

was always in fear that France would fight back in revenge and recapture Alsace and Lorraine. Therefore, the foreign policy of Germany after 1870 was building friendship with powerful countries in Europe and working to isolate France in Europe. Two camps of countries emerged based on France and Germany in Europe because France too started building friendships with European nations. As a result of this, one camp was created by Germany, Austria and Italy and the other was built including Britain, France and Russia. Here, the camp including Germany was called the central powers and the camp with France was called the Allied camp. The other countries too joined one of these camps according to their necessities. Since then, till 1914 there were verbal battles between these camps.

- Assassination of Austria's Heir of Throne

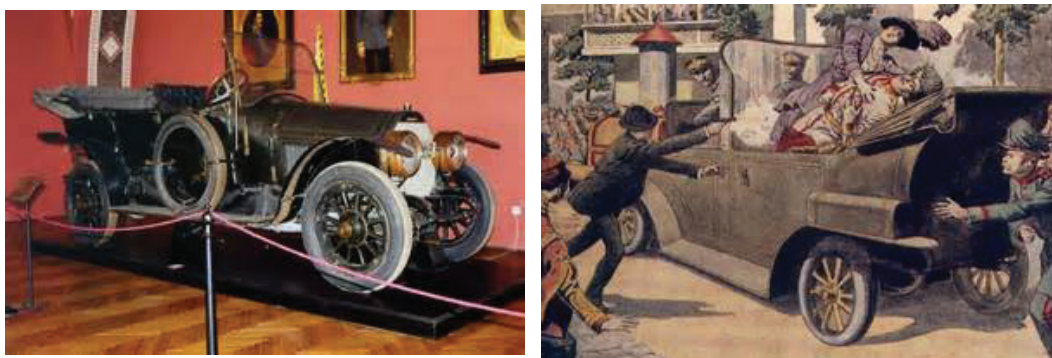


Fig 8.3 – A picture depicting the assassination of Franz Ferdinand and his wife and the vehicle they travelled

When Europe was on the verge of a war, the heir to the throne in Austria, prince Franz Ferdinand and his wife were murdered when they were touring in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia. This was done by two Serbians. Austria treated this as a conspiracy against them and demanded for compensation from Serbia under certain conditions. Austria declared war against Serbia on the 28<sup>th</sup> July 1914 because Serbia refused to compensate. This incident which is called the 'Sarajevo incident' is believed to be the closest reason for the beginning of World War I.



- 129 - Fig 8.4 Prince Franz Ferdinand

## ❖ Countries that took part in World War I

Allied countries	Central powers
France, Great Britain, Russia, United States of America	Germany, Austria, Italy, Turkey, Bulgaria, Hungary

## ❖ The spread of World War I

The declaration of war against Serbia by Austria in Sarajevo incident was hailed by Germany which was a friendly country of Austria. Therefore, Austria as well as Serbia wanted to gain help from their friendly countries. Serbia which was afraid of the military power of Austria requested for aid from Russia and Russia too agreed to give assistance.

Though Germany which was partial to Austria requested Russia not to support Serbia, Russia ignored the request. Therefore, Germany too entered the war in support of Austria. As a result, Germany declared war against Russia on the 01<sup>st</sup> of August 1914.

By that time France and Russia had been friendly countries and Germany which thought that France would support Russia because of their friendship declared war against France also with no second thoughts. There was a hatred between Germany and France since Germany was united. Germany thought of attacking France before she entered war and invaded Belgium and started attacking France through Belgium. Britain considering this stubborn behaviour of Germany a threat to their security and because of the friendship between Britain and France, she came in support of France declaring war against Germany. Britain had colonies all around the world by that time. Because Britain entered war, the effects of war were felt by all the colonies too.

There had been fights both on land and sea between the two parties. There were long drawn battles in which modern weapons were used. Germany kept on launching submarine attacks. As a result, one out of four ships launched by Britain were attacked by German submarines.

## ❖ United States of America joining the war

United States of America, which was a powerful country by this time, was impartial at the beginning. They entered war because one of their commuter ships, Lusitania was drowned by a German submarine. America joining the allied forces was one of the major reasons for the defeat of Germany. The mass food storage America possessed, the army and navy which numbered up to two million soldiers and the modern weapons became unbearable threats to the opposition.

