

The Making of a Global World

Case Study Based Questions

Source 1

Read the source given below and answer the questions that follow by choosing the most appropriate option:

The Portuguese and Spanish conquest and colonisation of America was decisively under way by the mid-sixteenth century. European conquest was not just a result of superior firepower. In fact, the most powerful weapon of the Spanish conquerors was not a conventional military weapon at all. It was the germs such as those of smallpox that they carried on their person. Because of their long isolation, America's original inhabitants had no immunity against these diseases that came from Europe. Smallpox in particular proved a deadly killer. Once introduced, it spread deep into the continent, ahead even of any Europeans reaching there. It killed and decimated whole communities, paving the way for conquest.

Q1. Which of the following was the most powerful weapon of the Spanish conquerors?

- a. Conventional military weapon
- b. Smallpox
- c. Cattle plague
- d. None of the above

Q2. Why did smallpox kill a large number of native American's?

- a. They did not know about the disease.
- b. They had no immunity against the disease because of long isolation.
- c. Smallpox was deadly killer disease.
- d. Smallpox spread throughout the continent within a short period.

Q3. Why did smallpox prove to be a deadly killer?

- a. It spread deep into the continent once introduced.
- b. It killed and decimated whole communities.
- c. Both a. and b.
- d. It provided the way for conquest.

Q4. From where did the disease used as weapon by Spanish conquerors come from?

- a. Portugal
- b. Spain
- c. America
- d. Europe

Answers

- 1. (b)
- 2. (b)
- 3. (c)
- 4. (d)

Source 2

Read the source given below and answer the questions that follow:

A good place to start is the changing pattern of food production and consumption in industrial Europe. Traditionally, countries liked to be self sufficient in food. But in nineteenth-century Britain, self- sufficiency in food meant lower living standards and social conflict. Why was this so? Population growth from the late eighteenth century had increased the demand for food grains in Britain. As urban centres expanded and industry grew, the demand for agricultural products went up, pushing up food grain prices. Under pressure from landed groups, the government also restricted the import of corn. The laws allowing the government to do this were commonly known as the 'Corn Laws'. Unhappy with high food prices, industrialists and urban dwellers forced the abolition of the Corn Laws. After the Corn Laws were scrapped, food could be imported into Britain more cheaply than it could be produced within the country. British agriculture was unable to compete with imports. Vast areas of land were now left uncultivated, and thousands of men and women were thrown out of work. They flocked to the cities or migrated overseas.

Q1. What was the Corn Law? Why was it abolished?

Ans. The law allowing the British Government to restrict the import of corn is known as the 'Corn Law. The Corn Law was abolished because the industrialists and urban dwellers were unhappy with high food prices and so they forced the abolition of these laws.

Q2. What was meant by self-sufficiency in food in nineteenth century Britain?

Ans. In nineteenth century Britain, self-sufficiency in food meant lower living standards and social conflict.

Q3. What was the impact of scrapping of the Corn Laws?

Ans. Scrapping of the Corn Laws had the following impact:

- (i) Food could be imported into Britain more country.
- (ii) As food prices fell, consumption in Britain rose. Faster industrial growth in Britain led to higher incomes and therefore more food imports.
- (iii) Around the world in Eastern Europe, Russia, America, Australia, lands were cleared and food production expanded to meet the British demand.