

UNIT IV
1.II WORLD WAR – CAUSES AND RESULT
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World War II

Introduction

- World War II, also called Second World War, was a conflict that involved virtually every part of the world during the years 1939–45.
- The principal belligerents were the Axis powers—Germany, Italy, and Japan—and the Allies—France, Great Britain, the United States, the Soviet Union, and, to a lesser extent, China.
- It was the biggest conflict in history that had lasted almost six years.
- Nearly some 100 million people had been militarised, and 50 million had been killed (around 3% of the world's population).

Causes of War

The major causes of World War II were numerous. They include the **impact of the Treaty of Versailles following WWI, the worldwide economic depression, failure of appeasement, the rise of militarism in Germany and Japan, and the failure of the League of Nations.**

Treaty of Versailles

- Following World War I, the victorious Allied Powers met to decide Germany's future. Germany was forced to sign the Treaty of Versailles.
- Under this treaty, Germany had to accept guilt for the war and to pay reparations. Germany lost territory and was prohibited from having a large military.
- The humiliation faced by Germany under this treaty, paved the way for the spread of Ultra-Nationalism in Germany.

Failure of the League of Nations

- The League of Nations was an international organization set up in 1919 to keep world peace.
- It was intended that all countries would be members and that if there were disputes between countries, they could be settled by negotiation rather than by force.
- The League of Nations was a good idea, but ultimately a failure, as not all countries joined the league.
- Also, the League had no army to prevent military aggression such as Italy's invasion of Ethiopia in Africa or Japan's invasion of Manchuria in China.

Great Depression of 1929

- The worldwide economic depression of the 1930s took its toll in different ways in Europe and Asia.
- In Europe, political power shifted to totalitarian and imperialist governments in several countries, including Germany, Italy, and Spain.
- In Asia, a resource-starved Japan began to expand aggressively, invading China and maneuvering to control a sphere of influence in the Pacific.

Rise of Fascism

- Victors' stated aims in World War I had been "to make the world safe for democracy," and postwar Germany was made to adopt a democratic constitution, as did most of the other states restored or created after the war.
- In the 1920s, however, the wave of nationalistic, militaristic totalitarianism known by its Italian name, fascism.
- It promised to minister to peoples' wants more effectively than democracy and presented itself as the one sure defense against communism.
- Benito Mussolini established the first Fascist, European dictatorship during the interwar period in Italy in 1922.

Rise of Nazism

- Adolf Hitler, the Leader of the German National Socialist (Nazi) party, preached a racist brand of fascism.
- Hitler promised to overturn the Versailles Treaty, restore German wealth & glory and secure additional Lebensraum ("living space") for the German people, who he contended deserve more as members of a superior race.
- In 1933 Hitler became the German Chancellor, and in a series of subsequent moves established himself as dictator.
- Moreover, in 1941 the Nazi regime unleashed a war of extermination against Slavs, Jews, and other elements deemed inferior by Hitler's ideology.

Policy of Appeasement

- Hitler openly denounced the Treaty of Versailles and began secretly building up Germany's army and weapons.
- Although Britain and France knew of Hitler's actions, they thought a stronger Germany would stop the spread of Communism from Russia.
- An example of appeasement was the Munich Agreement of September 1938. In the Agreement, Britain and France allowed Germany to annex areas in Czechoslovakia where German-speakers lived.
 - Germany agreed not to invade the rest of Czechoslovakia or any other country. However, in March 1939, Germany broke its promise and invaded the rest of Czechoslovakia.
 - Even then, neither Britain nor France was prepared to take military action.

Key Turning Points of the World War II

The Start

- Three years of mounting international tension - encompassing the Spanish Civil War, the union of Germany and Austria, Hitler's occupation of the Sudetenland and the

invasion of Czechoslovakia led to deterioration of ties between Axis Power and Allied Powers.

- However, the German invasion of Poland on 1 September 1939 and subsequently two days later, Britain and France declared war on Germany.
- This marked the beginning of World War II.

Phoney War

- The western Europe was very quiet during the first few months of the war.
- This period of war is known as 'phoney war'.
- Preparations for war continued in earnest, but there were few signs of conflict, and civilians of the western european countries (allied powers) evacuated to safe places.

