

## The Peace Settlement

A conference of the representatives of different European countries was held in Paris to settle the terms for peace. Germany signed the *Treaty of Peace* on June 28, 1919 A.D. In addition, separate treaties were signed by the representatives of Austria, Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria jointly with the *Allied Powers*. All these treaties together were given the name of the **Paris Peace Settlement of 1919-1923**.

### The Treaty of Versailles, 1919 A.D.

The **Treaty of Versailles** was the main Treaty, signed on June 28, 1919 in the *Hall of Mirrors* at Versailles in France, between the defeated Germany and the victors Britain, France and the U.S.A. About 27 nations represented the Peace Conference. There were some *sub-treaties* as well made with other defeated nations like Austria, Hungary, Turkey, etc. The leaders who played an active part in making the terms of these treaties were the British Prime Minister, Lloyd George, the French Prime Minister,



## Main Terms of the Treaty of Versailles, June 28, 1919

The following were the main terms of the Treaty of Versailles made with Germany, which she was compelled to sign.

1. Germany was held guilty of aggression. She was to pay 33 billion dollars to the victors as war compensation.
2. Germany was to evacuate from the areas she had captured during the war.
3. The German area of Rhine Valley was to be demilitarized, *i.e.*, not to construct any fortification either on the right bank or the left bank. The existing ones were to be demolished.
4. The German territory to the west of the Rhine Valley was to be occupied by the **Allied Troops** for 15 years.
5. Germany was to return Alsace and Lorraine to France; she was to handover Eupen and Malmady to Belgium; the city of Memel to Lithuania.
6. The newly created state of Poland got back all her territories lost in the war. She got Posen and West Prussia. To provide Poland with a port, **Danzig** was internationalised and kept as a 'free city' under the protection of League of Nations.



## The Treaty of Versailles - 1919



From left, Prime Minister David Lloyd George of the United Kingdom, Prime Minister Vittorio Emmanuel Orlando of Italy, Prime Minister George Clemenceau of France, and President Woodrow Wilson of the United States.

**Signed Location** June 28, 1919 Versailles, France.

**Effective** January 10, 1920

**Impact** It ended the state of war between Germany and Allied Powers.

**Signatories**

- (i) France
- (ii) Italy
- (iii) Germany
- (iv) United Kingdom
- (v) United States

7. To compensate France for the destruction of her coal mines by Germany in 1918 A.D., she was given full control over the rich coal mines in the *Saar basin of Germany*, to be governed by the *League of Nations*.
8. Germany lost all her colonies to the Allies. For example, Britain and France divided and shared the regions of Togoland and the Cameroons (West Africa). German colonies in East Africa and South-West Africa were shared between England, Belgium, Portugal and South Africa.
9. Germany was allowed to keep only one lakh soldiers, 15,000 naval men and 36 ships but no airforce or submarines.
10. Germany had to cede to the Allies her merchant ships as compensation.
11. Germany was to supply a huge quantity of coal to France, Italy and Belgium for ten years.

12. The Treaty of Versailles affirmed the complete independence of Belgium, Poland, Czechoslovakia (included Silesia, Bohemia and Moravia) and Yugoslavia (included Solovenia, Bosnia, Croatia and Herzegovina - Capital at Belgrade).
13. The Covenant (Constitution) of the League of Nations was added to the *Treaty of Versailles* and became its integral part.

### Treaty of St. Germania :

It was signed with Austria (September 1919). Hungary signed Treaty of Trianon, (June 1920). The terms were as follow :

- (i) Austrian-Hungary was broken up into two separate kingdoms namely Austria and Hungary.
- (ii) Austria had to cede the territories to Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Poland and was forced to accept their independence.
- (iii) Italy also gained certain territories from Austria.
- (iv) The Austrian army was reduced to 30,000.
- (v) Austria was forced to pay a huge amount as war indemnity.

**Treaty of Sevres (August 1920) :** Turkey signed it and surrendered all her authority on non-Turkish races. She retained only Constantinople and Dardanelles. Britain was given the control of Palestine and Iraq, France had control over Syria. This treaty was never ratified by Turkey. The final settlement was made by Treaty of Lausanne (1923) which restored Turkey all the territories held by her in Europe in 1914.

