

5. Role of Air-force in Allied victory in WWII

- a) Battle of Britain (1940)- The Royal Air Force defeated German Luftwaffe, which was essential for British survival.
- b) Use of new technology in Airplanes for detection of U-Boats in low visibility conditions helped in winning the Battle of Atlantic (1939-45).
- c) US Air-force aided the US navy in winning the Pacific War (1941-5). It had an important contribution in the Battle of Midway and the consequent 'Island hopping' by US. Also, the US airplanes ensured a vital flow of supplies to allies during winning back of Burma.
- d) Royal Air Force bombed supply ships in Mediterranean during the war in North Africa.
- e) The airplanes allowed dropping of paratroopers and gave air protection to them in Normandy (1944) and Italy (1943).
- f) Allied Strategic Air Offensive: It was the bombing of cities of the Axis powers especially the military and industrial targets. But this did not have an effect on German industrial production till 1944 but it did result in oil shortages for Germany after 1944.

6. Axis Defeated (July 1943-5)

It included four events viz. the fall of Italy (1943), the Operation Overlord (1944) for liberation of France, the invasion of Germany (1944-5) and the defeat of Japan (1945) by nuking it.

Fall of Italy (1943): This happened quickly after the US and British troops were air-dropped in Sicily. The King dismissed Mussolini and Italy joined the Allies. Germany sent troops but they lost. The fall of Italy forced Hitler to send troops to Italy which could have been better utilized against Russia. Also the Allied powers got air bases for bombing the German troops in central Europe and Balkans.

Operation Overlord (1944): This was the invasion of France that began on the so called D-Day to liberate it from German occupation. The operation was carried out due to multiple reasons. The Russians had been demanding to open this second front since 1941. By now the German U-boats were down and out. Also the Allied air superiority had been established and Italy had been brought on Allied side. Thus the Allied powers could now focus on liberating France, Belgium and Holland.

Invasion of Germany (1944-5): There was disagreement over this, between US and Britain. While Britain wanted to reach Berlin before the Russians, the US demanded to practice caution due to an earlier failed attempt at German invasion in 1944. The Battle of Bulge was fought in December 1944. It is named so due to the fact that German troops were able to break through American lines and advanced 60 miles leading to a huge bulge in the front line between the two forces. US and Britain pushed them back. The result was that Hitler had spent all resources in this battle and they could not be replaced. The fall of Germany was now certain. Russia captured Berlin in April, 1945 and Hitler committed suicide.

Defeat of Japan (1945): The nuclear bomb was used in Japan because US wanted to end the war as soon as possible so that Russia could not make further territorial gains in the Pacific. USSR had promised to join the Allies in invasion of Japan but US did not want Russia to gain any territory in Japan. There is also a view that the US wanted to threaten USSR by displaying the power of the new bomb and wanted to establish itself as a military super power.

7. Why Axis Powers lost the World War II

This can be summed up in the following points:

- 1) Shortage of Raw Material: Italy and Japan were dependent on imports and even Germany was short of rubber, cotton and oil.