Ribbentrop Pact

- By the early part of 1939 the German dictator Adolf Hitler had become determined to invade and occupy Poland.
- Poland, for its part, had guarantees of French and British military support should it be attacked by Germany. Hitler intended to invade Poland anyway, but first he had to neutralize the possibility that the Soviet Union would resist the invasion of its western neighbour.
- Secret negotiations in August 1939, led to the signing of the German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact in Moscow.
- Further, Russia followed Germany into Poland in September and Poland was carved up between the two invaders before the end of the year.

Winter War 1940

- The 'winter war' between Russia and Finland concluded in March, and in the following month Germany invaded Denmark and Norway.
- Denmark surrendered immediately, but the Norwegians fought on - with British and French assistance - surrendering in June 1940.

Fall of France 1940

- After war with scandenavian countries got over, Germany invaded France, Belgium and Holland.
- During this phase, the western Europe encountered the Blitzkrieg - or 'lightning war'.
- **Blitzkrieg:** Germany's combination of fast armoured tanks on land, and superiority in the air, made a unified attacking force that was both innovative and effective.
 - Despite greater numbers of air and army personnel in Allied powers, they proved no match for German Forces.
- In France an armistice was signed with Germany, with the puppet French Vichy government.

- Having conquered France, Hitler turned his attention to Britain, and began preparations for an invasion.

Battle of Britain 1940

- Lasting from July to September 1940, it was the first war to be fought solely in the air.
- German took decisions to attack from airfields and factories to the major cities, but somehow the Royal Air Force managed to squeak a narrow victory.
- This ensured the - ultimately indefinite - postponement of the German invasion plans.

War Getting Global

- With continental Europe under Nazi control, and Britain safe - for the time being - the war took on a more global dimension in 1941.
- Following the defeat of Mussolini's armies in Greece and Tobruk, German forces arrived in North Africa and invaded Greece and Yugoslavia in April 1941.

Operation Barbarossa

- After facing defeat in Britain, Hitler broke the **Ribbentrop Pact** and invaded Russia in 1941.
- The initial advance was swift, with the fall of Sebastopol at the end of October, and Moscow coming under attack at the end of the year.
- The bitter Russian winter, however, like the one that Napoleon had experienced a century and a half earlier, crippled the Germans.
- The Soviets counterattacked in December and the Eastern Front stagnated until the spring.

Pearl Harbour

- The Japanese, tired of American trade embargoes, mounted a surprise attack on the US Navy base of Pearl Harbor, in Hawaii, on 7 December 1941.
- This ensured that global conflict commenced, with Germany declaring war on the US, a few days later.
- Also, within a week of Pearl Harbor, Japan had invaded the Philippines, Burma and Hong Kong.

American Entry Into the War

- Through the Battle of Midway 1942, the US entered World War II. In this battle, US sea-based aircraft destroyed four Japanese carriers and a cruiser, marking the turning point in World War II.
- Also, the news of mass murders of Jewish people by the Nazis reached the Allies, and the US pledged to avenge these crimes.

Reversal of German Fortunes

- By the second half of 1942, British forces gained the initiative in North Africa and Russian forces counterattacked at Stalingrad.

- In February 1943, Germany surrendered at Stalingrad to Soviet Union. This was the first major defeat of Hitler's armies.
- Further, German and Italian forces in North Africa surrendered to the Allies.
- As the Russian advance on the Eastern Front gathered pace, recapturing Kharkiv and Kiev from Germany. Moreover, Allied bombers began to attack German cities in enormous daylight air raids.
- The Russians reached Berlin (capital of Germany) on 21 April 1945.
- Hitler killed himself on the 30th, two days after Mussolini had been captured and hanged by Italian partisans.
- Germany surrendered unconditionally on 7 May, and the following day was celebrated as VE (Victory in Europe) day. The war in Europe was over.

Nuclear Bombing And The End

- Plans were being prepared for an Allied invasion of Japan, but fears of fierce resistance and massive casualties prompted Harry Truman - the new American president to sanction the use of an atomic bomb against Japan.
- Such bombs had been in development since 1942, and on 6 August 1945 one of them was dropped on the Japanese city of Hiroshima.
- Three days later another was dropped on Nagasaki.
- No country could have withstand such attacks, and the Japanese surrendered on 14 August.
- With the surrender of Japan, World War II was finally over.

