SATYADHEESH
सत्याधीश

UPSC DAILY BRIEF

Current Affairs · 2 November 2026

13 min	6	0	5 + 1	GS2 · 3 GS3 · 3
READING TIME	KEY STORIES	IN BRIEF	MCQS + MAINS	PAPER MIX

01 — TODAY IN 2 MINUTES

The 5 stories you can't skip

1 **Russia vetoes MINURSO mandate renewal, sparking UN security warnings**
Why it matters: UNSC veto power and peacekeeping mandates: a GS2 International Relations and security study.
GS2 · INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS P

2 **ISRO launches GSLV-F18 to deploy NVS-03 satellite for NavIC programme**
Why it matters: Space technology and strategic autonomy: a GS3 topic focusing on regional navigation systems.
GS3 · SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY P M

3 **UN General Assembly passes resolution to end U.S. economic embargo on Cuba**
Why it matters: Unilateral sanctions vs. multilateralism: a GS2 case study on geopolitical pressures and diplomatic realignment.
GS2 · INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS P

4 **King of Bhutan dedicates Buddhist stupa to PM Modi at Gelephu**
Why it matters: Cultural and spiritual diplomacy as a tool for strengthening India-Bhutan bilateral ties (GS2).
GS2 · INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS P

5 **Ladakh experiment yields saffron flowers in 30 days on difficult terrain**
Why it matters: High-value horticulture and economic diversification in arid zones: a GS3 Agriculture and Geography case study.
GS3 · AGRICULTURE P

NUMBER OF THE DAY

35 years
Duration of the MINURSO peacekeeping mission

P.2 KEY STORIES » IN BRIEF + PLACES » TEST YOURSELF

P = PRELIMS · M = MAINS

What to know, in 60 seconds each

6 of 6 notes · picked for exam value

GS2 · INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS P

Russia vetoes MINURSO mandate renewal, sparking UN security warnings

Why in news: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned of security risks in Western Sahara after the UN Security Council failed to renew the MINURSO mandate due to a Russian veto.

REMEMBER

- MINURSO: United Nations peacekeeping mission in Western Sahara
- Western Sahara: Region involving Morocco, Algeria, and the Polisario Front
- 35 years: Duration of the MINURSO peacekeeping mission

MAINS ANGLE *Examine the implications of the expiration of the MINURSO mandate on regional stability in Western Sahara and the role of the UN Security Council's veto power in peacekeeping.*

USE: UN Security Council · Veto Power · Peacekeeping Mandate · Western Sahara

Full note → satyadheesh.in/upsc/note/146008

GS2 · INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS P

UN General Assembly passes resolution to end U.S. economic embargo on Cuba

Why in news: The UN General Assembly passed a resolution on October 30 calling for an end to the U.S. economic embargo on Cuba, despite a significant drop in supporting votes compared to previous years.

REMEMBER

- United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) — Passed the resolution on October 30
- Unilateral Sanctions — The U.S. economic embargo on Cuba is the subject of the resolution
- 130 in favour, 25 abstentions, and 17 against — The voting breakdown for the resolution

MAINS ANGLE *Analyze the impact of geopolitical pressures and bilateral ties on the voting patterns of member states in UN General Assembly resolutions regarding unilateral economic sanctions.*

USE: Unilateral Sanctions · Multilateralism · Geopolitical Pressure · Economic Embargo

Full note → satyadheesh.in/upsc/note/145987

GS3 · SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY P M

ISRO launches GSLV-F18 to deploy NVS-03 satellite for NavIC programme

Why in news: ISRO successfully launched the GSLV-F18 mission to deploy the NVS-03 satellite to rescue the NavIC programme after 18 months of launch failures.

REMEMBER

- GSLV-F18: The rocket used by ISRO to deploy the NVS-03 satellite.
- NavIC: A regional navigation programme that has been short one functional satellite for six months.
- ₹17,000 crore: The estimated amount required in the 2027-28 Union Budget to sustain NavIC progress.

MAINS ANGLE *Discuss the significance of the NavIC programme in enhancing India's strategic autonomy and its role in supporting domestic infrastructure and security.*

USE: Strategic Autonomy · Regional Navigation · Space Infrastructure · Fiscal Allocation

Full note → satyadheesh.in/upsc/note/145985

GS2 · INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS P

King of Bhutan dedicates Buddhist stupa to PM Modi at Gelephu

Why in news: King Jigme Khesar Namgyal Wangchuk of Bhutan dedicated a Buddhist stupa (Jangchub Chorten) to Indian PM Narendra Modi at the Gelephu Mindfulness City to signify strong bilateral ties.

