

May - 19

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ The Indian Coast Guard commissioned ICGS Achal, a new-generation Adamyaclass Fast Patrol Vessel (FPV) and the fifth vessel in a series of eight ships, at Goa Shipyard Limited.
- ❖ Tushar Mehta, Solicitor General of India and author, launched his books *The Bench*, *The Bar* and *The Bizarre and The Lawful and The Awful*, based on humour and unusual courtroom experiences in New Delhi.
- ❖ The Andaman and Nicobar Islands hosted two underwater Guinness World Record events at Swaraj Dweep (Havelock Island) to promote eco-tourism, including the “Largest Flag Unfurled Underwater” with a 60 metre × 40 metre Indian flag near Radha Nagar Beach.
 - Divers also created a 10-metre-high human stack underwater near the lighthouse area under the “Tallest Human Stack Underwater” event.
- ❖ International Day of Living Together in Peace is observed on 16 May every year to promote peace, tolerance and harmony among people.
 - The theme for the year 2026 is “Building Trust through Dialogue, Inclusion and Reconciliation”.
- ❖ International Museum Day is observed every year on 18 May to highlight the importance of museums in society.
 - The theme for the year 2026 is “Museums Uniting a Divided World”.

TAMIL NADU NEWS

Pattinamarudhur Archaeological Site

- ❖ Around 1,500 artefacts were recently excavated at Pattinamarudhur, located near the coast of Thoothukudi Archaeological Site, by the Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology.
- ❖ The excavation found ancient coins, porcelain pottery pieces, shell ornaments and figurines.
- ❖ Experts believe Pattinamarudhur was an important coastal trade centre similar to Korkai, the ancient port of the Early Pandyas.
- ❖ Korkai was famous during the Sangam Age for pearl fishing and trade with the Roman Empire and the Far East regions.
- ❖ The discoveries show that the region had different cultural phases and active maritime trade in ancient times.

A terracotta female figurine has been discovered at Pattinamaruthur



In Thoothukudi district, an archaeological site officially declared by the Tamil Nadu government. The find was made by local villagers within the 300-acre excavation zone. The torso features intricate ornamentation, and the figure is adorned with a finely modeled hair bun, reflecting the refined craftsmanship of the ancient period.

NATIONAL NEWS

Largest Ethanol Feedstock - Maize

| MAIZE PRODUCTION IN THE LAST TEN YEARS | | | |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Year | Area (million ha) | Production (million tonnes) | Yield (Tonne/ha) |
| 2015-16 | 8.81 | 22.57 | 2.56 |
| 2016-17 | 9.63 | 25.9 | 2.68 |
| 2017-18 | 9.38 | 28.75 | 3.06 |
| 2018-19 | 9.03 | 27.72 | 3.07 |
| 2019-20 | 9.57 | 28.77 | 3.00 |
| 2020-21 | 9.89 | 31.65 | 3.19 |
| 2021-22 | 9.96 | 33.73 | 3.38 |
| 2022-23 | 10.74 | 38.09 | 3.54 |
| 2023-24 | 11.24 | 37.66 | 3.35 |
| 2024-25 | 12.02 | 42.28 | 3.51 |

- ❖ Maize became India's largest feedstock for ethanol production in Ethanol Supply Year (ESY) 2025–26.

- ❖ India produced 182 crore litres of maize-based ethanol during the first half of ESY 2025–26.
- ❖ Ethanol is produced from sugarcane and grain-based feedstocks, with maize becoming the top grain contributor.
- ❖ Maize requires less irrigation water and has a shorter growing cycle compared to sugarcane.
- ❖ India’s E20 target aims to achieve 20% ethanol blending with petrol.
- ❖ Uttar Pradesh set a target to increase maize cultivation to 11.3 lakh hectares in 2026–27 to support ethanol production.