New Superpowers

- World War II brought about changes in the status of countries and continents. Britain and France lost their positions of preeminence as superpowers and yielded place to the USA and the USSR.

Start of Decolonisation

- After the war, Britain and France were confronted with various domestic and external problems. Both of them could no longer hold onto their respective colonies Thus, the post-war world witnessed the end of colonialism in Africa and Asia.

Birth of UN

- One of the momentous results of the war was the birth of the United Nations Organisation.
- Although the League failed to deliver, mankind did not altogether lose its hopes of making the world a safer and happier place to live in.
- The UN Charter enshrines the hopes and ideals of mankind on the basis of which countries can work together to maintain lasting peace.

- However, the establishment of the UN was agreed, much before the end of World War II under the Atlantic Charter.

Start of Cold War

- After the end of the war, a conference was held in Potsdam, Germany, to set up peace treaties. The countries that fought with Hitler lost territory and had to pay reparations to the Allies. Germany and its capital Berlin were divided into four parts.
- The zones were to be controlled by Great Britain, the United States, France and the Soviet Union.
- The three western Allies and the Soviet Union disagreed on many things and as time went on Germany was divided into two separate countries: East Germany, which had a Communist government and West Germany, which was a democratic state .
- This laid the foundation of the Cold War.

New Economic World Order

- Bretton Woods Conference, formally United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference, meeting at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire (July 1–22, 1944), during World War II to make financial arrangements for the postwar world after the expected defeat of Germany and Japan.
- It drew up a project for the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD-now known as World Bank) to make long-term capital available to states urgently needing such foreign aid, and a project for the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to finance short-term imbalances in international payments in order to stabilize exchange rates.
- Also, the US dollar was established as a reserve currency for the world trade.

India and World II

- World War II had taken an immense toll on the British Empire. Britain had lost a lot of capital and they were looking to their colonies to help them get the status of world power back. However, Mahatma Gandhi at this time organized Indians against the British.
- Also, World War II broke out to contain Hitler's intention of having German colonies beyond its borders, the same colonial occupation that Britain had already been practicing for centuries.
- Thus, after the war, people all over the world started supporting voices against British occupation over its colonies.
- When the Labour Party came to power in 1945 in Britain it inclined towards internationalism and racial equality, among other liberal principles.
- Soon after coming into power, Prime Minister Clement Attlee (Labour Party) began the process of granting India its independence in 1947.

II.U.N.O

United Nations Organisation (UNO)

Destructive and horrifying experiences of the two World Wars made the world realise the necessity of a peace maintaining organisation more powerful than the previous ones e.g., the League of Nations. The efforts finally took shape at San Francisco on 24th October, 1945 with the emergence of the United Nations Organisation (UNO).

Establishment of the UNO

- The two World Wars left a legacy of misery and depression in nearly every country. Millions of people lost their lives and many others became disabled, homeless and unemployed, apart from the millions of dollars that were spent during the war.
- The League of Nations was established with a promise of peace, but it had failed to prevent another war. All the countries feared, that another World War might lead to the end of the world as destructive weapons, like atom bombs, were now invented and already used.
- The world was divided in two Power Blocs, both having opposite ideologies. All the above mentioned events gave the world leaders a purpose to form a more powerful, transparent and impartial organisation, which would be able to resolve the differences between the countries/blocs amicably and save the mankind from any further destruction.

Origin of the UNO

- The leaders of the Allied powers comprising Great Britain, France, Soviet Union, United States and China realised the potential danger of wars on humanity, during the war period. Thus, there were talks about setting up a World Organisation.
- The formation of the UN had a huge history behind it, with many such efforts being already taken in the past. American President Roosevelt pointed out four freedoms – those of Worship, Speech, Freedom from Wars and Freedom from Fears as the basis of Peace.
- The London Declaration , 1941, proposed by the representatives of New Zealand, Canada, Australia, South Africa and Britain, aimed at forming a World Organisation more powerful than the League of Nations.
- The Atlantic Charter of August, 1941 required all signatories to accept peaceful settling of disputes, recognising equality and sovereignty of nations and also, the right of each nation to choose its own form of Government and trying to preserve peace and security. This was signed by the British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill and the American President, Roosevelt.
- Washington Declaration of 1942 also aimed for peace, declaring to accept the principles of the Atlantic charter. It were finally, after all these preceding conferences and declarations, the Moscow declaration (which laid the foundation of the UN), the Dumbarton Oaks Conference (1944) (where the Draft of the Charter was prepared) and the Yalta Conference in 1945 (where it was conceded that the membership would be open to all peace loving states) and also the San Francisco Conference, that finally lend the shape to the UN as it is today.

