

Lesson 4: Situations in Asia during the Cold War

1. Video Lesson

2. Competencies

After successful completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- List down the factors for Japan's rapid economic growth;
- Discuss the Indians struggle for independence;
- Mention the major socio-economic reforms introduced by the new Communist government of China;
- State the causes, course and consequences of the Vietnam War; and
- Discuss the causes, course and effects of the Korean War

3. Brainstorming Questions

- What were the major occupation reforms introduced to Japan?
- What kind of measures have been taken to revive Japan's war-ravaged economy?
- What was Mahatma Gandhi's method of struggle against British colonial rule?
- What was the major event in China soon after the end of World War II?
- Which country colonized Vietnam? How did Vietnam start anti-colonial struggle?
- How was Korea partitioned?

5. Lesson Presentation

A. Japan

To revive the Japanese economy, the USA encouraged the Japanese government to curb inflation and cracked down on Communist unions that used strikes for political ends. The United States also gave Japan \$2 billion in economic aid. In October 1956, the Soviet Union and Japan agreed to end the technical state of war that had existed between the two countries since August 1945. While maintaining close relations with the United States, Japan sought to expand trade with the USSR and China as a means of reducing unemployment. In the 1960s, Japan surpassed every nation in Western Europe in terms of gross national product and ranked next to the United States as a world industrial power.

An infrastructure of banking, marketing, and manufacturing skills had carried over from pre-war Japan. The international situation was also favorable: oil was cheap, access to raw materials and export markets was easy, and American sponsorship gained Japan early entry into the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and other international organizations. Japan's high rate of savings also contributed to reinvestment. New technology and education also stimulated growth. In the postwar period, an increasing number of people gained access to universities. Another factor was the abundance of high-quality, cheap labor. Government economic policy also played a crucial role in Japanese success. Governmental measures helped accelerate savings

and investment, the absorption of new technologies, and the shift to modern industries and high-value exports.

B. India

India was the most important colony of the British. It was exploited by European colonial powers from 1605 to 1947. The Indian National Congress, which was founded in 1885, played a leading role in the struggle for national independence. Initially, the Indian elite sought only more economic rights under British rule, but later on, in the early 20th century, the movement saw a more radical approach towards political self-rule. On their part, the British worked to sow differences between Muslims and Hindus. That was aimed at weakening the struggle of Indians for self-rule. In 1906, the Muslim League split away from the Indian National Congress to stand for the rights of Indian Muslims. And the League became a rallying point for Muslims, while the Indian National Congress was identified with Hindus. During the inter-war period, Congress adopted Mahatma Gandhi's policy of non-violence and civil disobedience as forms of struggle against British colonial rule. The period of World War II saw the peak of the campaigns by the Quit India Movement, led by Congress, and the Indian National Army movement, led by Subhas Chandra. Finally, on January 26, 1947, India became an independent state, with Jawaharlal Nehru as its first Prime Minister.

C. China

In October 1949, the Chinese Communist Party won the civil war and established the People's Republic of China (PRC) on the mainland, led by Mao Tse-tung (Mao Zedong). The Kuomintang, which was led by Chiang Kai-shek, fled to the island province of Taiwan, and established a Nationalist government.

The first step taken by the Communist government was military consolidation. It also brought an end to the long period of Western domination of China. Regions within the country's historic boundaries that had fallen away were reclaimed such as Tibet. The decade that followed is often called the "Soviet Period" because the Soviet model was adopted for the government, the army, the economy, and higher education. During the Korean War (1950–1953), Chinese troops aided the Communist regime of North Korea against South Korean and United Nations forces. China also aided the Communist insurgents fighting the French in Vietnam.

Women also received equal rights with respect to divorce, employment, and ownership of property. The CCP assumed strict control over religion, forcing foreign missionaries to leave the country. The land of landlords was redistributed among the landless. In 1958, Mao took ideology a step further and abandoned the Soviet model in favor of a mass spiritual mobilization for economic development. He called it the Great Leap Forward. The utter failure of the Great Leap Forward and the consequent widespread hunger and malnutrition led China to turn toward a more moderate economic policy.

In mid-1966, Mao launched the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, known simply as the Cultural Revolution. The announced goals of the revolution were to eradicate the remains of so-called bourgeois ideas and customs and to recapture the revolutionary zeal of early Chinese

Communism. Mao also wanted to increase his power over the government by discrediting or removing party leaders who had challenged his authority or disagreed with his policies. He called for a new revolution to create a truly egalitarian culture, urging students and teenaged youth to form bands of Red Guards and attack the party bureaucracy.

D. Vietnam

France completed its conquest of Vietnam and Cambodia by 1883, formed the Indochinese Union in 1887, and added Laos to the Union in 1893. This union was known as the Indochinese Union or French Indochina. In the early 20th century, as Vietnamese nationalism rose, political exiles in China, Japan, and France formed nationalist parties.

The most skilled organizer of such parties was Ho Chi Minh. Ho founded the Indochinese Communist Party in 1930. Ho led the Vietnamese against French and Japanese forces for control of their homeland. In 1954, after eight years of guerrilla attacks by the Vietnamese and a major defeat at the battle of Dien Bien Phu, the French government agreed to negotiations to end the war. At a conference held in Geneva, the two sides accepted an interim compromise to end the war. Thus, the country was divided into a Communist north and a non-Communist south. In the southern capital, Saigon, the non-Communist regime was toppled by an anti-Communist president Ngo Dinh Diem (1901–1963), who declared the Republic of Southern Vietnam. The north was aided by the USSR and China. The South was aided by the USA, which sent soldiers to Vietnam numbering up to half a million. In 1976, the South was reunited with the North in a new Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and Saigon was renamed Ho Chi Minh City.

There are several reasons for the defeat of South Vietnam and the United States by the North during the Vietnam War. The South Vietnamese government was corrupt and unpopular; Ho Chi Minh was a national hero not only for the northerners but also for South Vietnamese; even anti-Communists viewed the USA as the successor to France and supported Communist guerrillas; both the Communist guerrillas in the south and the North Vietnamese troops fought better than the South Vietnamese troops; the jungle terrain of Vietnam made the US's military technology ineffective; and strong opposition against US involvement in Vietnam at home forced the US to withdraw its troops.

E. Korea

Korea was a colony of Japan between 1910 and 1945. The USA and the USSR divided Korea along the thirty-eighth parallel into American and Soviet zones of liberation after World War II. The Korean War was a military struggle fought between 1950 and 1953. Considerable civil strife in South Korea and growing opposition to President Syngman Rhee persuaded Kim Il Sung that he would be welcomed by many South Koreans as a liberator to overthrow the Rhee government and reunite the two Koreas. Hence, the North Korean army, substantially equipped by the Soviet Union, invaded South Korea on June 23, 1950. The United States immediately responded by sending troops from Japan to South Korea. On June 27, the UN Security Council, with the Soviet Union voluntarily absent, passed a US-sponsored resolution calling for military sanctions against North Korea. Finally, the war became stalemated in 1951 and ended with an armistice on July 27, 1973. The Korean War was one of the most destructive conflicts of the twentieth century.