### A Critical Evaluation of the Treaty of Versailles

The Treaty of Versailles brought about peace in the world. The areas like Belgium forcibly occupied by Germany were evacuated. The principle of self-determination was upheld and many new States like Poland, Finland, Czechoslovakia, etc. were created. Another good outcome of this Treaty was that the League of Nations was created for the purpose of maintaining world peace.





But the **Treaty of Versailles** was unjust, harsh, disgraceful, humiliating, *economically crippling and militarily emasculating* for Germany as it was a dictated peace. It stripped Germany of all its colonial possessions and enacted enormous compensation in the form of war indemnity. When Hitler came to power in 1933 A.D., he tore this Treaty to pieces. He began militarization of Germany, refused to pay war compensation and conquered territories one after the other, including Poland, **Danzig**, etc. Thus, the injustice done to Germany and the national insult hurled upon her through the Treaty of Versailles led to the Second World War of 1939 A.D. barely twenty years after this Treaty was signed and the Covenant of the League of Nations was enacted.

### Results of the War :

The results of the First World War may briefly be stated as under :

**1. The Loss of Life :** During the four years of War, about 80 lakh persons were killed, 60 lakh were disabled and about one crore and 20 lakh

were wounded. Nearly 80 lakh people were announced as missing. Even more number of people faced sufferings due to *diseases, famines and epidemics* after the War.

**2. Heavy Cost of the War in terms of Money :** Financially, this War proved to be very destructive and costly. On the side of the Allies, the expenditure on War was nearly 41,000 million pounds. On the side of the Germans, the expenditure was over 15,000 million pounds. The War also ruined many industries, farms and towns which shattered the world economy.

**3. Changes in the Political Map of the World :** The erstwhile empires of Russia, Germany, Turkey, Austria, etc. were ruled by the royal dynasties in a despotic and autocratic manner before the World War I. After the War, democratic governments were established in these countries. The German Emperor, William II fled and a democratic government was set up there. Peoples Republic was set up in Russia after the Revolution of 1917 A.D. Even in Italy, a Republic was set up after the War. Many small states, based on the principle of nationality and self-determination such as Poland, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Yugoslavia were created. It also strengthened the freedom movements in Asia and Africa. Most of these nations, which had been under foreign rule, got their freedom now.

**4. The Rise of Nazi and Fascist Dictatorships :** The democratic set up in Spain, Germany and Italy failed to solve the post-war politico-economic problem of their people. This led to the rise of Nazi dictatorship under Hitler in Germany and the



Fascist dictatorship under Mussolini in Italy within few years after the end of the First World War. In Russia also, dictatorship of the Communist party took the real position under the Soviet Constitution.

**5. Effect on England :** After the First World War, England came to possess the German colonies and was also made the guardian of Palestine, Jordan and Iraq. She received some military equipment and cargo fleets of Germany as War compensation.

Though she won the war, but had to suffer great financial loss during the war. Trade, politics, industry and culture were in a mess. It faced the problems of giving employment to the disabled soldiers, step up industries, make up loss of the cargo ships destroyed in the war, look after health, security and defence of the people and overcome economic crisis.

The position which England had long held as creditor of Europe passed from her to America, which emerged as a world power economically and militarily after the First World War.

**6. Gave Impetus to Nationalism :** The War gave a great impetus to the principles of nationalism and self-determination. Empires having different cultures were dissolved and Independent states having distinct cultures emerged after the War. For example, under the impulse of nationalism Alsace-Lorraine was restored to France and Schleswig-Holstein was restored to Denmark.

**7. Gave a Blow to Racism :** The War gave a serious blow to racism and promoted the feeling of fraternity among the people of the world. Before the war, the Europeans refused to mingle with the Asians and the Africans because they regarded themselves as racially superior to the Asians or Africans. However, during the War the Europeans had to give up this feeling of racial superiority and fought shoulder to shoulder with the Asian and African soldiers. As a result, the feeling of racism slowly subsided.

**8. World Economic Recession :** Due to the heavy cost of the War in terms of money and material, there occurred an economic depression, general inflation and a high shoot up in the prices of commodities. The European nations had to depend on American loans for relief and the European markets came under American influence.

