

**Ques-** “Whenever France sneezes, Europe catches a cold.” Elaborate.

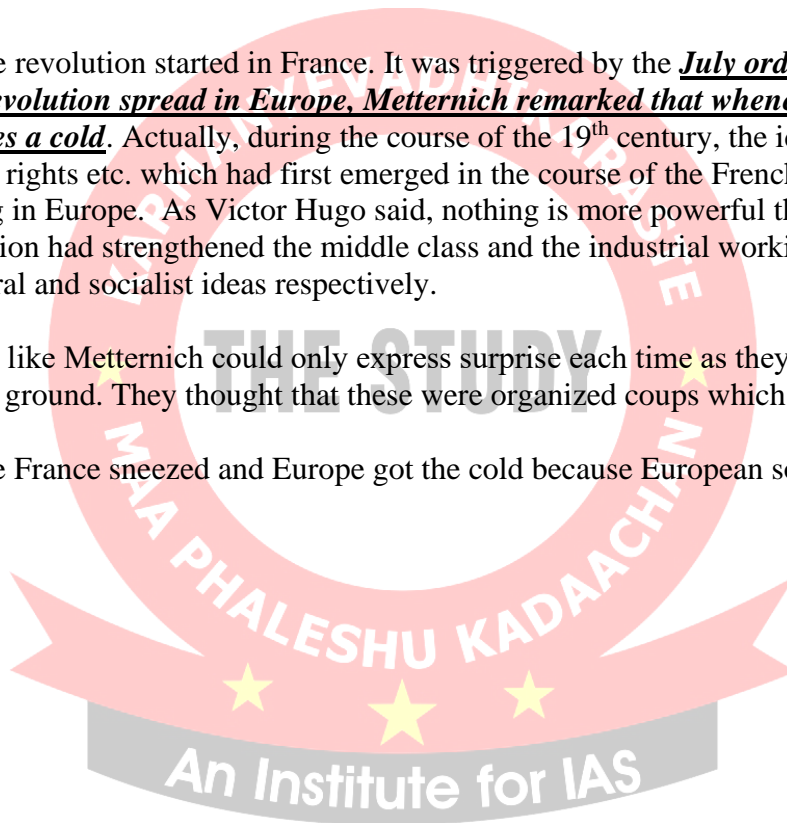
**Answer:** This statement was uttered by Chancellor Metternich of Austria-Hungary in the light of the July Revolution of 1830 which started from France and spread like a wildfire across Europe. Since the Congress of Vienna, the concert of Europe had made adequate arrangements to preserve the old order. But, every now and then, a spark in France would be a cue for rest of the Europe to rise up.

The revolts of 1820 had also started with the assassination of Duke de Berry in France. It then spread to Spain, Portugal, Italy, and Russia. In these places, demand was mainly about constituting constitutional monarchies.

Once again in 1830, the revolution started in France. It was triggered by the July ordinances. Surprised by the speed with which revolution spread in Europe, Metternich remarked that whenever France sneezes, the whole of Europe catches a cold. Actually, during the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the ideas of liberalism, nationalism, citizenship rights etc. which had first emerged in the course of the French Revolution were constantly reverberating in Europe. As Victor Hugo said, nothing is more powerful than an idea whose time has come. Industrialization had strengthened the middle class and the industrial working class, they were now a fertile ground for liberal and socialist ideas respectively.

The conservative forces like Metternich could only express surprise each time as they didn't appreciate material changes on the ground. They thought that these were organized coups which need to be crushed.

Thus, every time France sneezed and Europe got the cold because European society was on the cusp of a major change.



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