A special incident that took place during the war is that Italy which was in the central camp came into a secret agreement with the Allies and declared war on Germany. Because of this act military secrets that were there between Germany and Austria fell into the hands of the enemies and this became a disadvantage to Germany.

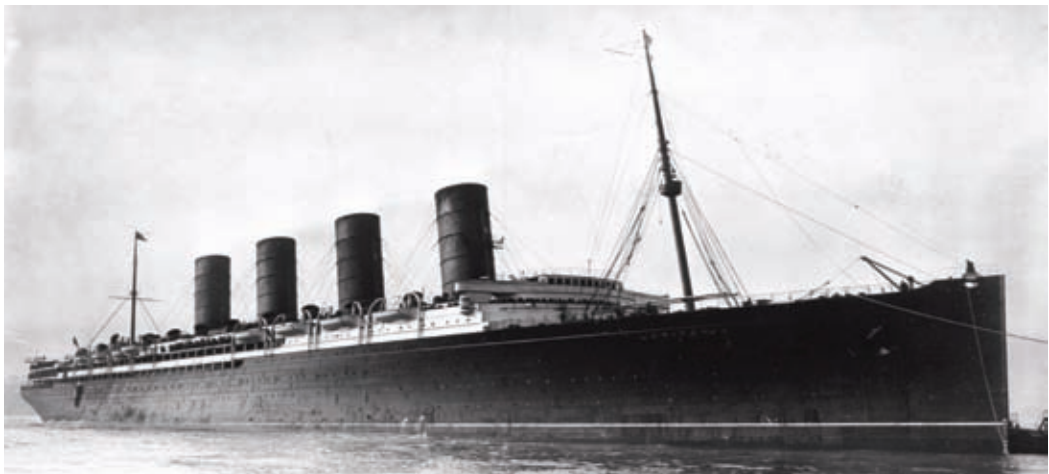


Fig 8.5 The ship Lusitania

Because of the attacks of Allied forces, Germany lost its forces and their military power became weakened. There was a food shortage in the country and it made the forces irritable. At the same time, there were riots among the general public. The emperor gave up his throne because the German navy rebelled to dethrone the emperor and this incident quickened the defeat of Germany. Thus, the World War I which lasted from 1914 to 1918 came to an end with the defeat of central powers headed by Germany.

## ❖ Results of World War I

- The most significant incident is the victory of allied groups by defeating the central powers.
- The loss of many lives and wealth because firearms were used and millions of people had become disabled.
- Versailles convention  
Leaders of many countries took part in discussions held in Paris in January 1919 for a peace pact at the end of war.

Names of those leaders are;

President of the United States of America	–	Woodrow Wilson
Prime minister of Britain	–	Jorge Loide
Prime minister of France	–	George Clemenceau
Prime minister of Italy	–	Vittorio Orlando

As a result of these peace talks, several agreements were signed with the defeated parties. The Versailles convention signed with Germany was among them. Germany was severely punished as the convict of the war.

### Punishments given to Germany in the Versailles Convention

- Germany had to pay a huge compensation to the winning countries.
- Restrictions were laid against Germany in keeping forces and the production of armament.
- Resubmission of Alsace and Lorraine areas to France.
- Dividing Germany's colonies outside Europe among the victorious countries.
- Downfall of the dictatorship monarchies in Europe. Dictatorship monarchies like German empire, Austria Hungary Empire, Turkey Empire fell down. New independent countries emerged based on different nationalities.  
e.g.: Finland, Poland, Czechoslovakia
- The whole of Europe faced an economic demise because the production weakened and price of goods went up due to the economic downfall. The United States of America and Britain became powerful countries in the world at the end of the war. Britain was able to improve its naval power and the number of colonies they had too increased.

- Steps were taken to establish an organization called the League of Nations Union to protect the world from such disasters in the future.

