



UPSC & STATE PCS CURRENT AFFAIRS · UJIYARI.COM

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

ASI Unearths Rare Copper Plates at Elephanta Island

9 July 2026 ·

HISTORY & CULTURE ·

GS1

CURATED & WRITTEN BY

**Bharat Choudhary**

UPSC Educator & Content Creator

[in linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://www.linkedin.com/in/epicbharat)

ALSO FROM THE CREATOR

BharatNotesFree UPSC notes, MCQs, PYQ analysis. **100% Free.**bharatnotes.com →

ADVERTISE

Advertise with Ujiyari

Reach thousands of UPSC aspirants daily.

[✉ epicbharat@gmail.com](mailto:epicbharat@gmail.com)



ASI Unearths Rare Copper Plates at Elephanta Island

9 July 2026 · 5 min read ·

Source: ujjiyari.com — researched, fact-checked & UPSC-mapped

✓ Every fact web-verified against primary sources (<https://ujjiyari.com/how-we-verify/>)

WHY IN NEWS

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) Mumbai Circle unearthed two copper plates at Morabander on Gharapuri (Elephanta) Island during the 2025-26 excavation season, announced in early July 2026, giving fresh epigraphic evidence of maritime trade and administration under the Traikutaka and Chalukya dynasties.

Elephanta Island is best known to the world for its magnificent rock-cut Shiva caves. The latest find shifts the lens: the two copper plates suggest the island was not merely a religious retreat but a **political, administrative and maritime hub** on India's western seaboard, a node in the Indian Ocean trade world of the mid first millennium CE.

THE DISCOVERY

The plates were found at **Morabander on Gharapuri (Elephanta) Island**, preserved inside a **large storage jar**, during the ASI Mumbai Circle's **2025-26 excavation season**. The careful deposition inside a jar helped preserve the inscriptions, which are engraved on copper, a durable medium traditionally used for records meant to last.

Both plates are **tamrapatra** (copper-plate inscriptions), the kind of document typically used in ancient and early-medieval India to record **land grants** and administrative orders.

Plate one: the Traikutaka record

The first plate belongs to **Maharaja Indrasena of the Traikutaka dynasty**. This is significant because it is **possibly the earliest direct epigraphic record of the dynasty's founder**, who was previously known mainly from **coins and later inscriptions**. The plate strengthens the identification of the ancient

site of **Aniruddhapura with Elephanta**, tying a historically attested place-name to the island.

Ujjayari Current Affairs · ujjayari.com · Free Daily Current Affairs for UPSC & State PCS

Plate two: the Chalukya record

The second plate is **provisionally attributed to Jayashraya Mangalarasa of the Chalukyas of Navasarika**, dated to the **7th-8th century CE**. The Chalukyas of Navasarika were based in the region spanning **southern Gujarat, northern Konkan and the Nashik area**, and this record extends the trail of their authority into the Elephanta zone.

PLATE	ATTRIBUTED TO	DYNASTY	SIGNIFICANCE
Plate one	Maharaja Indrasena	Traikutaka	Possibly earliest direct record of the dynasty's founder; links Aniruddhapura with Elephanta
Plate two	Jayashraya Mangalarasa	Chalukyas of Navasarika (7th-8th c. CE)	Extends Chalukya authority into the Konkan-Gujarat coastal zone

WHY THE FIND MATTERS

Historically, the **Traikutakas** ruled the **Konkan and northern Maharashtra around the 5th century CE**. Direct records of the dynasty are scarce, so a copper plate naming its founder is a rare primary source that can help fix chronology and territory.

The discovery matters for three reasons:

- **Epigraphy as history.** Copper-plate inscriptions are among the most reliable sources for reconstructing dynastic succession, administrative practice and land relations, because they are contemporary official documents rather than later literary memory.
- **Elephanta reimaged.** The find recasts Elephanta from a purely religious rock-cut site into a place of **political and administrative weight**, consistent with a location commanding sea approaches to the mainland.
- **Indian Ocean trade.** A settled administrative and maritime hub on Elephanta fits the wider picture of the western coast as a link in **Indian Ocean trade networks** that connected India's interior to sea routes.

ABOUT ELEPHANTA AND THE ASI

The **Elephanta Caves** are a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**, inscribed in **1987**, and are dedicated mainly to **Shiva**. The rock-cut cave complex, famous for the colossal Trimurti sculpture, is one of India's most celebrated examples of early medieval cave art.

The **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** was **established in 1861**, functions under the **Ministry of Culture**, and operates under the **Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958**. As of 2026, **India has 44 UNESCO World Heritage Sites**.

UPSC RELEVANCE

GS Paper 1 (Indian Art and Culture / Ancient History): Salient aspects of art forms and architecture from ancient times; sources of ancient Indian history (epigraphy and numismatics); dynasties of the Deccan and western India; the historical processes of maritime trade.

