

Daily Current Affairs

07 January 2025

Kushan Coins from King Vasudeva's Era Found

- Archaeologists in Pakistan have discovered 2,000-year-old Kushan Empire coins and lapis lazuli fragments at Bhir Mound near Taxila in Rawalpindi. The coins belong to the era of King Vasudeva, one of the last great Kushan rulers.
- The discovery highlights the region's ancient trade links, religious diversity, and historical importance during the early centuries of the Common Era.
- The excavation team unearthed **bronze coins** along with fragments of lapis lazuli, a prized semi-precious stone.
- Experts estimate that while the stones date back to the **6th century BC**, the coins belong to the **2nd century AD**, firmly placing them in the **Kushan period**.
- Scientific dating and numismatic analysis confirmed that the coins feature Emperor Vasudeva, regarded by historians as the last great Kushan ruler.



Haryana to Launch India's First Hydrogen-Train

- Bharat is preparing to take a major step towards green transportation with the launch of its first hydrogen-powered train in Haryana. The pilot project, led by

Indian Railways will operate between **Jind and Sonipat** and is now in the final stages of commissioning.

- The initiative highlights India's growing focus on clean energy and sustainable mobility solutions.
- The hydrogen-powered train is a pilot project of Northern Railway and will run on the Jind to Sonipat route in Haryana.
- Manufacturing of the hydrogen train-set has been completed and the project is designed to demonstrate the feasibility of hydrogen as a clean fuel for rail transport in India.
- A hydrogen plant has been established at Jind with a storage capacity of 3,000 kilograms.
- The plant is powered by a stable 11 kV electricity supply to ensure uninterrupted hydrogen production during commissioning and regular operations.
- Hydrogen is produced using the electrolysis process, a key method of green hydrogen generation.



Steve Smith Becomes 2nd Highest Run-Scorer in Ashes

- Australian batter Steve Smith became the second-highest run scorer in Ashes history. The right-handed batter achieved the milestone during Day 2 of the fifth and final Ashes Test against England at the Sydney Cricket Ground in Sydney.
- During Australia's first innings, Smith went past England's Jack Hobbs, who amassed 3636 runs in 41 matches and 71 innings in the Ashes. Hobbs had a superb average of 54.26 along with 13 centuries and 15 half-centuries.

- Smith, who is now ranked second, has notched up 3644 runs in 41 matches and 73 innings at a brilliant average of 56.93. The right-handed batter has made 13 centuries and 15 half-centuries in the Ashes.
- Australian legend Don Bradman is the leading run-getter in Ashes history. The great batter amassed 5028 runs in 37 matches and 63 innings at an astounding average of 89.78. Bradman smashed 19 centuries and 12 half-centuries.
- Meanwhile, Smith smashed his **37th hundred in Test cricket** during Australia's first innings. It was also his 13th Ashes hundred, surpassing Jack Hobbs (12). Smith is only behind Don Bradman's **19 centuries in Ashes history**.



Prime Minister Hails the Commissioning ICGS Samudra Pratap

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi hailed the commissioning of Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICGS) Samudra Pratap marks a significant milestone in India's maritime journey. He remarked that the induction of this advanced vessel is noteworthy for numerous reasons.
- The Prime Minister stated that the commissioning adds strength to India's vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat in defence and maritime capability. He further noted that it boosts the nation's security apparatus, enhancing coastal vigilance and safeguarding India's vast maritime interests.
- The ship significantly enhances India's capability in marine pollution response, fire-fighting, maritime safety and environmental protection, while also

strengthening coastal patrol and long-range surveillance across the country's maritime zones.

- Named Samudra Pratap – meaning “**Majesty of the Seas**” – the vessel has a displacement of 4,170 tonnes, a length of 114.5 metres and a top speed exceeding 22 knots. Powered by indigenously developed propulsion systems, it has an endurance of **6,000 nautical miles**.



India Crosses A Historic Milestone 50,000 NQAS Certifications

- The Government of India has achieved a landmark milestone in its journey to strengthen the quality of public healthcare services.
- As of 31st December 2025, a total of 50,373 public health facilities across all States and Union Territories have been certified under the National Quality Assurance Standards (NQAS) – a comprehensive quality framework established by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- This achievement marks a proud moment for India's public health system as the nation crosses the 50,000 mark for NQAS certifications, reinforcing the Government's unwavering commitment to quality, safety, and patient-centred care.
- The NQAS journey began in 2015 with just 10 certified healthcare facilities, initially focusing on District Hospitals to ensure safe, patient-centric, and quality-assured services.
- India's pursuit of Universal Health Coverage (UHC), guided by the National Health Policy 2017, emphasises the provision of quality, affordable healthcare without financial hardship.



REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. The recently discovered Kushan coins at Bhir Mound belong to the reign of which ruler?

- A. Kanishka
- B. Huvishka
- C. Vasudeva
- D. Kujula Kadphises

☒ **Answer: C. Vasudeva**

2. The Kushan coins and lapis lazuli fragments were found near which ancient site?

- A. Mohenjo-daro
- B. Harappa
- C. Taxila
- D. Gandhara

☒ **Answer: C. Taxila**

3. The Kushan coins discovered are estimated to belong to which century?

- A. 6th century BC
- B. 1st century BC
- C. 2nd century AD
- D. 4th century AD

☒ **Answer: C. 2nd century AD**

4. Lapis lazuli fragments found during the excavation date back approximately to which period?

- A. 2nd century AD
- B. 1st century AD
- C. 6th century BC
- D. 4th century BC

☒ **Answer: C. 6th century BC**

5. India's first hydrogen-powered train pilot project will operate between which two locations?

- A. Delhi – Panipat
- B. Jind – Sonipat
- C. Rohtak – Hisar
- D. Ambala – Chandigarh

☒ **Answer: B. Jind – Sonipat**

6. Hydrogen for India's first hydrogen train is produced using which process?

- A. Combustion
- B. Thermal cracking
- C. Electrolysis
- D. Gasification

☒ **Answer: C. Electrolysis**

7. Who is the highest run-scorer in the history of the Ashes series?

- A. Steve Smith
- B. Jack Hobbs
- C. Allan Border
- D. Don Bradman

 **Answer: D. Don Bradman**

8. Steve Smith surpassed which player to become the second-highest run-scorer in Ashes history?

- A. Don Bradman
- B. Ricky Ponting
- C. Jack Hobbs
- D. Alastair Cook

 **Answer: C. Jack Hobbs**

9. The Indian Coast Guard Ship 'Samudra Pratap' is primarily designed to enhance India's capability in which area?

- A. Submarine warfare
- B. Marine pollution response
- C. Aircraft carrier operations
- D. Missile defence

 **Answer: B. Marine pollution response**

10. Under which initiative are public health facilities certified to ensure quality healthcare services in India?

- A. Ayushman Bharat
- B. National Health Mission
- C. National Quality Assurance Standards (NQAS)
- D. Universal Immunisation Programme

 **Answer: C. National Quality Assurance Standards (NQAS)**