## 8.2. League of the Nations Union

The necessity of establishing an international organization to avoid such wars and maintain peace and security in the world was highlighted in the peace talks held in Paris in 1919. The president of United States of America, Woodrow Wilson pioneered in this. The League of the Nations Union was established on the 10<sup>th</sup> of January 1920 as a result of this. There were 42 countries in this union at the beginning.

Objectives of establishing the League of the Nations Union

- Giving peaceful resolutions to conflicts between countries
- Avoiding world wars in the future
- Improving international understanding and harmony
- Protecting the freedom and sovereignty of small countries
- Protection of world peace through universal harmony

### ❖ Attempts of the League of the Nations Union for Peace

The League of the Nations union was able to avoid wars for about 20 years after its establishment. The reason for that was the respectful obedience to the decisions shown by both big and small countries during the first few years of the union. Some instances where the League of the Nations Union became successful were;

- prevent the wars that broke out between countries like; Sweden and Finland, Germany and Poland, Greece and Bulgaria and Iran and Turkey.
- working for the rehabilitation of refugees.
- conducting supervision of colonies that were put under the guardianship of the League of the Nations Union well, after the World War I.
- taking steps to weaken slavery and drug business.

## ❖ Reasons for the failure of the League of the Nations Union

The primary objective of establishing the League of the Nations Union was to protect world peace and stop further wars. But within 20 years of the establishment of the League of the Nations Union, the convict of World War I, Germany began World War II also. It was clear that Nations Union's objective of stopping further wars could not be achieved. There were several reasons for this failure.

- United States of America which was wealthy and a country with military power did not become a member of this union. The American senate refused to agree with some principles laid according to the requirements of the member countries of the League of the Nations Union. Therefore, a powerful country like America was not bound to protect the principles of the league of the Nations Union. This caused the failure of the union. On the other hand keeping Russia, another powerful nation in the world away from the league of the Nations Union too affected it badly.
- The League of the Nations Union failed in encouraging its members to put its decisions into action. The reason for that is because the union did not have such power to get its members function according to its decisions. There was no military force in the union and there was no common agreement to employ a peace keeping force.
- Another challenge the union faced was that there was no unity among the powerful nations that were the members of the union and they were reluctant to give priority to common needs keeping their personal objectives aside. The members of the League of the Nations Union didn't pay enough attention to Germany's resignation from the union before World War II. The reason was that they were happy with Germany's role played in attacking communism.
- The union was not able to work against some countries that disturbed world peace. When Italy invaded Abyssinia, economic restrictions were imposed against them. Yet, the union failed to implement them efficiently.
- Another example is the time Japan invaded Manchuria. No action was taken against Japan in this incident.

The result of the failure of the League of the Nations Union was another World War. It was World War II.

### ↓ **ACTIVITY**

1. Mark the countries that joined in World War I on a map.
2. Explain three reasons for World War I.
3. Mention two results of World War I.

## **8.3. World War II**

We learned above that World War I ended by 1918 A.D. Another world war began to rise within two decades after World War I. As a result, another world war occurred. This devastating battle that lasted for six years from September 1939 to August 1945 is called World War II.

### ❖ **Reasons for World War II**

Though World War II began in 1939, it did not break out so suddenly. The competition that existed between powerful countries and the behaviour of some European countries set the background for another war in about a decade after World War I. When this situation is considered, several reasons that kindled the war can be identified. Let's study those in detail.

#### **01. Hitler's rise to power in Germany and his conduct**

After World War I, western countries got together to establish a new government in Germany which was called as "Weimar Republic". The Failure of the Weimar Republic in finding solutions to the problems faced by Germany in the contemporary society, paved way to a ruler like Hitler to come to power in Germany. Germany had to pay a vast compensation according to the Versailles convention. Because Germany spent her capital completely to pay compensation for war after 1920, the Weimar Republic started printing money in large quantities. This created a high inflation in the country reducing the real value of money. The price of goods went up rapidly and the unemployment rate too increased. Hitler's followers took the advantage of



this situation. Germany too suffered the adverse effects of the world economic demise of 1929. As a result the prices of goods and unemployment rate increased in Germany. There were labour strikes in some cities. Though many countries faced this situation, Hitler's followers began to claim that the democratic Weimar Republic could not solve problems.