Prelims pointers:

- The **Elephanta Caves** are a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** (inscribed **1987**), dedicated mainly to **Shiva**; the island is also called **Gharapuri**.
- **Two copper plates** were found at **Morabander** in the **2025-26 season**, inside a storage jar.
- One plate names **Maharaja Indrasena** of the **Traikutaka** dynasty; the other is attributed to **Jayashraya Mangalarasa** of the **Chalukyas of Navasarika**.
- The **Traikutakas** ruled the **Konkan and northern Maharashtra around the 5th century CE**.
- **Copper-plate inscriptions ("tamrapatra")** typically record **land grants**.
- The **ASI** was **established in 1861**, works under the **Ministry of Culture**, and enforces the **AMASR Act, 1958**.
- **India has 44 UNESCO World Heritage Sites** (2026).

Mains question: "Epigraphic sources such as copper-plate inscriptions often reveal what monuments alone cannot." Discuss with reference to how the recent Elephanta finds reshape our understanding of the island's political and maritime role. (15 marks, 250 words)

FACTS CORNER

Ujiyari Current Affairs - ujiyari.com · Free Daily Current Affairs for UPSC & State PCS

★ **FACTS CORNER, KNOWLEDGE PEDIA**

The find: Two copper plates unearthed by ASI Mumbai Circle at Morabander, Gharapuri (Elephanta) Island, in the 2025-26 season, preserved inside a large storage jar; announced early July 2026.

Plate one: Maharaja Indrasena of the Traikutaka dynasty, possibly the earliest direct record of the dynasty's founder; links ancient Aniruddhapura with Elephanta.

Plate two: Provisionally attributed to Jayashraya Mangalarasa of the Chalukyas of Navasariika (7th-8th century CE).

Traikutakas: Ruled the Konkan and northern Maharashtra around the 5th century CE; previously known mainly from coins.

Tamrapatra: Copper-plate inscriptions, typically recording land grants.

Elephanta Caves: UNESCO World Heritage Site (inscribed 1987), dedicated mainly to Shiva; island also called Gharapuri.

ASI: Established 1861, under the Ministry of Culture, enforces the AMASR Act, 1958.

UNESCO Sites: India has 44 World Heritage Sites (2026).

Sources: Archaeological Survey of India (<https://asi.nic.in/>), Ministry of Culture (<https://www.indiaculture.gov.in/>), The Print (<https://theprint.in/>)

Source: ASI Unearths Rare Copper Plates at Elephanta Island — Ujiyari.com | Free UPSC & State PCS Current Affairs

RELATED EDITORIALS

Ujiyari Current Affairs · ujiyari.com · Free Daily Current Affairs for UPSC & State PCS

THE HINDU

[The Taj and the Docket: When Litigation Besieges a Monument](#)

9 Jul

INDIAN EXPRESS

[Five Decades After the Emergency, Difficult Questions, Unheeded Warnings](#)

25 Jun

THE HINDU

[When the Young Took Up Arms: On the Ethics of Revolutionary Violence](#)

22 Jun

INDIAN EXPRESS

[Dancing Girl, Meet Modest Imagination](#)

16 Jun

RELATED KEY TERMS

KEY TERM

[Bodh Gaya Temple Management Committee \(BTMC\)](#)

The eight-member statutory body created under the Bodh Gaya Temple...

KEY TERM

[Bombay Reorganisation Act, 1960](#)

The central legislation enacted under Article 3 that bifurcated the...

KEY TERM

[Classical Languages of India](#)

Six Indian languages designated 'Classical' by the Government of India...

KEY TERM

[Eighth Schedule](#)

The constitutional list of India's 22 officially recognised languages,...

Ujiyari Current Affairs · ujiyari.com · ~~Free Daily~~ Current Affairs for UPSC & State PCS

CURATED & WRITTEN BY

Bharat Choudhary

UPSC Educator & Content Creator

[in linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://www.linkedin.com/in/epicbharat)[Read Full Article on Ujiyari →](#)<https://ujiyari.com/daily/2026/07/09/elephanta-copper-plates-traikutaka-2026/>

ALSO FROM THE CREATOR

BharatNotes

Free UPSC study platform — subject-wise notes across all 4 GS papers, Prelims MCQs, Mains answer frameworks, PYQ analysis & progress tracking. **100% Free • No Login Required.**

[Start Preparing → \[bharatnotes.com\]\(https://bharatnotes.com\)](#)

📌 OPPORTUNITY

Advertise with Ujiyari

Reach **thousands of serious UPSC & State PCS aspirants** daily through our PDFs, website, and social channels.

Ideal for: Coaching institutes • EdTech platforms • Book publishers • Exam prep apps

[✉ epicbharat@gmail.com](mailto:epicbharat@gmail.com)

Write to us for rates & media kit

Free UPSC & State PCS Current Affairs · ujiyari.com · bharatnotes.com