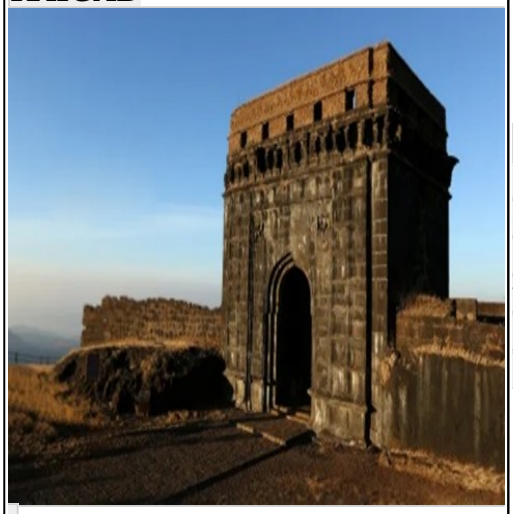
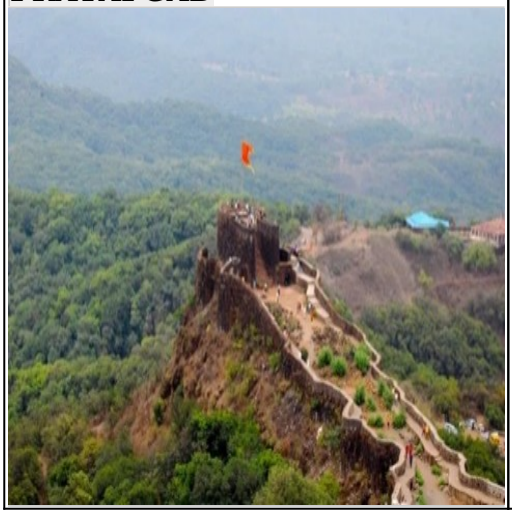
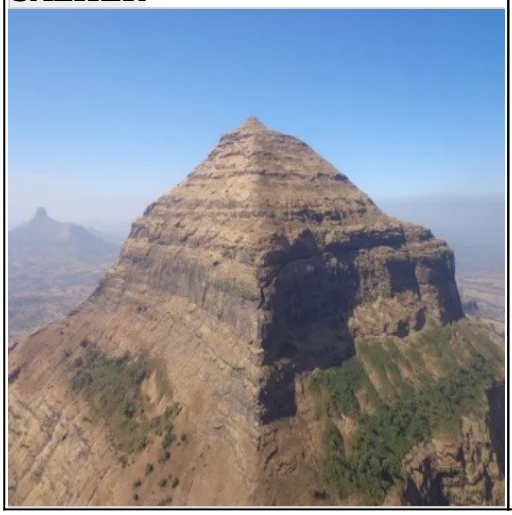
Maratha military landscapes of India in UNESCO World Heritage List

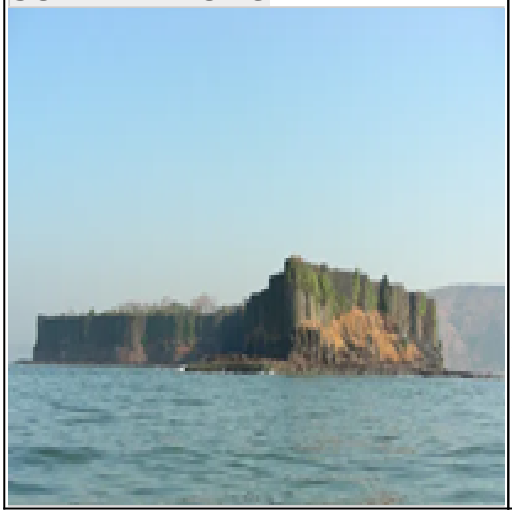
Prelims - *Current events of National & International importance | History of India & Indian National Movement.*

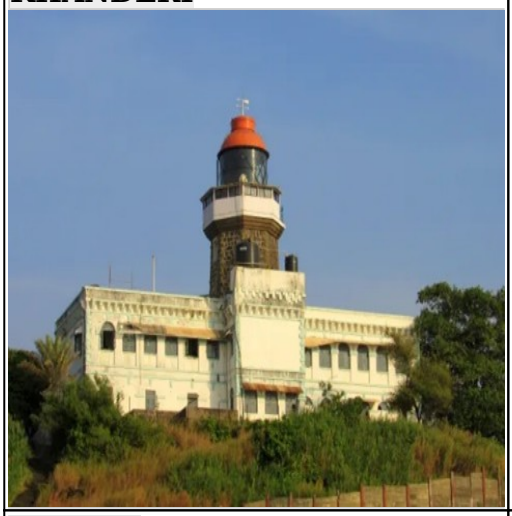
Why in News?