- The Organisation formally came into existence on 24th October, 1945, when the Charter was ratified by 29 nations, including 5 permanent members of the Security Council.

Purposes/Objectives of the United Nations

Objectives of the United Nations are as follows:

1. To maintain International Peace and Security.
2. To develop friendly relations among nations, based on the respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of people.
3. To achieve International Co-operation in solving various International, Economic, Social, Cultural or Humanitarian problems.
4. To be centre for harmonising the actions of nations in the attainment of goals.

Principles of the United Nations

Principles of the United Nations are as follows:

1. To respect the sovereign equality of all its members.
2. All members should fulfill, in good faith, the obligations assumed by them.
3. They should settle their International disputes by peaceful means.
4. They would refrain from threat or use of force against any state.
5. They should give the United Nations every assistance in any action it takes.
6. The Organisation should ensure, that States, which are not members of the United Nations, act in accordance with these principles.

Headquarters and the Flag of the United Nations

- All the organs of the United Nations are based in New York, USA, except the International Court of Justice, which is located at the Hague in Netherlands.
- The UN Flag is light blue in color and is portrayed in white. At its centre is the UN Emblem, a polar map of the world, embraced by twin olive branches. The flag was adopted on 20th October, 1947.

Official Languages and Membership

Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish are the official languages of the UNO. However, any documents are written only in the working languages – English and French.

50 members who took part in the San Francisco Conference, signed and approved the Charter and became the original members of the United Nations.

All Peace-loving Nations can be admitted to the UN. These countries are admitted by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council by a 2/3rd majority of votes. It should be noted that India was one of those 50 members who took part in the Conference and has been an active participant in all the peace-keeping endeavours of the UN.

Organs of the United Nations

The General Assembly

The work of the UN is determined by the will of the majority of the members as expressed in Resolutions adopted by the Assembly. The General Assembly is the main deliberative organ of the UN.

All the members of the UN are members of the General Assembly. Each state has 5 representatives in the General Assembly, but each State has only one vote.

The regular session of the General Assembly begins each year on the 3rd Tuesday in September and continues usually until the 3rd week of December.

At the beginning of each regular session, the Assembly elects a new President, 21 Vice-Presidents and the Chairmen of the Assembly's six main committees.

The Presidency of the Assembly rotates each year among the five groups of the States: Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America and Caribbean and Western Europe and other States. This rotation of Presidency is done so as to ensure equitable geographical representation.

Powers and Functions of the General Assembly

The powers and functions of the General Assembly are as follows:

1. To consider and make recommendations on the principles of co-operation, in the maintenance of international peace and security.
2. To discuss any question relating to international peace and security and to make recommendations on it.
3. To make recommendations for the peaceful settlements of disputes.
4. To receive and consider reports from the Security Council and other organs of the UN.
5. To consider and approve the budget of the UN and to apportion the contributions among members.
6. To elect the non-permanent members of the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and Trusteeship Council and to elect the judges of the International Court of Justice.
7. To appoint the Secretary-General on the recommendation of the Security Council.
8. To discuss and make recommendations on any issue affecting the powers and functions of any organ of the UN.
9. To make recommendations to promote International, Political, Social and Economic co-operation.

The Security Council

It is the executive body of the United Nations. It has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of International peace and security.

Composition of Security Council

The Council consists of 15 members out of which 5 members China, France, Russia, Britain and the USA are permanent. The non-permanent members are elected from Afro-Asian countries (5 members), Latin America (2 members), West European and other countries (2 members) and East European countries (1 member).

Each member of the Security Council has one vote. The permanent members have the Veto power i.e., a negative vote. However, abstinence for voting does not amount to a negative vote or a veto.

