

## Discovery of an 1,500 Year Old Reservoir in Elephanta Island

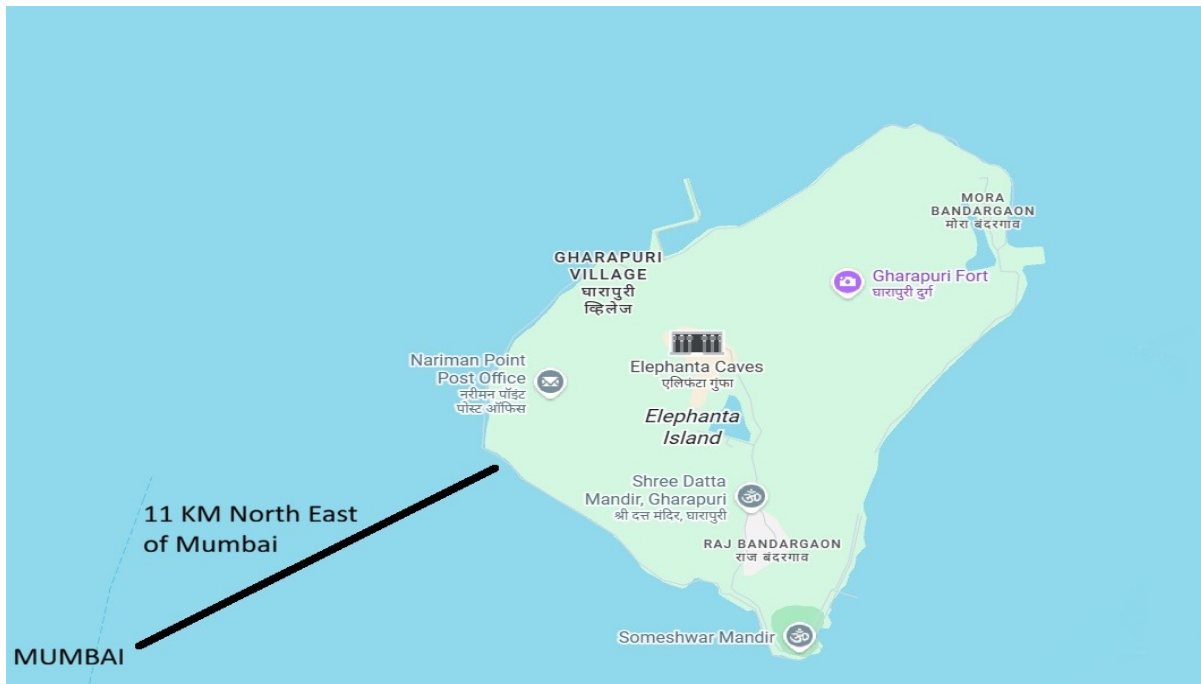
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### Why in News?

*The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has unearthed a 1,500-year-old stepped reservoir on Elephanta Island, off the Mumbai coast.*

### Elephanta Island

- **Located in** - Mumbai Harbour, Maharashtra.
- It is also known as ***Gharapuri ("City of Caves")***.
- **UNESCO Heritage Site - Elephanta Caves** (5<sup>th</sup> century) are located on Elephanta Island.
- It features massive rock-cut sculptures dedicated to Lord Shiva is designated as UNESCO World Heritage site.
- **Historic Ports** - Originally comprised 3 key maritime localities
  - Morabandar,
  - Rajbandar, and
  - Shethbandar.
- **Global Trade** - It served as an ancient hub linking ***India to Rome and Mesopotamia*** as early as the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE.



## Key Findings of the recent discovery

- **Stepped Reservoir** - Reveal an advanced water management system essential for its role in maritime commerce.
  - **Estimated age** - 1,500 years.
  - **Dimensions** - 14.7 m long, 6.7 m & 10.8 m wide, T-shaped.
  - **Built** - Stone blocks ferried from the mainland.
  - **Depth excavated** - 5 m, exposing 20 steps.
  - **Purpose** - Water storage on rocky terrain with poor soil absorption.
- **Other Excavated Artifacts** -
  - Brick structure (possibly a *dyeing vat* for textiles).
  - Storage pot, terracotta figurines, glass & stone bangles.
  - Beads of *carnelian and quartz*.
  - *Stone anchors* indicating maritime activity.
  - *3,000 amphorae sherds* (Roman-style jars) and *torpedo jars* from West Asia (Mesopotamia) - used for wine, oil, fish sauce.
  - **60 silver, lead, and copper coins** belonging to Krishnaraja (Kalachuri Dynasty).
- **Coins of Krishnaraja - Kalachuri Dynasty (6<sup>th</sup> CE)**
  - **Features** - *Obverse* - Seated bull motif and *Reverse* - Temple symbol with legend "Sri Krishnaraja."
  - Confirms *Kalachuri presence and influence in western India* during this period.

## Reference

[The Hindu | Elephanta Islands](#)

