

CLASS:--11TH, HISTORY NOTES
CHAPTER:-11, PATH,OF MODERNIZATION

Re-emergence of Japan as a Global Economic Power

During the 1930s, Japan exercised imperialist policy and invaded China to extend its colonial empire. Japan's attempt to carve out a colonial empire ended with its defeat by the Allied forces. However, it was defeated in the World War II when the US dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It resulted in huge destruction of masses. Under the US-led Occupation (1945-47) Japan was demilitarised and a new constitution introduced. Japanese philosopher Miyake Setsurei (1860-1945) argued that each nation must develop its special talents in the interest of world civilisation: The rapid rebuilding of the Japanese economy after its shattering defeat was called a post-war 'miracle'.

- The new constitution had Article 9, the so-called 'no war clause' that renounces the use of war as an instrument of state policy.
- Agrarian reforms, the re-establishment of trade unions and an attempt to dismantle the *zaibatsu* or large monopoly houses that dominated the Japanese economy were also carried out.
- Constitution was democratised.
- Political parties were revived and the first post-war elections held in 1946.
- Suffrage was given to women in the elections of 1946.
- There was close relation between the government, bureaucracy and industry.
- Japan also introduced better goods at cheaper rates in the market with its advanced technologies.
- US support, as well as the demand created by the Korean and the Vietnamese wars also helped the Japanese economy.
- The 1964 Olympics held in Tokyo, it symbolised the maturity of Japan's economy.
- The introduction of network of high-speed Shinkansen or bullet trains, started in 1964, which ran at 200 miles per hour, added to its prosperity.
- In 1960s several pressure groups protested against industrial pollution. Industrialisation was pushed with utter disregard with the growth of civil society movements, due to its harmful effect on health and the environment.
- Government action and new legal regulations helped to improve conditions.

