

Germany attacked from the north, south and centre, and marched towards Leningrad, Ukraine and Moscow respectively using Blitzkrieg tactics which involved simultaneous and rapid attacks by airplanes, tanks and men.



Germans were highly successful initially as they faced an inexperienced Russian army. The Stalin purges of 1937 had led to inexperienced young officers replacing the experienced Generals. Slow mobilization procedures were also a reason. But Germany failed to capture Moscow and Leningrad (now called St Petersburg) in 1941. This was due to high rains in October that turned the Russian roads to mud and then the frost during November-December (temperature as low as minus 38 degree Celsius) also limited the forward march by the Germans. German army was short of winter clothes as they had expected to defeat Russia by November. In 1942, the Germans lost the Battle of Stalingrad.

3) US enters the War (December 1941): Japan attacked Pearl Harbour and with this attack the US ended the Policy of Isolation and joined on the side of Allies. Although through the Lend-Lease Act (April 1941), the United States of America had already been supporting the Allies with massive financial aid to Britain and war material to Russia. Pearl Harbour was a Naval Base in Hawaii islands. At the Washington Conference, Japan had reached an agreement on the naval limit with Britain, France and the USA. In 1930, it had reiterated its commitment to the naval limit but it soon breached it, thus breaking its Washington conference pledge. It had also agreed to maintain the neutrality of China under the Washington Conference (1921-2) but in 1931 it invaded Manchuria. By 1937, Japan had begun the full invasion of China and this 2nd Sino-Japanese war merged into the second World War. The reasons for the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour are as follows:

- a) Japan wanted domination of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere. This was an imperial concept and implied all the Asian nations in East Asia under the Empire of Japan and free of western powers.
- b) Japan wanted raw material and thus desired British possessions of Malaya and Burma which were rich in rubber, oil and tin. It also wanted to colonize the Dutch East Indies which was rich in oil.
- c) Japan did not want a war with US but the latter was proving to be a hurdle in the Japanese plans. US was helping China in the war against Japan. The US had also placed