

# Lesson 24

## THE INTER-WAR PERIOD AND THE SECOND WORLD WAR

### Summary

The First World War did not end the rivalries among various European powers. Some peace treaties and the creation of the league of nation also did not solve the problems. There was economic hardship during post war period. The countries which were defeated in the First World War were not treated well by the victorious countries. There was rise of totalitarian regime in several Countries-Fascism in Italy, Nazism in Germany and Military Fascism in Japan etc. Initially the western powers adopted the policy of appeasement towards the fascist aggression in the hope of containing the growth of socialism. But soon it engulfed the entire world.

### League of nations

- For the promotion of 'international cooperation, peace and security.
- When aggression began in the 1930s, the League failed to prevent it.

### The Treaty of Versailles

- Based on President Wilson's peace proposals or Fourteen Points
- But these principles were ignored when the allies signed the Treaty of Versailles with Germany

### RISE OF TOTALITARIAN REGIMES

- Totalitarian regimes- a system of government, in which there is a single party dictatorship, the state is all powerful and the individual is subordinated to the state.

### THE GREAT DEPRESSION AND ITS EFFECTS

- 'Overproduction' and 'misdistribution of purchasing power' were the two main causes of The Great Depression
- Fall in the share prices leading to a collapse of the U.S. stock market
- President Franklin D. Roosevelt introduced a programme of economic reform and social welfare called New Deal
- Almost 9000 banks closed operations and millions of people lost their life's savings
- Goods remained unsold, thousands of factories shut down, resulting in unemployment, poverty and starvation.

### AGGRESSION AND APPEASEMENT



## **THE WORLD AT WAR**

**The battle for Britain** In August 1940, the German Air Force (Luftwaffe) began its campaign over British

### **The expansion of war**

- In 1940, Germany, Italy and Japan signed a Tripartite Pact at Berlin.
- Italian and British forces clashed over several territories in Africa

### **Germany turns against Soviet Union**

- Operation Barbarossa' was launched on June 22 1941 against Soviet Union.

### **A global war**

- December 7, 1941, Japan launched a surprise attack on the American naval base at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii.
- On December 8, US declared war on Japan and, a few days later on Germany and Italy.

### **The battle of Stalingrad**

- By November 1942, the German armies were encircled by the Soviet troops.
- All supplies to the German army cut off & Germans were defeated.

### **Surrender by the fascist powers**

- April 28, Mussolini was captured and executed, thus putting an end to fascism in Italy.
- The Allied troops entered Germany from three directions – the south, the northwest and the east and as the Soviet army reached Berlin, Hitler committed suicide.
- On May 7, Germany surrendered unconditionally

### **The fall of Japan**

- The war in Asia and the Pacific continued even after Germany's surrender.
- On August 6, 1945, U.S. dropped the first atom bomb on the Japanese city of Hiroshima.
- Two days later, a second bomb destroyed the city of Nagasaki and forced Japan to surrender.
- The Second world war came to an end.

### **Evaluate yourself**

Q. Some of the seeds of the Second World War were sown at Treaty of Versailles. Analyse.

Q. Mention the principle of Treaty of Versailles.

Q. Explain the Great Depression.