**Adolf Hitler** was an Austrian. He fought for Germany in World War I. He was imprisoned during the Weimar Republic for conspiring against the government. While in prison, he wrote a famous book called, "Mein Kampf (My War)". He presented his ideas about German Nazism in this book. Hitler who was released from prison kept on spreading an insane racism. He was able to become the German Chancellor by capturing the power in the German parliament (Reichstag) in 1933. His party was named as National Socialist Party.

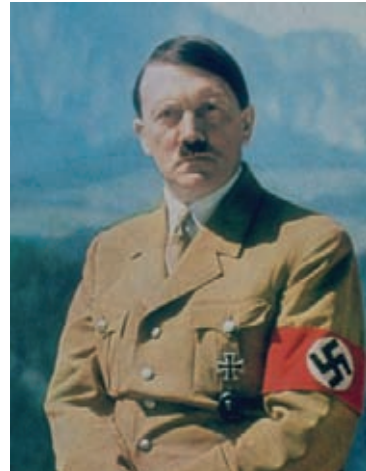


Fig 8.6 Adolf Hitler

### **Nazism**

- Nazism which emerged against democracy, communism, and capitalism, bore as its basic concept that Germans are the noblest nation that descends from pure Aryans.
- Another special characteristic of Nazism is looking down upon Jews.
- Hitler has explained Nazism in his book 'Mein Kampf'.
- Nazism is a political system that was based on party dictatorship.

It is said that Hitler had conducted speeches before his instructors to get practice in making public speeches to attract people. He came to power in 1933 with the support of the other members in the parliament. Yet, he gradually established his power and started being a dictator. When Hitler became the chancellor, the president of Germany was Von Hindenburg. Old Hindenburg died soon and Hitler grasped the president's power also. He got his followers set fire to the parliament building in an approaching election and accused communists of it. Then he abolished all political



parties and started murdering his opponents such as communists and Jews. Here, his secret police force, the Gestapo and the SS force engaged themselves in brutal massacres. Hitler was a person who abused mass media completely for his advantage. His media minister Goebbels, violated all media ethics and used mass media to create a public opinion which was partial to Hitler. Hitler completely disturbed the democracy of Germany. The freedom of press, freedom of meeting and freedom of expressing ideas were completely banned. The contemporary Germans tolerated these things with the expectation of a noble Germany as was promised by Hitler. The western capitalist countries did not oppose Hitler because they were happy about the destruction caused to communism by Hitler's brutal massacres of communists in Germany. This apparently made Hitler more and more stubborn.

Hitler who quitted the League of the Nations Union in 1934 drew Germany back to war. Hitler invaded neighbouring Austria in 1938 and started a Nazi reign there by attaching it to Germany. Then, Hitler focused his attention on Czechoslovakia and by separating the Germans and Czechoslovakians, he supported the establishment of a new country called Sudetenland. After that, Hitler invaded both Sudetenland and Czechoslovakia and took them under the power of Germany. The western countries did not oppose Hitler's actions till he invaded Poland. But with Hitler's invasion of Poland, countries like Britain and France started fighting against Hitler. That was the beginning of World War II. Hitler who came to power in 1933 started World War II by empowering Germany in 6 years and Allied forces including America, England and Russia had to fight Hitler for 6 years to defeat him and wipe out Nazism from the world.

During this period, Hitler had established concentration camps and got millions of innocent Jews and Russians assassinated. Some examples for such camps are Auschwitz, Bergen Belsen, Belzec and Sobibor. People of the whole world had to suffer due to the invasive policies carried out by leaders like Hitler during World War II. The development of the whole world was drawn back for several years because the whole world had to pay its attention to war. The biggest destruction after World War I was caused during World War II.



