



UNIT I OUTBREAK OF WORLD WAR I AND IT'S AFTERMATH

Dear students,

I hope all of you have studied the causes, course and results of the World War I. Now we are going to learn about Russian Revolution and the League of Nations.

RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

CAUSES :

SOCIAL CAUSES :

- The Russian peasants were serfs tied to lands owned by wealthy Russians. After Russia's defeat in the Crimean War, some reforms were introduced.
- The labourers and workers whose number had increased on account of industrialisation were aggrieved as they got very low wages.

AUTOCRACY OF THE TSAR :

- Tsar Nicholas II of Romanov dynasty had little experience of government.
- Nicholas mistrusted most of his ministers and he was surrounded by flatterers.
- Nicholas encouraged Russian expansion in Manchuria.
- This provoked a war with Japan in 1904.
- The resulting Russian defeat led to strikes and riots.

OPPOSITION TO TSAR AND DISSOLUTION OF DUMA:

- The outbreak of the First World War had temporarily strengthened the monarchy, as Russia allied to France and Britain.
- As there was rumour of a palace revolution, Nicholas made himself the commander-in-chief of the army.
- The members of the St. Petersburg Soviet were arrested.
- Whenever the Duma opposed the Tsar's move, it was dissolved and fresh elections held.
- Without change of government policy, the fourth Duma ended with the revolution of 1917.



POPULAR UPRISINGS :

- Masses of women workers demanding “Bread for workers “waved their arms towards factory workers and shouted “Come out! “ “Stop work! “
- The city's 400,000 workers joined the movement the next day.

ABDICATION OF TSAR :

- The government used the troops to break the strike.
- But soon mutinies broke out in the barracks.
- The generals at the front and some leaders in Petrograd, frightened by these developments pleaded with the Tsar to abdicate.
- On 15 March, Nicholas II abdicated.

PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT:

- There were two parallel bodies to take on government functions.
- One was of the bourgeois politicians of the old state Duma.
- The other were workers' delegates drawn together in a workers' council, or Soviet.
- The workers' delegates in the Soviet were influenced by the underground left – wingers.
- The Soviet was dominated by Mensheviks and minority Bolsheviks were timid and undecided.
- The situation changed with the arrival of Lenin.

RUSSIAN REVOLUTION UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF LENIN :

- Lenin was in Switzerland when the revolution broke out in Russia. He wanted to continue revolution.
- His slogan of “All power to the Soviets” soon won over the workers' leaders. Devastated by war time shortages, the people were attracted by the slogan of ‘Bread , Peace and Land’.
- In October Lenin persuaded the Bolshevik Central Committee to decide on immediate revolution Trotsky prepared a detailed plan.
- On 7 November the key government buildings, including the Winter Palace, the Prime Minister's headquarters were seized by armed factory workers and revolutionary troops.
- On 8 November 1917 a new Communist government was in office in Russia. It's head this time was Lenin. The Bolshevik party was renamed the Russian Communist Party.



LEAGUE OF NATIONS

STRUCTURE :

The League consisted of five bodies. They were

1. The Assembly
2. The Council
3. The Secretariat
4. The Permanent Court of Justice
5. The International Labour Organisation.

OBJECTIVES :

1. To avoid war and maintain the peace in the world.
2. To promote international co – operation in economic and social affairs.

ACTIVITIES OF THE LEAGUE:

- It settled the dispute between Sweden and Finland regarding the ownership of Aaland island.
- It solved a boundary dispute in Silesia between Poland and Germany.
- It solved a dispute between Greece and Italy over the island of Corfu.
- It avoided a war between Greece and Bulgaria over the border disputes.
- It solved a border issue between Peru and Columbia.
- Through its other organs it prevented the spread of management diseases.
- It solved the problems of refugees and lepers.
- It attempted to raise the standard of education in various states.

VIOLATIONS:

- The proposed conference materialised only in February 1932. In this Conference, Germany 's demand of equality of arms with France was rejected. In October Hitler withdrew Germany from the Conference and the League.
- In September 1931 , Japan attacked Manchuria and the League condemned its action. So Japan resigned from the League.

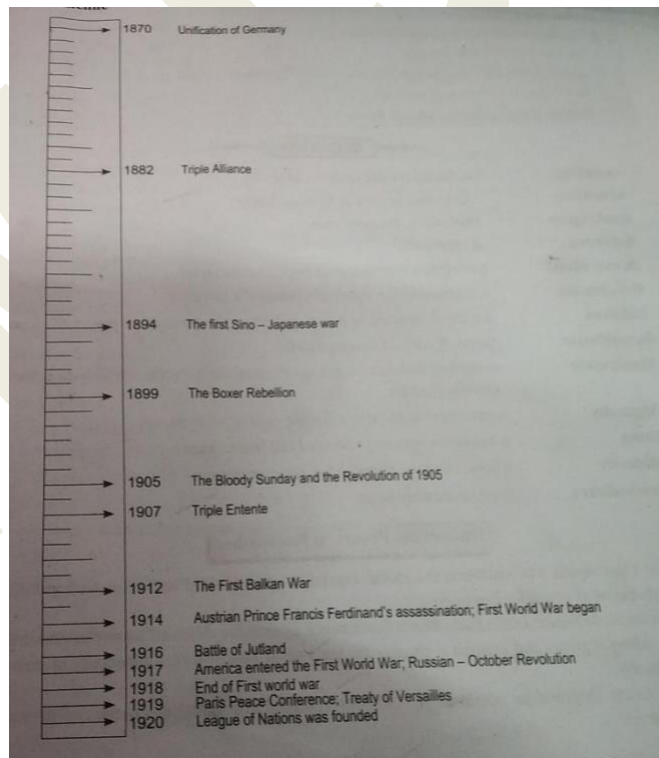


- Italy also resigned from the League in 1937. Thereafter the League was a passive witness to events, taking no part in the crises over the Rhineland, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland.
- The last decisive action it took was in December 1939 when Russia was expelled for her attack on Finland. The Assembly did not meet again and the League of Nations was finally dissolved in 1946.

CAUSES OF FAILURE:

- The founders of this organisation underestimated the power of nationalism.
- When Italy, Japan and Germany headed by dictators, refused to be bound by the orders of the League, Britain and France were the only major powers to act decisively.
- But they were not enthusiastic supporters of the League.

TIMELINE





WORLD

THE FIRST WORLD WAR - MAJOR COUNTRIES

