accepted
1945	Yalta Conference	Winston Churchill Stalin, Roosevelt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN representation, structure voting etc were decided.
1945 April	San Francisco Conference	Several National Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational details completed. A Co-ordination forum was formed. UN Charter was adopted.
1945 July	Portsmouth conference	Churchill, Alee Chiang Kaishek and Truman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The boundaries of Germany and Poland were decided. Decision was taken to disarm Japan. • Decided to conduct peace talk with Italy, Bulgaria, Roumania, Hungary, Finland etc.

was the outcome of these discussions and conferences. Note the details of some of the important conferences projected in the chart.

The above mentioned decisions were meant for strengthening democracy and peace. Of these which ones were implemented later? After all these conferences the United Nations Organisation was formally founded on 24th October 1945. New York was its head quarters.

The United Nations Organisation, which was formed after the disastrous world war II, adopted certain objectives emphasising permanent peace and co-operation.

- Preserve international peace and security.
- Promote friendship among nations on the basis of the principle of equality
- Ensure international co-operation to settle economic, social, cultural and humanitarian issues



The UN head quarters

- Function as a centre to co-ordinate the activities of various nations in this area.

The picture showing the structure of the UNO, the rights and duties and the methods of decisions making of each organ are given below.

General Assembly

All the members of UN are the members of the General Assembly . Each member nation can send five representatives but there is only one vote for them. The General Assembly has to meet once a year but under emergency situations special sessions may be held on the request of the security council or the members.

Ordinary problems are decided by simple majority vote. But important decisions are taken by two- thirds majority.

The General Assembly performs two other important duties. It inducts new members and elect the members of the other organs.

In the case of decisive and sensitive issues the General Assembly can make recommendations but its authority to take decisions is very limited.

Security Council

The Security Council is the most powerful organ of the United Nations Organisation. It takes the ultimate decisions on international issues.

It consists of five permanent members and ten non -permanent members. The permanent members are China, France, Russia, Britain and USA. The other members serve for a period of two years.

The Security Council takes decisions on the basis of majority vote. But to pass a resolution, the permanent members should unanimously vote for it . If one permanent member votes against the resolution it is defeated.



Structure of the U.N.O

This right of the permanent members is called the 'veto power'.

Secretariat

The Secretariat is the administrative body of the UN and the head of office is the Secretary General. About 50,000 persons work in this organisation. The Secretary General is appointed for a period of five years by the General Assembly, to prepare and present the report of the activities of the UN and act as the spokesman of the UN.

Trusteeship Council

The function of the Trusteeship Council is to administer the mandated territories. It is composed of the members of the Security Council, the member nations that rule over trust areas and members elected for three years by the General Assembly.

International Court of Justice

The International Court of Justice, also

known as the world court, consists of 15 judges jointly elected by the General Assembly and Security Council for a period of 9 years. Its headquarters is the Hague. Decisions of the Court are taken by majority opinion. But the court has no set up to implement its orders.

Economic and Social Council

It is a co-ordinating organ of the UN having 54 members. Though a permanent body one third of the members retire every year. Each member gets a period of three years. It meets twice a year. The functions of this organ are non-political in nature. Special Commissions are appointed by the Economic and Social Council to look into the population problem, the problem of medicine, human rights, status of women etc.

- * *Collect information regarding the services of these agencies and prepare an edition labelled 'Services of the UN in the past'*

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Post war services ○ Eradication of diseases ○ Eradication of Poverty ○ Eradication of illiteracy ○ Educational Assistance ○ Help in times of national calamities ○ Protection of human rights ○ ○ | <p><i>on the subject 'United Nations and its missions' What aspects can be discussed?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is the UN a plaything in the hands of super powers. ● Can it ensure the independence of the member nations. ● Does the UN impartially help in the fight for human rights. <p>Record your observations and findings.</p> <p>Which are the service agencies of the UN?
Fill in the chart given below.</p> |
|---|---|
- * *Does the UN succeed in establishing permanent peace? Conduct a seminar*

Fill in the Chart given below

Agency	Service sector
World Health Organisation (WHO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To conduct the activities to promote the health of the people of the world. ● Arrest the growth of contagious diseases ● ●
Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase Food Production ● ●
International Labour Organisation(ILO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improve employment condition and wages ● ●
United Nations International (UNICEF) Children's Emergency Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To promote health and allied activities of children ●
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. UNESCO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ●

Summary

- The world war II was caused by aggressive nationalism, love for war, and the colonial interests of Fascism. The attitude of the powerful nations in the initial phase helped the growth of Fascist aggression.
- The war started with the German attack on Poland
- The German attack on Soviet Union and the Japanese attack on America's Pearl Harbour were turning points of the war.
- The German defeat at Stalingrad and the victories of America and the Allies altered the course of the war against the Fascist powers.
- War brought untold miseries to majority of people. The colonies of Asia and Africa were liberated
- To guarantee world peace and settle international problems the United Nations Organisation was founded

Questions

- Assess the global situation that led to the world war II
- Why the nations of the world failed to resist Fascist aggressions?
- Write a short note on the Munich Agreement.
- Is the structure of the Security Council democratic? Why?
- What were the circumstances that led to the World War II
- What were the direct and indirect results of the World War II
 - Disasters, miseries.
 - Set back to European dominance.
 - Imperialistic Polarisation, cold wars