Powers and Functions of the Security Council

The powers and functions of the Security Council are as follows:

1. To maintain International peace and security in accordance with the principles and purposes of the UN.
2. To investigate any dispute or situation and to take military action against an aggressor, and to recommend terms of settling disputes and any methods of adjusting against them.
3. Formulating plans to regulate armaments.
4. To call on members to apply economic sanctions and other measures other than force, to prevent or stop aggression.
5. To recommend to the General Assembly for the appointment of the Secretary-General and to elect the Judges of the International Court of Justice together with the General Assembly.
6. To determine existence of any threats and to recommend actions for the same.
7. To recommend the admission of new members.
8. To exercise the trusteeship functions of the United Nations in strategic areas. One of the peace keeping forces of the UN is working in Afghanistan as UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), which is deeply concerned about the rising number of civilian deaths and injuries.

III. COLD WAR:

Background of the Cold War

The term “Cold War” denotes the absence of large-scale military operations fighting between the two opponents despite major regional wars, termed proxy wars, supported by both sides. The USSR and the USA were left as two superpowers with political and economic differences as a result of the Cold War that split the temporary wartime alliance against Nazi Germany

The seeds of future hostility were sown towards the closing years of World War 2. After the crossing of the Rhine in March 1945, the fall of Nazi Germany was inevitable. As such the Allies began drawing up the map of post-war Europe. The problem was each faction had their own idea about post-war Europe.

Each side held dissimilar ideas regarding the establishment and maintenance of post-war security. Foreign policy experts believed that while the Western Allies, who would go to form the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), favoured a democratic system of governments with fair elections as a measure to resolve any issues that might arise in the future, the Soviet Union was insistent on installing communist governments in countries under its influence. Even the Allies were divided on the issue of how best to deal with the now-belligerent Soviet Union. The Americans were more than happy to let the Soviet Union do as it pleased as their goal mainly to achieve American economic supremacy that would undo the legacy of old colonial entities like the British Empire, while the French and the British favoured

complete independence of Eastern European countries, especially Poland, over whose independence both nations had declared the war over Nazi Germany in the first place. Additional and independent and strong Central Europe would act as a buffer between the Soviets and Western Europe.

In April 1945, President Roosevelt died and was succeeded by Harry S. Truman. This caused a remarkable change in US-Soviet relations. Truman distrusted Stalin and opposed many of the changes that Stalin brought to the geopolitical landscape of Central and Eastern Europe, especially with regards to the “Polish Question”. The Soviets had installed the communist government based out of Lublin, who were rivals to the Polish government-in-exile in London, whose relations with the Soviets had been severed following the discovery of the Katyn Massacre in 1943.

The 1945 Allied conference in San Francisco established the multi-national United Nations (UN) for the maintenance of world peace, but the enforcement capacity of its security wing the United Nations Security Council was effectively paralyzed by the ability of individual members to exercise veto power. Accordingly, the UN was essentially converted into an inactive forum for exchanging polemical rhetoric, and the Soviets regarded it almost exclusively as a propaganda tribune. Thus the stage was set for the longest period of geopolitical tensions of the 20th century, whose effects last to this day.

Causes of the Cold War

- During World War 2 the United Kingdom, France and the United States aligned another in order to defeat Nazi Germany. The USSR would join this alliance following Operation Barbarossa – the invasion of Russia by Nazi Germany. There were promises that the alliance would continue well after the war.
- After the war, however, tensions started rising up. The USA was the strongest power that emerged after the war. It was a superpower in economic and military strengths.
- The USSR was the second most powerful country and it had played a key role in Germany’s defeat in the war. This increased its prestige in the world.
- After the war, in eastern Europe, many countries had communist governments. These nations saw the USSR with favourable eyes. Those that did not, were replaced by governments that looked at the USSR in a similar way
- The USA, as also the western European countries saw communism as a threat to its way of life and towards freedom also.
- The world was polarised into two blocs – the communist powers led by the USSR and the powers opposed to communism led by the USA. The former group comprised mostly eastern European nations while the latter by the western European countries.
- The USA began to view every development in the world as either supportive of or against the rise of communism. It even went to the extent of supporting colonial powers in their subjugation of the people if it meant curbing communism. This was their reasoning behind supporting the colonial domination of France in Indo-China.
- The arms race by the two powers also was a factor in rising tensions between them. It even extended beyond the far reaches of the Earth itself, when both the superpowers developed technology that would put their respective nations on higher technological footing than its rivals