1 percent Labour Welfare Cess



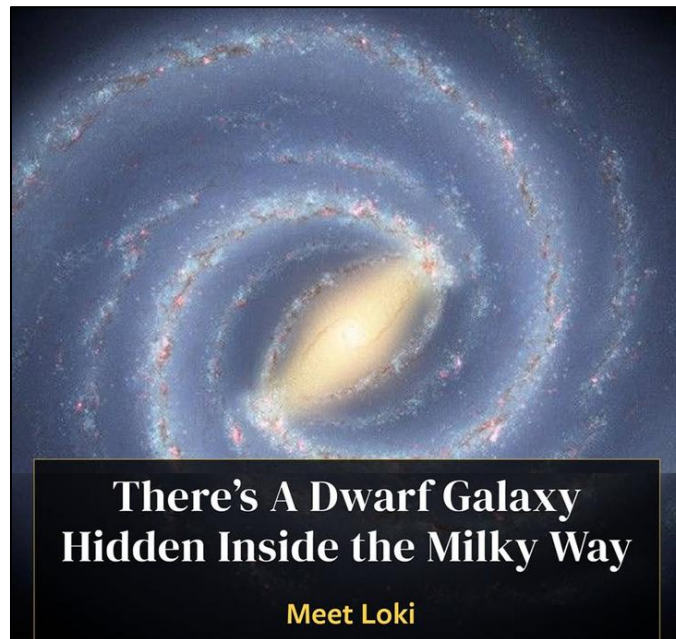
- ❖ The Government of India notified a 1% welfare cess on construction costs under the Code on Social Security, 2020.
- ❖ The cess is imposed on the total construction cost paid by employers for building and construction works.
- ❖ Individuals constructing houses costing less than ₹50 lakh are exempt from the cess from 21 November 2025.
- ❖ The cess funds are used for welfare schemes such as health support, insurance, financial aid, and education benefits for construction workers.
- ❖ The welfare funds are managed by Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Boards in States and Union Territories.

- ❖ Section 100(1) of the Code on Social Security, 2020, provides the legal basis for the construction welfare cess.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY NEWS

Hidden Dwarf Galaxy Loki

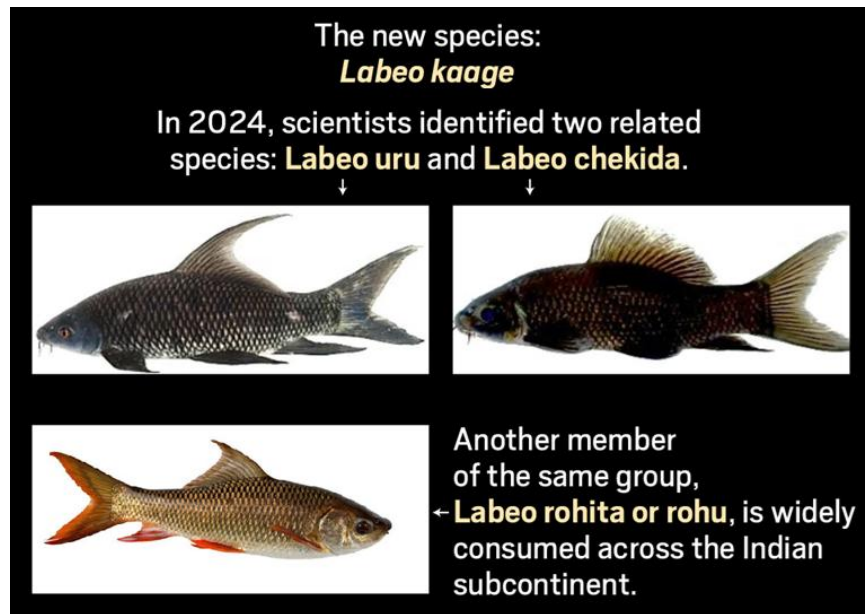
- ❖ Scientists proposed the existence of a hidden ancient dwarf galaxy named “Loki” inside the Milky Way.
- ❖ A dwarf galaxy is a small galaxy with fewer stars and lower mass than large galaxies like the Milky Way.
- ❖ Scientists studied 20 old metal-poor stars located within 2 kiloparsecs of the Sun using spectroscopy techniques.
- ❖ The stars showed both prograde and retrograde motion, which means they move both with and against the Milky Way’s rotation.
- ❖ The study used ESPaDOnS, a high-resolution spectropolarimeter, to examine chemical elements formed from supernovae and neutron star mergers.



Freshwater fish - Labeo kaage

- ❖ Scientists from Indian Council of Agricultural Research - National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources (ICAR-NBFGR) discovered a new freshwater fish species named Labeo kaage in the Cauvery River basin of Karnataka.

- ❖ The fish was found in the Shivanasamudra stretch of the Cauvery River in Mandya district.
- ❖ The name “kaage” comes from the Kannada word for crow, referring to the fish’s dark body colour.
- ❖ Locally, the fish is called “kaage meenu” and belongs to the dark-coloured Labeo species found in the Western Ghats.
- ❖ Scientists also discovered Labeo chekida and Labeo uru in Kerala in 2025.
- ❖ The study clarified the identity of Labeo nigrescens, also called the “Dark Labeo”, first described in 1870.



