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Current Affairs Today — May 3, 2026

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TOP STORIES — MAY 3, 2026

1. SIPRI 2026: India is World's 5th Largest Military Spender

The **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)** released its annual **Military Expenditure Report** on May 3, 2026. India's defence spending in 2025 was **\$92.1 billion** — an **8.9% increase** year-on-year — placing India as the **world's 5th largest military spender**. Global military expenditure reached **\$2,887 billion** — the **11th consecutive annual increase**. The **top 5 countries** — US, China, Russia, Germany, India — account for **58%** of global military spending. India's jump is partly attributed to accelerated procurement following **Operation Sindoor** (May 2025). India displaced Saudi Arabia and the UK to enter the top five. | *GS3/Security & Defence, GS2/IR*

RANK	COUNTRY	SPENDING (2025)
1	USA	~\$997 billion
2	China	~\$314 billion
3	Russia	~\$149 billion
4	Germany	~\$95 billion
5	India	\$92.1 billion

2. World Press Freedom Day 2026 — India Ranked 157th

World Press Freedom Day is observed every year on **May 3** (declared by UNESCO in **1993**). The 2026 conference theme is **“Shaping a Future at Peace”** (UNESCO). **Reporters Without Borders (RSF / Reporters Sans Frontières)** released the **2026 World Press Freedom Index** ranking India **157th out of 180 countries** — a six-place drop from 151 in 2025. The RSF cited judicial harassment of independent journalists, application of criminal defamation and national security laws, and concentrated media ownership. India ranks below **Pakistan (153rd)**, **Nepal (95th)**, **Sri Lanka (139th)**, and **Bangladesh (149th)** in South Asia. | *GS2/Governance, Polity, IR*

ITEM	FACT
World Press Freedom Day	May 3 (UNESCO, declared 1993)
Theme 2026	“Shaping a Future at Peace”
Organised by	RSF (Reporters Sans Frontières / Reporters Without Borders)
India rank 2026	157th / 180
India rank 2025	151st / 180
Change	–6 places

3. Rohit Jain Appointed RBI Deputy Governor

The Government of India appointed **Rohit Jain** as **Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India** for a **three-year term** effective **May 3, 2026**. He succeeds **T. Rabi Sankar** (whose term ended in April 2026) and was previously serving as **Executive Director at RBI**. RBI has four Deputy Governors — three are typically career central bankers and one is from the commercial banking sector. | *GS3/Economy, Monetary Policy*

4. Andaman & Nicobar: Guinness World Record — Tallest Underwater Human Stack

On **May 3, 2026**, the Andaman & Nicobar Administration set a **Guinness World Record** for the **tallest underwater human stack — 22.3 metres tall**, involving **14 people** including **Lt. Governor D.K. Joshi**, sustained for **3 minutes** underwater. This followed May 2’s record for the **largest national flag unfurled underwater — a 60×40 metre (2,400 sq m) Tricolour** at **Radhanagar Beach (Swaraj Dweep / Havelock Island)**, involving **223 divers** from the Navy, Police, and other agencies. Radhanagar Beach is **Blue Flag certified** — one of 13 Blue Flag beaches in India. | *GS1/Geography, Polity, Persons*

RECORD	DETAILS
Date	May 3, 2026
Record	Tallest underwater human stack
Height	22.3 metres
Participants	14 people, including LG D.K. Joshi
Duration	3 minutes underwater
Previous record (May 2)	Largest underwater national flag — 60×40m, 2,400 sq m, 223 divers
Location	Radhanagar Beach, Swaraj Dweep (Havelock Island)
Beach certification	Blue Flag

5. DRDO Tests LR-AShM Hypersonic Anti-Ship Missile (Phase-II)

DRDO conducted the **Phase-II trial** of India’s indigenously developed **Long-Range Anti-Ship Missile (LR-AShM)** from the **Odisha coast**, targeting a ship in the **Bay of Bengal**. The missile — a **boost-glide hypersonic** system — achieved a range of approximately **1,500 km** at speeds of up to **Mach 10** in its initial boost phase before gliding to the target. The test strengthens India’s **anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD)** capability and the **Indian Navy’s** stand-off maritime strike capability. Phase-I tests were conducted in 2023 and November 2024. *[Note: Test reported by multiple media sources; PIB press release was pending at time of publication.] | GS3/Security & Defence, Science & Tech*

