

8. Short News

1. Exercise EKVVERIN

14th edition of the India-Maldives bilateral military exercise held in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala (Dec 2025).

Meaning- "Ekuverin" means "Friends" in the Dhivehi language.

Participants- Indian Army and Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF).

Focus Areas- Counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism. Operations in semi-urban, jungle, and coastal terrains. Enhancing interoperability and sharing best practices.

Significance- Reinforces safety and stability in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). Reflects equal partnership (conducted alternatively in both nations).

Other Exercises- *Ekatha* (Maritime) and *Dosti* (Trilateral with Sri Lanka).

2. 'Rage Bait' (Word of the Year 2025)

Chosen as Oxford's Word of the Year 2025.

Definition- Online content specifically designed to provoke anger or outrage to get clicks, comments, and shares. **Examples-** Polarizing political posts, fake stories, or exaggerated videos.

Social media algorithms reward high-emotion engagement, making anger profitable for creators.

Impact- Causes digital toxicity, mental fatigue, and stress among users.

3. Global Indices for Reforms and Growth (GIRG) Initiative

Goal- To improve India's rankings in 26 global indices (e.g., Economy, Governance, Development).

Coordinator- NITI Aayog's DMEO (Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office).

Strategy- 17 Nodal Ministries assigned to specific indices. Identify data gaps and update international agencies with correct Indian data. Implement policy reforms to boost performance.

Significance- Enhances India's global reputation, data credibility, and attractiveness for investment.

4. Tea Development & Promotion Scheme (TDPS)

Agency- Implemented by the Tea Board of India (Statutory body under Union Govt).

Objective- Boost tea production, quality, and exports (2021-2026).

Key Activities- Helping small growers form Self Help Groups (SHGs) and Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs). Setting up mini-factories and promoting organic farming. Welfare measures for workers.

Success in Assam- Significant rise in exports (CAGR of 7.15%) and establishment of new processing units.

5. DRDO High-Speed Rocket-Sled Test

Achievement- DRDO successfully tested an indigenous fighter aircraft escape system.

Location- Terminal Ballistics Research Laboratory (TBRL), Chandigarh.

The Test- A rocket-propelled sled moved at 800 km/h on a rail track to simulate a jet in flight.

Purpose- To check if the pilot ejection system works safely at high speeds.

Significance- India joins a select group of nations (USA, Russia, France) capable of such dynamic testing.

6. Dr. Rajendra Prasad (Birth Anniversary)

Role- India's first President and the only one re-elected twice (served 12 years).

Freedom Struggle- Active in Champaran Satyagraha and Quit India Movement. Thrice elected as Congress President.

Constitution- served as the President of the Constituent Assembly.

Legacy- Awarded Bharat Ratna in 1962. Opened the Mughal Gardens (Amrit Udyan) to the public. Authored books like *India Divided* and *Atmakatha*.

7. Guinea-Bissau

Current Event- Military ousted the President; Junta installed a transitional leader.

Geography- Small West African nation.

Capital- Bissau.

Borders- Senegal (North), Guinea (South/East), Atlantic Ocean (West).

Terrain- Known for mangrove swamps and the Bijagos Archipelago.

8. PAHAL (DBTL) Scheme

Full Form- Pratyaksh Hanstantrit Labh (Direct Benefit Transfer of LPG).

Objective- Send LPG subsidy directly to bank accounts to stop leakage and fake connections.

Eligibility- Income under ₹10 Lakh/year + Aadhaar linked.

Reforms- Biometric authentication is now mandatory. 8.63 lakh fake/inactive connections have been removed.

Satisfaction- Over 90% of users are satisfied with the direct transfer mechanism.

9. National Legislative Index (NLI)

India's first index to rank and assess **State Assemblies**.

Objectives- To make assemblies more transparent, productive, and digital.

Key Metrics- Number of sitting days. Time spent on Question Hour. Bills referred to committees. Digitization of records.

Goal- Encourage competition and peer learning among states to improve governance.