Fig 8.7 – Rings and slippers of those who were massacred in a Nazi concentration camp



Fig 8.8 – Innocent child prisoners who were kept in Nazi concentration camp

## 02. The conduct of Mussolini in Italy

Though Italy was in the victorious group in World War I, the peace pacts signed after war were not so profitable for them. They could not obtain the number of

colonies they expected. As a result, there were several economic problems such as unemployment, food shortage etc. At the same time, labour strikes broke out because of increasing labour problems. Benito Mussolini who exploited this situation, captured political power through Fascist political party in 1922. His political system is known as Fascism. It is also a single party dictatorship like Nazism of Hitler. Mussolini who captured power in Italy started hunting his enemies using the armed soldiers called 'Black Shirt Army'. Though Mussolini could strengthen the economy of Italy through dictatorship, his attempt became a failure amidst the bad effects of world economic demise in 1929. First, Mussolini gathered all internal powers into his hand and later started spread the power of Italy internationally. It was in 1870 that Italy became a united country just as Germany. By that time, the other European nations had captured many of the fertile areas of the world. As a result, the existing condition was likely to create battles among European nations in the attempt of Italy to establish colonies. In 1936, Mussolini invaded and captured Abyssinia of Africa which is known as Ethiopia today. Later Mussolini joined Hitler in the World War II in order to improve Fascist power. There, the Fascist and Nazi powers fought against the countries headed by England, Russia and America. Mussolini was arrested towards the end of World War II and lost his life at the end.



Fig 8.9 Benito Mussolini

### **03. The conduct of Japan**

Japan came forward as a developed Asian country towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They had the necessity of finding raw materials for their productions and markets for their products. Yet, by that time, many areas of Asia had become colonies of European nations. Hence, Japan's attempt to fulfill its economic needs or building a Japanese empire in Asia resulted in a situation which led Japan to have problems with European nations. In 1934, Japan invaded Manchuria in Northern China and captured it. Japan's incursive behaviour was discussed in the League of the Nations Union and Japan was found guilty of invasion. Here, Japan resigned from the League of the Nations Union and continued their invasive conduct by capturing several

important harbours and cities of China. In the same way as Hitler's and Mussolini's behaviour affected Europe, Japan's behaviour affected Asia. Thus, Japan had become the invader in Asia by the time World War II began. Thus, Japan's behaviour paced up the approach of war to Asia.

#### 04. Weaknesses of the League of the Nations Union

It was explained above that the objective of establishing the League of the League of the Nations Union was to protect world peace and avoiding war. Nevertheless, the Union did not possess power or ability to avoid war.

Several countries entered into friendly agreements because the collaboratively established Nations Union to avoid wars failed in its task. As a result of this, the powerful nations started to be armed for the security of their group. This being armed set a background of war.

#### ❖ Participants of World War II



(Map 8.2)



Allied Powers which were Britain, France, United States of America (western liberalist countries) belonged to this group. Communist Russia too was an allied country.

The European countries; Germany and Italy entered into a secret agreement with Japan in 1937. This group was named the Berlin, Rome, Tokyo axis after their capital cities. Later, the term “Axis Powers” was used to name these three countries.



Fig 8.10 – A German military submarine



Fig 8.11 – Gas ovens used by Hitler to massacre the Jews and other prisoners of war

## ❖ Expansion of World War II

World War II began when Hitler of Germany invaded Poland on 01 September, 1939. Britain and France that had vowed to protect Poland joined the war declaring war against Germany. Germany defeated Poland within four weeks. Continuing his belligerence, Hitler captured the countries; Norway, Denmark, Holland and Belgium. He attacked France in June, 1940 and captured her capital city, Paris.



Fig 8.12 – British fighter aircraft

With the approach of German forces into Paris, Mussolini too joined war invading different parts of France across the territories of Italy. Thus, as a result of the agreement made after German and Italian forces capturing France, Germany took France into her hand.

Winston Churchill, the British Prime Minister who considered the defeat of France an insult to Britain understood the value of being strategic in facing future threats. Churchill who was an eloquent speaker and a skillful leader was able



Fig 8.13 – Winston Churchill

to motivate the whole British population to fight against Nazism. He built a war front against Germany including British colonies such as Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India and Ceylon. In addition to that, USA supported Britain a lot.