REPORTS AND INDICES

World Health Statistics Report 2026

- ❖ The World Health Organization (WHO) released the World Health Statistics Report 2026, an annual compilation of global health indicators published since 2005.
- ❖ The report stated that progress towards health-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) remains uneven and too slow to meet 2030 targets.
- ❖ Global malaria incidence increased by 8.5% since 2015, despite long-term declines in HIV infections, tuberculosis and neglected tropical diseases between 2010 and 2024.
- ❖ Around 2 billion people worldwide continued using polluting cooking fuels and technologies in 2024.

- ❖ About 1.6 billion people were living in or pushed into poverty due to health expenses as of 2022, while nearly one-fourth of the global population faced financial hardship from out-of-pocket health spending.



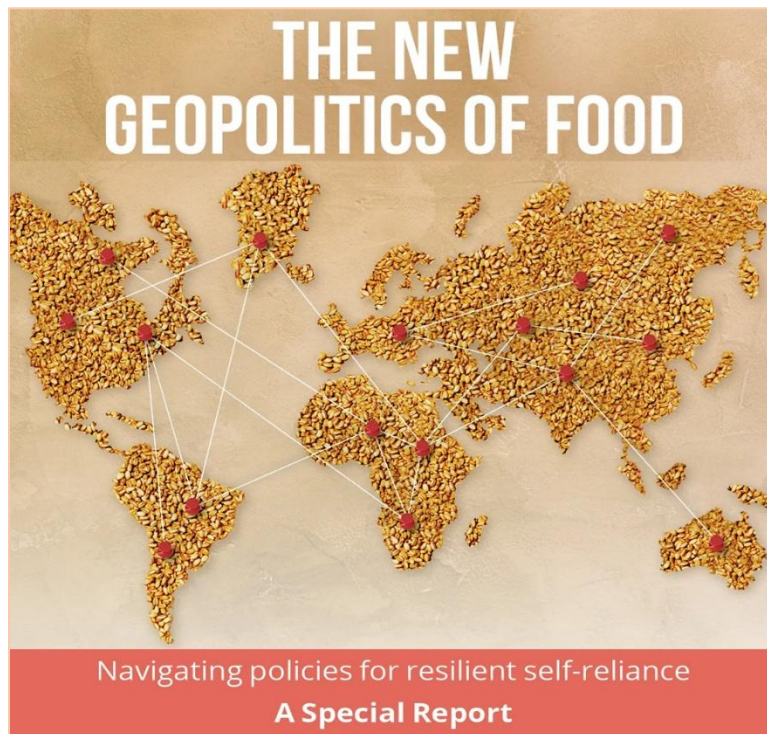
Global Report on Internal Displacement 2026



- ❖ The Global Report on Internal Displacement (GRID) 2026 reported that 82.2 million people were internally displaced across 104 countries by the end of 2025.

- ❖ The report was released by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre in partnership with the Norwegian Refugee Council.
- ❖ Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are people forced to leave their homes but who remain within their own country's borders.
- ❖ Conflict and violence displaced 68.6 million people, becoming the largest cause of displacement for the first time.
- ❖ Sudan recorded the world's largest internal displacement crisis with more than 9.1 million displaced people.
- ❖ The report noted that 78,000 people remained displaced in Manipur due to Meitei-Kuki violence.

New Geopolitics of Food Report

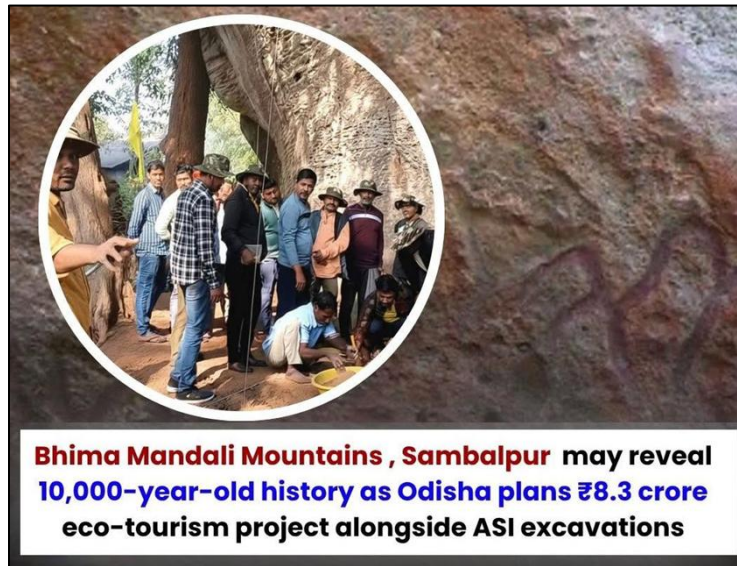


- ❖ The report “A New Geopolitics of Food” was released by the International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems (IPES-Food).
- ❖ The report states that trade wars, military conflicts, and weakening multilateral institutions are reshaping global food systems.
- ❖ It highlighted that food is increasingly being used as a tool of war and economic coercion in global hunger hotspots.
- ❖ The report discussed Public Food Stockholding (PSH), under which governments procure, store, and distribute food grains for food security.