**9. Emergence of the U.S.A. as a World Power :** The U.S.A. was largely responsible for turning the tables against Germany and the Axis Powers and for the victory of the Allied Powers. The Armistice signed by Germany on November 11, 1918 was based upon U.S. President Wilson's Fourteen Points. Militarily, and in matters of finance, the U.S.A. emerged as the world's great power after the First World War.

**10. Seeds of the Second World War :** The Treaty of Versailles signed after the end of the First World War crippled, humiliated, humbled, and tortured Germany and her friends like Austria, Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria. Each one of these lost their territories and had to pay heavy war-indemnities. They were forcibly disarmed and their armies were disbanded. Such harsh and unjust treaties hit the self-respect of these nations and filled them with the spirit of revenge. Hence, when Hitler came to power, he began to disregard the terms of the Treaty of Versailles as far as disarmament was concerned. He also conquered territories like Poland, Danzig and Austria, etc; which led to the outbreak of the Second World War.

**11. The Birth of the League of Nations :** The League of Nations was an international organization founded as a result of the Treaty of Versailles in 1919-1920. The League was established in 1920 with its headquarters at Geneva. It had 58 members. The League's goals included disarmament, preventing war through collective security, settling disputes between countries through negotiations, diplomacy and improving global quality of life. The League lacked its own armed force and so depended on the Great Powers to enforce its resolutions, keep to economic sanctions, or provide an army when needed.

**Its Membership :** The League began with 42 founding members. The league had four permanent members, i.e., Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan. Admission of new members required not less than a two-thirds vote of the Assembly. The United States never became its member, because the American Senate did not ratify the League's Covenant. Germany and her allies were not eligible for entry for a few years. Germany joined the League in 1926 and became the fifth permanent member of the League.



**Its Organs :** The principal organs of the League of Nations were (i) the Assembly (ii) the Council (iii) the Secretariat (iv) and the Permanent Court of International Justice. The International Labour Organization was a specialised agency of the League and was created as part of the **Versailles Treaty**.

After a number of notable successes and some early failures in the 1920s, the League ultimately proved incapable of preventing aggression by the **Axis Powers** in the 1930s. The onset of the Second World War suggested that the League had failed in its primary purpose, which was to avoid any future World War. The United Nations replaced it after the end of the war and inherited a number of agencies and organizations founded by the League.

**The aims and objectives of the League of Nations were as follow :**

The chief aim of the League of Nations was "to promote international cooperation and to achieve international peace and security."

(i) All the states of the world were not allowed to enter into any secret treaties.

(ii) The member states were not supposed to have warships and destructive armaments.

(iii) All the states should refer to the League of Nations their mutual disputes, if any.

(iv) The states should respect each other's independence and maintain open, just and honourable relations between nations.

(v) The League of Nations was responsible for promoting *cultural, social and economic* cooperation among the member states.



4. Write a note on the Treaty of Versailles with reference to :
- (a) Losses to Germany in material and military arrangement.
  - (b) Losses with respect to her own territories.
  - (c) Losses with respect to her colonies.

Or

- (a) Mention four points under the Treaty of Versailles which affected Germany.

(ICSE 2005, 2007, 2011, 2015)

- (b) Explain how the Treaty of Versailles was responsible for the outbreak of the Second World War.

(ICSE 2007)

5. With reference to the consequences of the World War I, explain :

- (a) Loss of life and money.
- (b) Changes in the political map of the world.
- (c) Emergence of the democratic spirit after World War I.
- (d) Rise of Fascism and Nazism in Italy and Germany respectively.

(ICSE 2010)

6. Explain the aims and objectives of the League of Nations. Why were the aims not fulfilled ?

Or

What were the objectives of the League of Nations ? Name the organization formed in 1945 with similar objectives.

(ICSE 2005, 2008, 2011)

7. The 1914 and 1939 Wars that engulfed almost the entire world, were known as World Wars due to its unprecedented impact and damage. In this context, answer the following :

- (a) Explain the immediate cause of the First World War.
- (b) Mention any four terms of the Treaty of Versailles which affected Germany after World War I.

(ICSE 2017)