#### ❖ USA joins the war

How Japan tried to build an empire in Asia while Germany and Italy were capturing European countries was discussed above. There, Japan had to fight the countries such as Britain, USA and France who had many colonies in the eastern part of the world. The camp in Pearl Harbour became an obstacle to Japan in these battles. Therefore, Japan bombed the American navy camp in Pearl Harbour on 07 November, 1941. The American president, Franklin Roosevelt declared war against Japan on this incident. Germany and Italy that were partial to Japan had declared war against America, following the above incident. Thus, the war that was limited to Europe grew into a world war until the end of 1941.

The Germany's next target was Britain. Hitler decided to invade Britain using his air force and commanded them to bomb British air ports and cities. Britain too possessed strong naval and air forces. Then, Britain too employed fighter planes to attack enemy craft. Ferocious attacks took place between the two parties on 14 September, 1940. It was reported that the British air force dropped about 56 German aircraft. Hitler gave up attacking Britain once he understood that Britain's military power and its talent were too stronger than he guessed.

Fig 8.14 Attack on the  
Pearl harbour





### ❖ Germany invading Russia

After the above mentioned incidents, Hitler attacked Russia with no any clear reason. He thought that he would be able to capture Russia easily. The French emperor, Napoleon Bonaparte attacked Russia before this and retreated after a great loss with thousands of casualties. Hitler too faced a similar loss after 125 years. Soviet forces had foreseen such an attack and were ready to retaliate. So, they were well equipped with all strategies to misguide the enemy. One such strategy was to keep the German forces in Russia till the severe cold season approached. The Nazi forces too underwent the same destiny Napoleon's forces faced. German forces were not prepared to face a long winter season. Therefore, severe coldness, food shortage and diseases caused many deaths among German forces. Hitler was not tactful enough to retreat. Ignorant to the critical conditions his forces were facing in Russia, Hitler commanded them to move forward. There, the Russian red forces were able to defeat the German forces easily.

### ❖ Germany surrenders

Russia continued fighting and progressed towards Germany liberating the areas that were in the hands of Nazis. At the same time, French and American forces launched attacks from the western front. The allied forces that reached Germany by March 1945 came to Berlin by May. Hitler and many of his commanders, who understood that their defeat was close by, committed suicide. Thus, Germany surrendered with no conditions in May 1945.

### ❖ Japan surrenders

Japan captured using its military power, the British colonies such as; Singapore, Malaysia, Burma, Hong Kong. Later, they captured countries like Borneo, Java, Sumatra and Philippines. Thus, by 1942 whole Southeast Asia except Ceylon and India seemed to have surrendered.

Japan bombed Colombo on 05<sup>th</sup> April 1942 and Trincomalee on 07<sup>th</sup> April. Because of that, Britain suspecting that Japan would invade Ceylon placed several platoons in Ceylon. Yet no battle between the two parties took place in Ceylon.

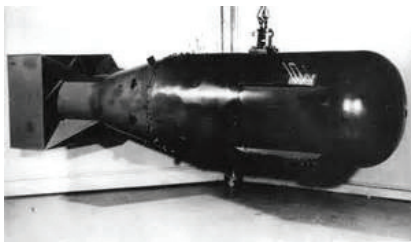


Fig 8.15 – The atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima

Severe battles took place between the allied forces and Japan resulting in the defeat of Japan. Because the final warning issued to already losing Japan by allied forces was ignored, USA attacked Hiroshima on 06<sup>th</sup> August, 1945 and Nagasaki on 09<sup>th</sup> August with atomic bombs. The two cities were destroyed in a few seconds and more than one hundred thousand people died. More than that was injured. Many more generations became ill due to the harmful effects of radiation. World War II came to an end when the emperor Hirohito of Japan agreed to surrender under no conditions seeing the destruction.



Fig 8.16 Hiroshima destruction

#### ❖ Results of World War II

- The axis powers that included Germany, Italy and Japan were defeated in World War II.
- That was the most devastating war that took place on this earth. It is believed that more than 50 million people died in this war. The loss of property and wealth cannot be valued.
- Under Hitler's plan of massacring Jews, millions of Jews in areas like Germany, Poland and Hungary where there was German power were put into concentration camps and murdered.
- Atomic bombs were used as a weapon and the terrible destruction caused by them shocked not only the losers but also the winners. A countless number of lives were lost due to the use of atomic bombs and their terrible results are still felt even after generations.
- France and Britain who were world leaders lost their positions and their imperialist concepts were broken down. As a result, colonies of Britain and France such as Sri Lanka, India and Indo China got independence.
- USA took steps to uplift the devastated defeated countries in Europe. This aid program was named 'Martial Plan' after the state secretary of USA, John Martial.
- USA and Russia became the two central powers of the world after the world war. USA became the protector of democracy whereas Soviet Russia became the protector of socialism. Several other countries also divided into two camps based

on these two countries. Countries headed by USA were called as capitalist camp and the group led by Russia was identified as socialist camp.