6. WRI Report: 4.3 Million Hectares of Tropical Rainforest Lost Annually

The **World Resources Institute (WRI)** released its **Global Forest Watch** report (data year 2025), finding that **4.3 million hectares** of tropical primary rainforest are still being lost annually — equivalent to the area of **Denmark** — at a rate of **11 football fields per minute**. This represents a **36% decline** from the 2024 peak — largely due to **Brazil’s 41% reduction** in non-fire forest loss under stricter enforcement. However, global loss remains **70% above** the pace needed to meet the **Glasgow Leaders’ Declaration (COP26, 2021)** target of halting deforestation by 2030. *| GS3/Environment & Ecology*

METRIC	FIGURE
Annual tropical forest loss (2025)	4.3 million hectares
Rate	11 football fields per minute
Change from 2024 peak	-36% (decline)
Brazil's change	-41% (improvement under Lula's enforcement)
Still above Glasgow target pace	+70% (deforestation too fast for 2030 goal)
Glasgow Leaders' Declaration	COP26 (Nov 2021) — halt deforestation by 2030

7. Prasoon Joshi Appointed Prasar Bharati Chairman

The Central Government appointed **Prasoon Joshi** — renowned lyricist, writer, and former **CBFC (Central Board of Film Certification) Chairman** — as **Chairman of Prasar Bharati**. He is expected to assume charge on **May 4, 2026**. **Prasar Bharati** is India's statutory public service broadcaster, operating **Doordarshan (DD)** and **All India Radio (AIR)**, established under the **Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Act, 1990**. | *GS2/Governance, Polity*

8. Manipur Ethnic Violence — Third Anniversary (May 3, 2023)

May 3, 2026 marks the **third anniversary** of the outbreak of ethnic clashes in Manipur between **Meitei** and **Kuki-Zo** communities, which began on May 3, 2023. The violence left over **250 dead** and displaced over **60,000 people**. The **Thadou Inpi Manipur** (apex body of the Thadou-Kuki community) observed the day as a **“Day of Peace and Prayer”**, calling on churches and community members to remember victims. The situation in Manipur remains a live constitutional and humanitarian issue under Articles 355, 356, and the Sixth Schedule. | *GS2/Polity, Social Issues, Security*

9. ECI Deploys QR Code Identity System for Counting Centres

The **Election Commission of India (ECI)** deployed a **QR code-based Photo Identity Card system** integrated with its **ECINET platform** for a three-tier security framework at election counting centres. The system debuted on **May 4** for assembly election counting. All authorised personnel — Returning Officers, candidates, election agents, counting agents — must undergo mandatory QR scanning at the inner counting hall. The system replaces older manual ID verification and is to be extended to all future elections. | *GS2/Polity, Electoral Governance*

10. India Power Grid: Solar Duck Curve and Peak Demand Record

India's power grid recorded a **peak demand of 256.11 GW on April 25, 2026** — a national record. However, the real stress occurs at **night**, when approximately **150 GW of solar generation** goes offline post-sunset while cooling demand from air conditioners during heatwaves remains high, compounded by **18–21 GW of coal plant outages**. This **“duck curve” problem** — falling daytime demand followed by a steep evening ramp — is driving India's **Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) target of 47 GW** (plus 27 GW pumped hydro) by **2031-32** under CEA projections. | *GS3/Economy, Science & Tech*

FACTS CORNER

ITEM	FACT
SIPRI 2026 India spending	\$92.1 billion (5th globally, 8.9% increase)
Global military spending 2025	\$2,887 billion (11th consecutive annual rise)
Top 5 military spenders	USA, China, Russia, Germany, India
World Press Freedom Day	May 3 every year (UNESCO, since 1993)
2026 theme	“Shaping a Future at Peace”
India WPMI 2026 rank	157th / 180 (published by RSF)
Rohit Jain	RBI Deputy Governor from May 3, 2026
Replaces	T. Rabi Sankar (retired April 2026)
Prasoon Joshi	Prasar Bharati Chairman (charge from May 4)
Prasar Bharati Act	1990; operates DD + AIR
Andaman Guinness (May 3)	Tallest underwater human stack — 22.3m, 14 people, 3 min
Andaman Guinness (May 2)	Largest underwater flag — 2,400 sq m, 223 divers, Radhanagar Beach
Radhanagar Beach	Blue Flag certified; Swaraj Dweep (renamed Havelock Island)
WRI forest loss	4.3 million ha/year; 36% down from 2024; 11 football fields/min
Glasgow Leaders' Declaration	COP26 — halt deforestation by 2030
Manipur ethnic violence	Began May 3, 2023; 250+ dead; 60,000+ displaced
India peak power demand	256.11 GW on April 25, 2026
India BESS target	47 GW + 27 GW pumped hydro by 2031-32 (CEA)

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