Art & Culture · GS - I

Protection of cultural heritage requires both physical security and international cooperation. Discuss the major threats to museums and heritage collections and suggest measures for their protection.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 19/10/2026	GS - I	Art & Culture

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Cultural heritage; museum security; art theft; illicit trafficking; digital inventories; international cooperation; UNESCO; INTERPOL; insurance; emergency preparedness.

Model Answer

Introduction

Museums preserve historical objects, artistic achievements and cultural memory. Theft, vandalism, unrest and illicit trafficking threaten these collections and undermine the heritage of societies.

Major Threats

1. Security Vulnerabilities: Inadequate surveillance, weak access controls and insufficient emergency planning can expose collections to theft.

2. Illegal Trafficking: Stolen artefacts may be moved across borders through organised networks, complicating recovery.

3. Civil Unrest and Disasters: Conflict, fires and other emergencies can damage irreplaceable collections.

4. Documentation Gaps: Incomplete inventories and limited provenance records can make stolen objects difficult to identify and recover.

Measures for Protection

Museums should strengthen surveillance, access controls, inventory management and disaster-response plans. Digital cataloguing and photographic documentation can improve identification of stolen objects.

Countries should cooperate through INTERPOL, UNESCO frameworks and relevant national laws to investigate trafficking and facilitate restitution. Staff training, risk assessments and adequate funding are equally important.

Conclusion

Protecting museums is essential for preserving humanity's shared cultural memory. Strong security, reliable documentation and international cooperation can reduce losses and improve recovery.

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