

Political Science Class 12 Notes Chapter 1 The Cold War Era

Cuban Missile Crisis

- Cuba was an ally of the Soviet Union and received diplomatic and financial aid from it. In April 1961, leaders of the USSR were worried that the United States of America would invade communist-ruled Cuba and overthrow its President Fidel Castro.
- In 1962, the leader of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev, placed nuclear missiles in Cuba for converting it into a Russian base.
- Three weeks later, Americans became aware of it. The US President John F. Kennedy and his advisers tried to find a solution to avoid full-scale nuclear war. But they were determined to get Khrushchev to remove the missiles and nuclear weapons from Cuba.
- Kennedy ordered American warships to intercept any Soviet ships heading to Cuba as a way of warning the USSR. This clash between the USA and the USSR came to be known as the Cuban Missile Crisis. It made the whole world nervous.
- The Cuban Missile Crisis was a high point which came to be known as the Cold War. It refers to the competition, the tensions and a series of confrontations between the United States and Soviet Union.

Cold War

- The Cold War was the war of ideologies. The US followed the ideology of liberal democracy and capitalism while the USSR backed the ideology of socialism and communism.
- The Second World War (1939-1945) came to an end with the defeat of the Axis powers led by Germany, Italy and Japan by the Allied forces led by the US, Soviet Union, Britain and France.
- It marked the beginning of the Cold War. The Second World War ended when the United States dropped two atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945, causing Japan to surrender.
- This decision of the US was both criticised and supported. But the consequence of the end of the Second World War was the rise of two new powers on the global stage.
- The United States and the Soviet Union became the greatest powers in the world with the ability to influence events anywhere on Earth.
- But the Cold War inspite of being an intense form of rivalry between great powers, remained a 'cold' and not hot or shooting war. It was due to the 'logic of deterrence'.
- The 'logic of deterrence' means when both sides have the capacity to respond against an attack and to cause so much destruction that neither can afford to initiate war.
- The two superpowers and their allies were expected to behave as rational and responsible actors.

The Emergence of Two Power Blocs

- The two superpowers i.e. the US and USSR wanted to expand their spheres of influence in different parts of the world. Hence, they decided to take help of the smaller countries.
- These smaller states got the promise of protection, weapons and economic aid against their local rivals, mostly regional neighbours.
- The first division took place in Europe. Most countries of Western Europe sided with the US and thus, came to be known as 'Western alliance'.
- The countries of the Eastern Europe joined the Soviet camp and came to be known as 'Eastern alliance'.
- The Western alliance formed itself into an organisation, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). It came into existence in April, 1949 with twelve states.
- The NATO declared that armed attack on any one of them in Europe or North America would be regarded as an attack on all of them.
- The Eastern alliance, also known as the Warsaw Pact, was led by the Soviet Union. It was established in 1955. Its principle function was to counter NATO's forces in Europe.
- In East and South East Asia and in West Asia (Middle East), the United States built an alliance system called the South-East Asian Treaty Organisation (SEATO) and the Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO).
- Many newly independent countries were worried of losing their freedom. Cracks and splits within the alliances were quick to appear.

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- Communist China quarrelled with the USSR towards the late 1950s. The other important development was the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).
- The smaller countries were of more help to the superpowers because they were the means to gain vital resources such as oil and minerals; locations to spy each other and to launch weapons.

Arenas of the Cold War

- The arenas of the Cold War refer to areas where crisis and war occurred or threatened to occur between the alliance systems but did not cross certain limits.
- The Cold War was also responsible for several shooting wars.
- The two superpowers were poised for direct encounter in Korea (1950-53), Berlin (1958-62), the Congo (the early 1960s) and in several other places.
- Jawaharlal Nehru, one of the key leader of NAM played a key role in mediating between the two Koreas. In the Congo crisis, the UN Secretary General played a key mediatory role.
- The US and USSR decided to collaborate in limiting or eliminating certain kinds of nuclear and non-nuclear weapons.
- The two sides signed three significant agreements within a decade. These were :
 - Limited Test Ban Treaty (LTBT).
 - Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)
 - Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABMT)

Challenge to Bipolarity

- Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) offered the newly decolonised countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America a third option i.e. not to join any of the alliances.
- NAM was founded by three leaders-Yugoslavia's Josip Broz Tito, India's Jawaharlal Nehru and Egypt's leader Gamal Abdel Nasser. Indonesia's Sukarno and Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah strongly supported them. The first NAM summit was held in 1961 at Belgrade.
- Non-Alignment neither means isolationism nor neutrality. It played a role in mediating between the two rival alliances.

New International Economic Order

- The challenge for the newly decolonised countries was to become more developed economically and to lift their people out of poverty. The idea of a New International Economic Order (NIEO) originated with this realisation.
- The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) brought out a report in 1972 entitled 'Towards a New Trade Policy for Development'.
- The nature of Non-Alignment changed to give greater importance to economic issues. As a result, NAM became an economic pressure group.