Korean War

In the first major conflict since the end of World War 2, a crisis occurred in the Korean peninsula when Communist North Korea invaded democratic South Korea. This was the first test for the newly-formed United Nations to stop escalation between the two superpowers who were using their proxies to fight for them. A United Nations Army under the command of American General Douglas Mac Arthur pushed back North Koreans following the decisive battle of Inchon. However, the push into North Korea and China threatened to escalate matters when the Soviet Union pledged to support its allies for what they saw as a fight “against capitalist tyranny”. The war began on 25th June 1950 and ended on 27th July 1953 with the establishment of the Korean Demilitarized Zone. Tensions between North and South Korea persists to this day despite decades after the fall of the Soviet Union.

Cuban Missile Crisis

The USSR deployed nuclear missiles in Cuba which were ready to be launched onto the cities of the USA. The USA responded with a naval blockade of Cuba and both superpowers are on the verge of war. The standoff ended after 13 days when the USSR withdrew the missiles.

Vietnam War

The US intervened in the Vietnam crisis in 1965 by sending troops to aid South Vietnam in its fight against communist North Vietnam. North Vietnam was supported by the USSR and China. The Vietnam war (Which ended on April 30, 1975) proved very costly for the US where they lost about 58000 men. The losses and anti-war sentiment by its own people forced the US to withdraw its troops from Vietnam. In 1975, the Vietnam war ended with the fall of Saigon, the capital of the South Vietnamese government, with a decisive victory for communists.

Prague Spring

This occurred in 1968. The communist government of Czechoslovakia tried to bring in reforms such as multiparty democracy and more freedom for the media. This alarmed the powers that be in Moscow. They feared this would cause a domino effect in Eastern Europe with every other nation asking for more concessions if the Czechoslovak government was allowed to continue its present course. The USSR sent in troops on the pretext of restoring order, leading to the collapse of the Prague spring was thwarted by the USSR which intervened with troops.

Afghan Invasion

Tensions between the US and the Soviet Union were abating in the seventies. But the situation in Afghanistan reversed this trend. The Afghanistan crisis further escalated when the Soviet army invaded Afghanistan to help the communist government there fight the insurgents called Mujahideen. The United States responded by supporting the Mujahideen elements in a war that lasted ten years there. The Taliban emerged directly as a result of this war. The US-funded the Mujahideen through Pakistan’s ISI. The Afghan war ended in 1989 when Soviet troops withdrew from there. This had long-lasting consequences for South Asia itself. The fighters from the Afghan-Soviet war were funnelled into Kashmir, leading to a rise in the insurgency in the state.

Mikhail Gorbachev

In 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev rose to become the leader of the USSR. He initiates capitalist reforms known as perestroika and glasnost. He also let the Berlin Wall crumbled on October

30, 1989. Finally, in 1991, the Soviet Union was disbanded and new countries Russia and others emerged as independent nations. Most of the eastern European countries have popular uprisings against communist governments.

Non-Aligned Movement

Another outcome of the cold war is the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). When the cold war emerged, there were many newly independent countries in the continents of Asia and Africa. Most of them including India did not want to be aligned with either the USA or the USSR. This led to the development of the NAM which played a huge role in curbing the spread of the cold war to cover the entire globe. NAM was opposed to military blocs like NATO. The major leaders of the NAM countries who played a significant role in it were India's Jawaharlal Nehru, Indonesia's Sukarno, Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser and Yugoslavia's President Tito.

IV.DISARMAMENT- G7 COUNTRIES.

The G7 or the Group of 7 is a group of the seven most advanced economies as per the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The seven countries are Canada, USA, UK, France, Germany, Japan and Italy.

G7 Summit – Latest Update

1. The 47th G7 Summit is scheduled to be held in June 2021. The United Kingdom has invited the Prime Minister of India to attend the G7 summit.
 - Australia and South Korea are also invited as guest countries to participate in the proceedings of the summit.
 - The UK was the first G7 member to invite India to a G7 Summit in 2005 and was the first P5 member to support a permanent UN Security Council seat for India.
 - The Objective of the 47th G7 Summit is to unite leading democracies to help the world build back better from the coronavirus and create a greener, more prosperous future.
 - The proposed summit will be the first in-person G-7 summit in almost two years.

