

## **Mamallapuram**

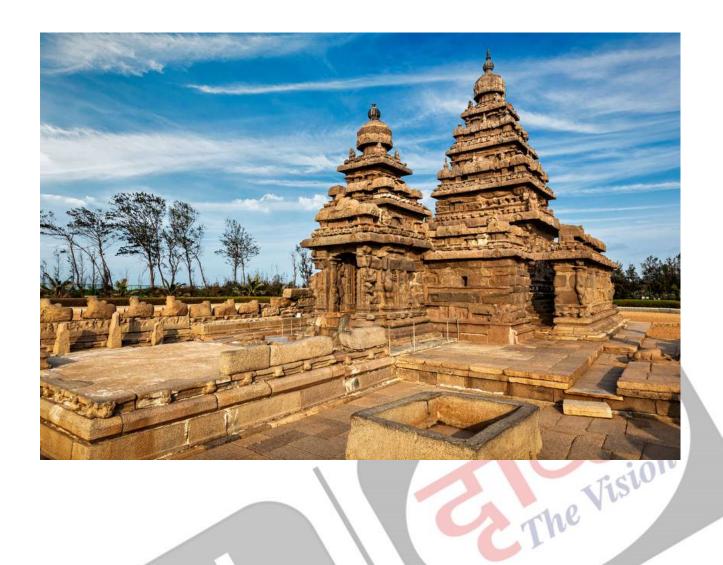
- Location: Mamallapuram, also called **Mahabalipuram** or **Seven Pagodas**, is a town that lies along the Coromandel Coast of the Bay of Bengal, **south of Chennai (Tamil Nadu)**.
- History
  - It is an important town of the **erstwhile Pallava dynasty** that **ruled in parts of South India** from 275 CE to 897 CE.
  - It was **founded by the Pallava king Narasimhavarman** I in the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD.
  - The name Mamallapuram derives from **Mamallan**, or "great warrior", a title by which the Pallava King **Narasimhavarman I** was known.
  - The name Mamallapuram got distorted during the British era to Mahabalipuram and thus it is also known as Mahabalipuram.

## Architecture

- Mamallapuram contains many surviving 7<sup>th</sup>- and 8<sup>th</sup>-century Pallava temples and monuments, chief of which are the sculptured rock relief popularly known as "Arjuna's Penance," or "Descent of the Ganges," a series of sculptured cave temples, and the Shore Temple.
- The town's Five Rathas, or monolithic temples, are the remnants of seven temples, for which the town was known as Seven Pagodas. The entire assemblage collectively was designated a <u>UNESCO World Heritage Site</u> in 1984.

## Significance:

- Ancient Chinese, Persian, and Roman coins found at Mamallapuram point that it was a seaport.
- Mamallapuram and the Pallava dynasty are also historically relevant, for the earliest recorded security pact between China and India (in the early 8<sup>th</sup> century) that involved a Pallava king (Rajasimhan, or Narasimha Varma II), from whom the Chinese sought help to counter Tibet.
- The second informal summit between India and China was held here in October 2019.



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