

Chapter 3 Nazism and the Rise of Hitler Class 9

Important Questions

Question.1

Explain the factors which led to the rise of Hitler in Germany.

Answer:

The factors which led to the rise of Hitler in Germany were :

- Germany was compelled to sign the treaty by which she had to pay a huge war indemnity. This treaty created the feeling of dissatisfaction among the people of Germany. The Weimar Republic was regarded as a symbol of national disgrace. Hitler assured the Germans about the restoration of the old prestige, so they became his followers.
- Germany had to face a Great Economic crisis after the First World War. Many soldiers were no more in service, so they became unemployed. Trade and commerce were ruined. In 1929, there was, however, a great slump in Europe. Germany was in the grip of unemployment and starvation. The prices rose and the value of money fell.
- The Germans had no faith in democracy. It was against their culture and tradition. They, at once, gave support to a strong man of action like Hitler who could turn their dreams into reality.

Question 2.

What were the provision of the famous Enabling Act ?

Answer:

On 3 March 1933, the famous Enabling Act was passed. The provisions of the Enabling Act were given below :

- This Act established dictatorship in Germany. It gave Hitler all powers to sideline Parliament and rule by decree.
- All political parties and trade unions were banned except for the Nazi Party and its affiliates. The state established complete control over the economy, media, army and judiciary.
- Special surveillance and security forces were created to control and order society in ways that the Nazis wanted.

Question 3.

What promises did Hitler make to the German people ? How did he mobilise them ?

Answer:

Hitler was a powerful speaker. His passion and his words moved people. He promised to build a strong nation, undo the injustice of the Versailles Treaty and restore the dignity of the German people.

He promised employment for those looking for work, and a secure future for the youth. He promised to weed out all foreign influences and resist all foreign 'conspiracies' against Germany.

Hitler devised a new style of politics. He understood the significance of rituals and spectacle in mass mobilisation. Nazis held massive rallies and public meetings to demonstrate the support for Hitler and instil a sense of unity among the people. The Red banners with the Swastika, the Nazi salute, and the ritualised rounds of applause after the speeches were all part of this spectacle of power.

Question 4.

From whom did Hitler borrow his racist ideology ? Explain.

Answer:

(a) Hitler borrowed his racist ideology from thinkers like Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer.

(b) Darwin was a natural scientist who tried to explain the creation of plants and animals through the concept of evolution and natural selection. Darwin never advocated human intervention in what he thought was a purely natural process of selection.

(c) Herbert Spencer later added the idea of survival of the fittest. According to this idea, only those species survived on earth that could adapt themselves to changing climatic conditions.

However, his ideas were used by racist thinkers and politicians to justify imperial rule over conquered peoples.

Question 5.

Describe the effect of Great Economic depression on Germany ?

Answer:

The effect of Great Economic depression on Germany were :

- The German economy was the worst hit by the Great Economic depression. By 1932, industrial production was reduced to 40% of the 1929 level. Workers lost their jobs or were paid reduced wages.
- The number of unemployed touched an unprecedented 6 million. Men could be seen on streets with placards saying, 'Willing to do any work'. As jobs disappeared, youth took to criminal activities, and total despair became common place.
- There were deep anxieties and fears in people. The middle classes, especially salaried employees and pensioners, saw their savings diminish when the currency lost its value.
- The large mass of peasantry was badly affected by a sharp fall in agricultural prices.

Question 6.

What steps were taken by Adolf Hitler for the destruction of democracy ?

Answer:

The following steps were taken by Hitler for the destruction of democracy :

- A mysterious fire that broke out in the German Parliament building in February, 1933 indefinitely suspended civic rights. It is said that the fire was broken out by Hitler's supporters, while Hitler blamed his political enemies for it. The Fire Decree of 28 February, 1933 indefinitely suspended civic rights such as freedom of expression, speech, press and assembly that had been guaranteed by the Weimar Constitution.
- After that Adolf Hitler turned on his enemy, i.e., the Communists of Germany, most of the communists were quickly packed off to the newly established concentration camps.
- The repression of the Communists was severe. Their membership was in thousands. They were, however, only one among the 52 types of victims persecuted by the Nazis across the country.
- On 3rd March, 1933, the famous Enabling Act was passed. This Act established dictatorship in Germany. It gave Adolf Hitler all political and administrative powers to sideline German Parliament and rule by decree.

Question 7.

What were the main effects of Nazi rule on Germany ?

Answer:

The victory of Nazism produced far reaching effects on Germany :

- Hitler tried to pull his country out of the Economic Crisis that had befallen on Germany as a result of her defeat in the First World War. Different types of industries were set up to provide work to the workmen. Trade was encouraged with the same aim in mind.
- Hitler inspired to make Germany a powerful country and enhanced his military power in all possible ways.
- All political parties except the Nazi Party were banned. And, then a Reign of Terror was let loose in Germany. Assassinations of anti-Nazi leaders took place on a large scale.
- The Communist Parties were also banned.
- Trade unions were suppressed.

Question 8.

What did Hitler do to overcome the economic crisis that badly hit the German economy ?

Answer:

After establishing his dictatorship in Germany, he took major steps towards the economic reconstruction.

Hitler assigned the responsibility of economic recovery to the economist Hjalmar Schacht who aimed at full production and full employment through a state-funded work-creation programme.

In foreign policy also, Hitler acquired quick successes. He pulled out of the League of Nations in 1933, reoccupied the Rhineland in 1936, and integrated Austria and Germany in 1938 under the slogan, One people, One empire, and One leader.

He then went on to wrest German speaking Sudetenland from Czechoslovakia and gobbled up the entire country. In all of this he had the unspoken support of England, which had considered the Versailles verdict too harsh. These quick successes at home and abroad seemed to reverse the destiny of the country.

Hitler chose war as the way out of the approaching economic crisis. Resources were to be accumulated through expansion of territory. In September 1939, Germany invaded Poland. This started a war with France and England. In September 1940, a Tripartite Pact was signed between Germany, Italy and Japan, strengthening Hitler's claim to , international power.

Hitler now moved to achieve his long-term aim of conquering Eastern Europe. He wanted to ensure food supplies and living space for Germans. He attacked the Soviet Union in June 1941. In this historic blunder Hitler exposed the German western front to British aerial bombing and the eastern front to the powerful Soviet armies.

Question 9.

Why is Nazism considered a calamity not only for Germany but for the entire Europe ?

Answer:

Nazi ideology specified that there was racial hierarchy and no equality between people.

(a) The blond, blue-eyed Nordic German Aryans were at the top, while the Jews were located somewhere on the lowest rung of the ladder.

(b) The number of people killed by Nazi Germany was 6 million Jews, 200,000 Gypsies, 1 million Polish civilians, 70,000 Germans.

(c) Nazism glorified the use of force and brutality. It ridiculed internationalism, peace and democracy.

(d) Nazi Germany became the most dreaded criminal state. Hitler chose war as the way out of approaching the economic crisis.

(e) Germany invaded Poland. This started a war with France and England in September 1940.

Question 10.

Explain the impact of the First World War on European society and polity.

Answer:

The First World War left a deep imprint on European society and polity. It had a devastating impact on the entire continent.

(a) In society, soldiers were ranked higher than civilians. Trench life of the soldiers was

glorified by the media. The media glorified trench life.

(b) Politicians and publicists laid great stress on the need for men to be aggressive and masculine.

(c) Aggressive war propaganda and national honour occupied centre stage in the public sphere.

(d) Popular support grew for conservative dictatorships that had recently come into being.

(e) Democracy as a young and fragile idea could not survive the instabilities of interwar Europe.