History of the G7

The concept of a forum for the world's major industrialized countries emerged before the 1973 oil crisis.

In 1975, a summit hosted by France brought together representatives of six governments: France, West Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Schmidt and Giscard d'Estaing were heads of government in their respective countries, and since they both spoke fluent English, it occurred to them that they, and British Prime Minister Harold Wilson and U.S. President Gerald Ford could get together in an informal retreat and discuss election results and the issues of the day. In late spring, d'Estaing of France invited the heads of government from West Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States to a

summit in Château de Rambouillet; the annual meeting of the six leaders was organized under a rotating presidency, forming the Group of Six (G6).

Following 1994's G7 summit in Naples, Russian officials held separate meetings with leaders of the G7 after the group's summits. This informal arrangement was dubbed the Political 8 (P8) – or, colloquially, the G7+1. At the invitation of Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Tony Blair and President of the United States Bill Clinton, Russian President Boris Yeltsin was invited first as a guest observer, later as a full participant. After the 1997 meeting, Russia was formally invited to the next meeting and formally joined the group in 1998, resulting in a new governmental political forum, the Group of Eight or G8. Despite not being a major economic power according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

However, the Russian Federation was ejected from the G8 political forum in March 2014, following its annexation of Crimea.

Composition of the G7

The G7 is composed of the seven wealthiest advanced countries. The People's Republic of China, according to its data, would be the second-largest with 16.4% of the world net wealth but is excluded because the IMF and other main global institutions do not consider China an advanced country and because of its relatively low net wealth per adult and HDI. Various reports suggest that the G7 (without the European Union) represents above 62% of the global net wealth. Including the EU the G7 represents over 70% of the global net wealth.

Group of 7 – G7 Summit Participation:

- Summits are held annually and hosted on a rotation basis by the group's members.
- The leaders of important international organizations like the European Union, IMF, World Bank and the United Nations are also invited.
 - Aspirants can know in detail about all these organizations on the given links –
 - World Bank
 - International Monetary Fund IMF
 - United Nations Organization – UNO
 - European Unions – EU

The groundwork for the summit, including matters to be discussed and follow-up meetings, is done by the “sherpas”, who are generally personal representatives or members of diplomatic staff such as ambassadors.

Challenges Faced by G7 Members

1. There are a number of disagreements in the Group of 7 internally, e.g. clash of the USA with other members over taxes on imports and action on climate change.
2. It is also facing a challenge from fast-growing emerging economies like India and Brazil are not members of the G7. However, In 1999, G20 was formed to bring more countries on board to address global economic concerns. You can know in detail about the G20 Summits in the link provided here.
 - Also, go through the List of G20 Summits on the linked page.

3. G7 The organization has also been criticized for not reflecting the current state of global politics or economics.

Facts about the members of G7

Here we give you some brief facts about a few members of G8 nations

- All the 7 are top-ranked advanced economies with the current largest GDP and with the highest national wealth (United States, Japan, Germany, UK, France, Italy, Canada).
- The G7 are among the 15 top-ranked countries with the highest net wealth per capita (United States, France, Japan, United Kingdom, Italy, Canada, Germany).
- All the 7 are leaders when it comes to export
- 5 members of the G-7 have the largest proven reserves of gold (United States, Germany, Italy, France, Japan).
- All 5 of the members of the NATO Quint (The Quint is the informal decision making body of NATO consisting of the U.S., U.K., France, Germany, Italy) and Canada is also a member of Five Eyes intelligence gathering body with the U.S. and U.K.
- 6 of the 9 largest nuclear energy producers (United States, France, Japan, Germany, Canada, UK), although Germany announced in 2011 that it will close all of its nuclear power plants by 2022. Following the 2011 Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami, Japan shut down all of its nuclear reactors. However, Japan restarted several nuclear reactors, with the refuelling of other reactors underway.
- There are no G7 members from Africa, Latin America, or the southern hemisphere.

The requirements to be a member of the G7 are a high net national wealth and a high HDI (Human Development Index). The G7 also accounts for 46% of the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) calculated at market exchange rates and also for 32% of the global PPP GDP.

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