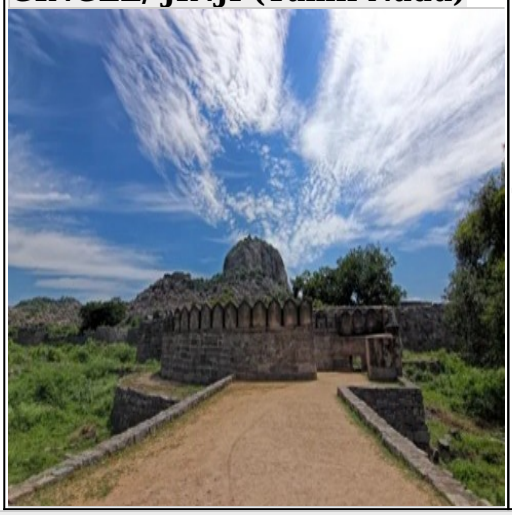
The World Heritage Committee, meeting for its 47th session at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, has inscribed the 'Maratha Military Landscapes of India' on the World Heritage List.

Fortress	Description
RAIGAD 	• **Located in -** North Konkan region of ***Maharashtra.*** • It is once the capital of the Maratha Empire because of its strategic location and colossal size. • Surrounded by deep valleys, and access is only through a steep pathway in front. • Shivaji Maharaj was crowned and he took the title of Chhatrapati, in 1674 CE.
PRATAPGAD 	• **Built by -** Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in 1656. • It is situated in the the Western Ghats. • The fort is famous for its defensive architecture.

PANHALA 	• It was designed to be a self-sustaining settlement. • **Originally built in -** The 12th century CE by the Shilaharas, a feudatory dynasty of the Rashtrakutas. • It is among the *largest of the Maratha forts.* • Panhala fort is the site of the famous Battle of Pawankhind.
SHIVNERI 	• Shivneri Fort, located near Junnar in Pune district. • The fort is triangular in shape and surrounded by cliffs. • It dates back to the 6th century CE, when it was built as a strategic military outpost. • The 7-tier defences of the fort, intended to block enemy advances at multiple levels, are among its most striking aspects.
SALHER 	• Salher Fort is located in Nashik district, Maharastra. • It is a significant landmark of the Sahayadri mountain range. • It is the highest fort in Maharashtra and one of the highest in the Western Ghats. • It is the site of the pivotal open-field Battle of Salher.

LOHAGAD 	• Located near Lonavala. • It is an "Iron Fort" originally built by the *Lohtamia dynasty* in the 10th century CE. • It is known for its 4 huge gates - The Ganesh Darwaja, - Narayan Darwaja, - Hanuman Darwaja, and - Maha Darwaja. • The "Vinchukada", or "Scorpion's Tail", is one of Lohagad's most striking features, a long, narrow, fortified spur that extends from the main fort.
SINDHUDURG 	• The fort stands on the island of Khurte in the Arabian Sea, off the Konkan coast. • **Constructed in -** 1664-67 by Hiroji Indulkar, the chief military engineer of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. • It is to provide a secure base for maritime operations against the Portuguese, the British, and the local Siddis.
SUVARNADURG 	• The "Golden Fortress" is an island fortress built by Shivaji Maharaj off Harnai port in Ratnagiri district. • Suvarnadurg has a sister fortress on the mainland known as Kanakadurga; the two structures used to be connected by a tunnel, which is now unusable. • **Initially built by -** *Adil Shahi dynasty*, Suvarnadurg was captured and rebuilt by Shivaji in 1660.

VIJAYDURG 	• One of the oldest of the Maratha forts, the “Fort of Victory” on the Arabian Sea coast in Sindhudurg district. • It was originally built by the *Shilahar dynasty* in the late 12th century. It was then known as Gheria. • The fort was captured by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in 1653.
KHANDERI 	• Khanderi, a small island off the coast of Alibaug. • It was fortified by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in 1679 to secure Maratha control over the coastal waters.
RAJGAD 	• The “King of Forts” was captured by the Shivaji Maharaj in 1647. • It served as his capital for 26 years before Raigad. • This was where Rajaram I, the son of Shivaji Maharaj, was born, and where his first wife, Saibai, passed away.

GINGEE/ JINJI (Tamil Nadu)	
	• Gingee Fort is located in the Villupuram district of Tamil Nadu. • **Built by -** Ananta Kon of the *Konar Dynasty.* • **Built in -** 1200 CE. • Known as –The 'Troy of the East.'

Reference

The Indian Express| Maratha fortress in UNESCO Heritage sites

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