



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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Kanheri Caves

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Why is in news? G20 delegates visit the Kanheri Caves in Mumbai

The Kanheri Caves are a group of caves and rock-cut monuments located on the **western outskirts of Mumbai**.

The caves are located within the **forests of the Sanjay Gandhi National Park**.

The name Kanheri is derived from 'Kanhagiri' in Prakrit and occurs in the **Nasik inscription of the Satavahana ruler Vasisthiputra Pulumavi**.

Kanheri was mentioned in the **travelogues of foreign travellers**. The **earliest reference** of Kanheri is ascribed to **Fa-Hein** who visited India during 399-411 CE and later by several other travellers.

The Kanheri caves comprise more than 110 different rock-cut monolithic excavations and is **one of the largest single excavations in the country**.

These excavations were primarily undertaken during the **Hinayana phase of Buddhism** but also has several examples of the Mahayana stylistic architecture as well as few printings of the Vajrayana order.

Kanheri flourished under the **patronage of Satavahana, Traikutakas, Vakatakas and Silaharas** and through donations made by the wealthy merchants of the region.

Its importance is heightened by the fact that it is the only centre where a **continuous progression** of Buddhist faith and architecture is observed as an unbroken legacy right from 2nd century CE to 9th century CE is observed here.

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