Portuguese Coin

Why in News?

A farmer in North Goa's Nanoda Bamber village unearthed a pot that contained coins from a bygone era.

- Pot contained 832 copper coins, believed to have been minted in Goa around the **16th or 17th Century when it was under Portuguese rule.**

What was Characteristic of Portuguese Coinage in India?

- Portuguese **issued coins in gold and silver from Goa,** as well as copper, tin, and lead coins from other mints such as Cochin, Diu, and Damão.
- The **gold coins were called 'Cruzado' or 'Manoel'** and were issued in the same size, value, and weight. They had a cross on one side and the royal arms on the other.
- The **silver coins were called 'Meia-espera' and 'Espera'.**
- The copper coins were divided into various denominations such as '**Bazaruco', 'Leal', 'Tanga', 'Pardau', and 'Real'.**
  - The copper coins had various symbols such as a castle, a lion, a crown, a cross, and the king's name.
- The **tin and lead coins were mainly issued from Diu and Malacca** and were called 'Dinheiro'.
  - They had a crude design and were often irregular in shape and size. They had the king's name or initials on one side and a cross or a flower on the other.

What was India's Engagement with Portuguese in Goa?

- **Portuguese as a Traveller:** Vasco da Gama was the first Portuguese explorer to reach India by sea in 1498 at Calicut on the **Malabar Coast** and was welcomed by a local ruler Zamorin.
- **Portuguese as a Coloniser:** In 1505, **Francisco de Almeida became the first viceroy of Portuguese India** and established a base in Cochin. He also fought against the Zamorin of Calicut and the Mamluks of Egypt, who were rivals in the spice trade.
  - **Afonso de Albuquerque (**in 1510**)** captured Goa from the Bijapur Sultanate and made Goa the capital of the Portuguese State of India.
- **Colonial Rule of Portuguese:** The Portuguese rule in Goa lasted for about 450 years, from 1510 to 1961. During this period, Goa became a prosperous and cosmopolitan city, known as the **"Rome of the East".**
- **Liberation of Goa:** The **liberation of Goa** from Portuguese rule was achieved by the Indian government in December 1961, after a 36-hour military operation known as **Operation Vijay.**
- **Statehood to Goa:** In 1987, **Goa was granted statehood** by the Indian government, and became the 25th state of India.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims:

Q. With reference to Pondicherry (now Puducherry), consider the following statements: (2010)

1. The first European power to occupy Pondicherry were the Portuguese.
2. The second European power to occupy Pondicherry were the French.
3. The English never occupied Pondicherry.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 and 3 only

(c) 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (a)

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