Fig 8.17 – A statue built in commemoration of children killed in a village destroyed by Hitler's forces

World was divided into two camps like this after World War II and continued a battle to win their own ideas using different strategies other than weapons. This is called the 'Cold War or Weaponless War'. This existed for about four decades after World War II. Basic strategies employed here were;

- using spy services
- establishment of different organizations
- launching of aid programmes etc

After World War II, Asian and African countries got the opportunity of obtaining independence getting freed from colonization. USA and Russia extended their support to uplift the social and economic status of those countries. Their intention was to win those countries to their camps. Those countries had to be partial to the countries who gave them aid directly or indirectly and it became a problem for their sovereignty. Therefore, they established the Non-Aligned Movement with the intention of being impartial without going with either of the central powers. It was established in 1961. The late Indian Prime Minister, Sri Jawaharlal Nehru was a pioneering leader of this movement.

The then president of Yugoslavia, Marshal Tito and Egyptian president Abdul Gamal Nasser too had worked hard for this organization.

### ↓ **ACTIVITY**

Complete the following table.

Reasons for World War II	Results of World War II

## 8. 4 United Nations Organization

While World War II was going on, the British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill and the USA President, Franklin Roosevelt signed the Atlantic convention in August 1941. This document which explained why the allied forces joined the war, focused its attention on receiving international support for peace and paying attention to protecting the independence and sovereignty of nations. Based on this agreement,

names of 26 nations who fought against axis powers were declared in January 1942 in Washington. The term ‘United Nations’ was first used here to name those nations. After that, in October 1943, foreign ministers of Russia, Britain, America and China conducted discussions in Moscow about establishing an international organization for peace.



Fig 8.18 – The United Nations Headquarters in Newyork



Fig 8.19 – Official Logo of United Nations

In December 1943 in Teheran, the three central powers of the world,

- USA President, Franklin Roosevelt
- British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill
- Russian leader Joseph Stalin

conducted further discussions about this. There the proposal for establishing an organization for world peace was accepted by those leaders. Thus, a discussion was held in June 1945 in San Francisco of USA for designing the United Nations Convention to establish the United Nations Organization.

Representatives of 50 countries attended this. Poland who did not attend the conference later signed the convention. Thus the number of starting members was 51. The organization was officially started in 24 October, 1945 by giving official approval to the convention. Hence, 24<sup>th</sup> of October is considered the United Nations' Day.

#### ❖ Objectives of the Establishment of United Nations Organization

- Maintaining international peace and security.
- Developing friendship among nations.
- Getting international assistance in confirming human rights and independence.

#### ❖ Structure of the United Nations Organization

UNO consists of six main institutions.

1. The General Assembly
2. The Security Council
3. The Economic and Social Council
4. The Trusteeship Council
5. The International Court of Justice
6. The Secretariat



## ❖ The General Assembly



Fig 8.20 – Conference room of the General Assembly of the United Nations

This is formed by the representatives of all member countries of the United Nations Organization. There are 193 members. The general assembly of this council is held in September, every year. All members are equal in this council. Every member country has a vote. Main duties and powers of the General Assembly are as follows.

- Discussion of all matters regarding international peace and security and presenting recommendations on them. Presenting proposals for the promotion of fields such as economic, health and human rights of member countries.
- Approval of the budget of the United Nations after considering it and division of contribution fees among members.
- Appointing the secretary-general on the recommendation of the Security Council, appointing Judges for the International Court of Justice and admission of new members to the organization.

## ❖ The Security Council



Fig 8.21 – A moment when the members of the Security Council were voting