India and the Cold War

- India followed a two way policy regarding the Cold War. It did not join any of the alliances and raised voice against the newly decolonised countries becoming part of these alliances.
- The policy of India was not 'fleeing away' but was in favour of actively intervening in world affairs to soften Cold War rivalries.
- The Non-Alignment gave India the power to take international decisions and to balance one superpower against the other.
- India's policy of Non-Alignment was criticised on a number of counts. But still it has become both as an international movement and a core of India's foreign policy.

FACTS THAT MATTER

1. Cuban Missile Crisis made whole world nervous by creating clashes between the two superpowers, the US and Soviet Union namely Cold War.
2. Cold War referred to competitions, tensions and series of confrontations between the US and USSR.
3. In 1945, with the end of Second World War, Cold War began when the US dropped bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in diplomatic manner to warn Soviet Union.
4. Both the powers became reluctant to initiate war to protect world from large scale destruction as they were aware that it will not lead only political aim to them.
5. The greed of expansion of their spheres of influence divided the world into alliances. The US built NATO, South East Asian Treaty Organisation (SEATO) and Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO).
6. The Soviet Union created Eastern alliance known as WARSAW PACT.

7. Smaller states „Maine either the alliance to get the promise of protection, weapons and economic aid against their local rivals.

8. Superpower required them to gain on access to vital resources, territory to launch weapons and troops, to spy on each other and economic support.

9. Despite of occurring crisis in Korea, Vietnam and Afghanistan, both the superpowers behaved rationally and responsibly.

10. Both the superpowers maintained 'arms control' by signing various treaties as Limited Test Ban Treaty, Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty and Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty.

11. Countries outside the two blocs known as NAM (Non-Aligned Movement), joined by decolonised countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, played a crucial role in reducing cold war conflicts to maintain peace and stability all over the world.

12. Five founder members of NAM were Yugoslavia's Josip Broz Tito, India's JL Nehru, Egypt's leader Gamal Abdel Nasser, Indonesia's Sukarno and Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah.

13. The majority of NAM members was categorised as Least Developed Countries (LDCs) which initiated economic development under the head of New International Economic Order (NIEO).

14. The United Nations Conference of Trade and Development (UNCTAD) brought out a report in 1972 to propose to give the LDCs control over their natural resources, to make western market available to them to reduce cost of technology and to provide greater role in international economic institutions.

15. India responded to growth of Cold War into two fold. First, it stayed away from alliances and secondary, it raised voice against newly decolonised countries becoming part of either the alliance.

16. NAM served India's interests also to participate in international decisions and maintained balance between two superpowers.

17. India's policy was criticised on grounds of possessing contradictory postures i.e. signed treaty of friendship with the USSR in August 1971 for 20 years and developed good relations with the US during Bangladesh crisis.

18. It is said that NAM has lost its relevance after disintegration of USSR and end of cold war in 1991.

19. NAM is based on a resolve to democratise international system to redress existing inequities that poor and very small countries need not to follow any of the big powers instead they can pursue an independent foreign policy also.

20. These core values make NAM relevant even in today's scenario as it has stood of adverse circumstances and served an important purpose of protecting the interests of third world countries.

WORDS THAT MATTER

1. **Cold War:** Cold war referred to competitions, tensions and a series of confrontations between the US and USSR.
 2. **Cuban Missile Crisis:** It created tensions between the US and USSR when Soviet Union (USSR) installed missiles in Cuba to make it a Russian base.
 3. **Allied Forces:** Allied forces were one of the two camps during second world war including the US, Soviet Union, Britain and France.
 4. **Axis Power:** It was another camp against allied forces led by German* Italy and Japan.

 5. **Alliance System:** Alliance system was created by the two superpowers to expand their sphere of influence all over the world.
 6. **Deterrence:** It was a logic followed by both the superpowers to avoid large scale destruction i. e. not to take place hot war between them because both of them had the capacity to retaliate.
 7. **Neutrality:** Neutrality is a condition not to participate in world affairs or make oneself aloof from world.
 8. **Decolonisation:** To make colonised states free from the rule of mother country.
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- **1947** American President Harry Truman's Doctrine about containment of communism.
 - **1947-52** Marshall Plan: US aid for reconstruction of Western Europe.
 - **1948-49** Berlin blockade by the Soviet Union.
 - **1950-53** Korean War
 - **1954** Defeat of the French by Vietnamese at Dien Bien Phu; Signing of Geneva Accord; Division of Vietnam along the 17th parallel formation of SEATO.
 - **1954-75** American intervention in Vietnam.
 - **1955** Signing of Baghdad Pact, later CENTO.
 - **1956** Soviet intervention in Hungary.
 - **1961** US-sponsored Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba construction of Berlin Wall.
 - **1962** Cuban Missile Crisis
 - **1965** American Intervention in the Dominican Republic
 - **1968** Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia.
 - **1972** US President Richard Nixon's visit to China
 - **1978-89** Vietnamese intervention in Cambodia
 - **1979-89** Soviet intervention in Afghanistan
 - **1985** Gorbachev becomes the president of the USSR and begins reform process.
 - **1989** Fall of Berlin Wall
 - **1990** Unification of Germany
 - **1991** Disintegration of Soviet Union, End of the Cold War era.