REMEMBER

- Gelephu Mindfulness City (GMC) — a planned urban project in Bhutan based on ancient Bhutanese principles.
- Jangchub Chortens — 108 Buddhist Stupas consecrated by Bhutan.
- Kiren Rijiju — represented the Government of India at the consecration ceremony.

MAINS ANGLE *Discuss the significance of cultural and spiritual diplomacy in strengthening the India-Bhutan bilateral relationship in the contemporary era.*

USE: Soft Power · Bilateral Relations · Cultural Diplomacy · Strategic Partnership

Full note → satyadheesh.in/upsc/note/145970

GS3 · AGRICULTURE P

Ladakh experiment yields saffron flowers in 30 days on difficult terrain

Why in news: Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena initiated a saffron cultivation experiment in Leh, Ladakh, demonstrating the feasibility of high-value crop cultivation in difficult terrains.

REMEMBER

- Leh, Ladakh: Site of the saffron cultivation experiment on restored land
- High-value horticulture: Cultivation of high-value crops to enhance economic landscape in high-altitude regions
- 90,000 Iranian saffron corms: Total corms weighing 800 kg used in the experiment

MAINS ANGLE *Discuss the potential of high-value horticulture to enhance the economic landscape of high-altitude regions like Ladakh while addressing ecological constraints.*

USE: High-value crops | Economic diversification | Arid zone agriculture | Sustainable horticulture

Full note → satyadheesh.in/upsc/note/145963

GS3 · ECONOMY P M

India's Decent Work Index rises to 0.302 as informal workforce persists

Why in news: A study by Anukriti Negi et al. analyzed the Periodic Labour Force Survey to highlight that while India's Decent Work Index rose to 0.302, 90% of the workforce remains in informal employment.

REMEMBER

- Decent Work Index: A metric to assess job quality and labor market trends
- Decent Work Index: Rose from 0.247 in 2017-18 to 0.302 in 2023-24
- Informal employment: Nearly 90% of the Indian workforce

MAINS ANGLE *Discuss the structural challenges in transitioning India's massive informal workforce toward 'decent work' and job quality standards.*

USE: Decent Work Index | Informal Economy | Job Quality | Labor Market Dynamics

Full note → satyadheesh.in/upsc/note/145948

04 — TEST YOURSELF

5 questions, 5 minutes

Answers at the bottom, upside down

1 With reference to MINURSO, consider the following statements:

1. The UN initiated a liquidation phase for the mission on November 1, 2025.
2. The mission is located in a region involving Morocco, Algeria, and the Polisario Front.
3. The MINURSO peacekeeping mission lasted for 35 years.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 1 and 3 only
(c) 2 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

2 What is the estimated amount required in the 2027-28 Union Budget to sustain the progress of the NavIC programme?

(a) ₹50,000 crore
(b) ₹10,000 crore
(c) ₹25,000 crore
(d) ₹17,000 crore

3 Which countries switched their voting position on the Cuba embargo resolution due to downgraded ties with Havana?

(a) Mexico, Chile, and Peru
(b) France, Spain, and Brazil
(c) Japan, South Korea, and Canada
(d) Costa Rica, Ecuador, Argentina, and Colombia

4 With reference to the Gelephu Mindfulness City and the recent consecration ceremony, consider the following statements:

1. Bhutan consecrated 150 Buddhist Stupas during the ceremony.
2. Jangchub Chorten number 76 was specifically dedicated to PM Narendra Modi.
3. Bhutan consecrated a total of 108 Buddhist Stupas known as Jangchub Chortens.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 2 only
(b) 3 only
(c) 1 and 2 only
(d) 2 and 3 only

5 Which specific type of corms were used in the saffron cultivation experiment in Leh?

(a) Spanish saffron corms
(b) Dutch saffron corms
(c) Iranian saffron corms
(d) Kashmiri saffron corms

MAINS PRACTICE

Write one answer today

GS2 · INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Examine the implications of the expiration of the MINURSO mandate on regional stability in Western Sahara and the role of the UN Security Council's veto power in peacekeeping.

USE: UN Security Council · Veto Power · Peacekeeping Mandate · Western Sahara · Geopolitical Stability

ANSWERS · 1 (c) · 2 (d) · 3 (d) · 4 (d) · 5 (c)

TELEGRAM WEBSITE

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