- ❖ India's Public Food Stockholding programme supports the National Food Security Act, 2013 and is managed by the Food Corporation of India (FCI).

STATE NEWS

Bhimmandali Eco Heritage Site



- ❖ Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan inaugurated the Bhimmandali Eco Heritage Site in Sambalpur district, Odisha.
- ❖ The site is located in the Naktideul Forest Range and contains rock paintings and stone inscriptions over 20,000 years old.
- ❖ The findings show evidence of early human habitation from the Old Stone Age to the Neolithic period.
- ❖ The project aims to conserve prehistoric archaeological remains and promote eco-tourism in Odisha.
- ❖ Bhimmandali is linked to Bhima from the Mahabharata and includes worship sites of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati as Gupteswar.

PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

DigiLocker Integration Awards

- ❖ Five States were felicitated by the National e-Governance Division (NeGD) for outstanding DigiLocker integration initiatives during the National Consultative Workshop on Strengthening Cybersecurity Frameworks for State Data.

- ❖ The awarded States were Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Nagaland, and Rajasthan for expanding DigiLocker-based citizen services.
- ❖ Karnataka recorded the highest number of DigiLocker accounts with over 2.7 crore registered users and digitised around 3 crore electricity bill records.
- ❖ Gujarat integrated 65% of its services and introduced digital disability certificates for free bus transport benefits.
- ❖ Kerala onboarded more than 117 services within seven days, while Nagaland integrated over 32 services in one month under both issuer and requestor models.
- ❖ Rajasthan linked the Family Register Jan Aadhaar with DigiLocker, benefiting more than 7.5 crore citizens.



SPORTS NEWS

Archery World Cup Stage 2

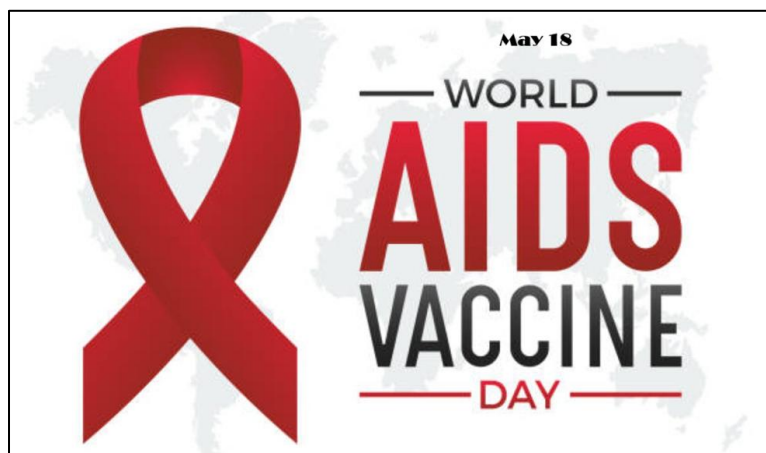
- ❖ India's women's recurve team won the gold medal at the Archery World Cup Stage 2 in Shanghai.
- ❖ The Indian team of Deepika Kumari (Jharkhand), Ankita Bhakat (West Bengal), and Kumkum Mohod (Maharashtra) defeated China 5-4 in the shoot-off final.
- ❖ India won its first Archery World Cup stage gold medal since 2021.

- ❖ Pravin Jadhav (Maharashtra) won bronze in the compound individual event, while Sahil Jadhav (Maharashtra) won bronze in the men's compound event.
- ❖ Simranjeet Kaur (Punjab) reached the semifinals of the women's recurve individual event.



IMPORTANT DAYS

World AIDS Vaccine Day 2026 - May 18



- ❖ The day aims to spread awareness about the need for an HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) vaccine.

- ❖ HIV is a virus that attacks the body's immune system and can lead to AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) if not treated.
- ❖ The day is also called HIV Vaccine Awareness Day and honours scientists, doctors, volunteers and health workers working on HIV vaccine research.
- ❖ The observance began after a 1997 speech by Bill Clinton highlighting the need for an effective HIV vaccine.
- ❖ The first World AIDS Vaccine Day was celebrated on 18 May 1998.

