

March- 22

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ ICICI Bank launches '**InstaOD**', India's first online overdraft facility for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME).
- ❖ National flag has been unfurled in India's tallest flag post in Belagavi, Karnataka. The 110-metre-tall flag post at Kote Kere is near the historic Belagavi fort in the city. It is taller than the post in Pune (107 m) and the one at the India-Pakistan border at Attari (105 m) in Punjab.

NATIONAL

'Varuna-18'

- ❖ The Indo-French joint naval exercise Varuna-18 was held in Arabian Sea off Goa coast.
- ❖ Varuna-18 was conducted in three sea areas, including the Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal and South Western Indian Ocean.
- ❖ In 2017, Varuna was conducted in three sea areas in the European waters.
- ❖ The exercise was conducted in three phases.
- ❖ The Indian Navy and the French Navy have conducted bilateral maritime exercises since May 1993.
- ❖ Since 2001, this Indo-French Bilateral exercises have been named as Varuna and there have been fifteen editions of the same till date.

Energy Transition Index

- ❖ India was ranked at 78th among 114 countries on World Economic Forum's (WEF) Energy Transition Index (ETI).
- ❖ Energy Transition Index (ETI) was released as part of report titled *Fostering Effective Energy Transition*.
- ❖ The index ranked countries based on how well they are able to balance energy security and what extent they have an access with environmental sustainability.
- ❖ The Energy Transition Index was topped by Sweden, followed by Norway at the second position and Switzerland at the third.

- ❖ Rounding out the Top 10 were Finland (4th), Denmark (5th), the Netherlands (6th), the United Kingdom (7th), Austria (8th), France (9th) and Iceland (10th).
- ❖ Among India's emerging market peers, Brazil stood at the 38th place, Russia at 70th and China at 76th place.
- ❖ India has also been implementing National Solar Mission (NSM), a largest government-mandated renewable energy programme, with a target of generating 175 Giga Watts renewable energy capacity by 2022.
- ❖ Under national solar mission among 175 Giga Watts 100 GW will be produced from Solar installations, 60GW from wind, 10GW from biomass and 5 GW from small hydro facilities.

'INDIA RANKS 78TH ON WEF ENERGY TRANSITION INDEX; LOWER THAN BRAZIL, CHINA'

India has been ranked at 78th, lower than its emerging market peers like Brazil and China, among 114 countries on the World Economic Forum's Energy Transition Index that was topped by Sweden.

INDIA RANKS in the third performance quartile and third readiness quartile, making it an emerging country that is approaching the leapfrog category

INDIA HAS taken "bold measures" to improve energy access, energy efficiency, and to improve the deployment of renewable sources of energy

BETWEEN 2013 and 2018, India improved its performance score by 5.6 percentage points, mainly with improved energy access, reduced subsidies and reduced import costs

FOSSIL FUELS

On India, energy needs in the country are primarily met by fossil fuels with implications for environmental sustainability and increasing energy import costs

ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY

A considerable share of population still lacks access to electricity and clean cooking fuel

THE ENERGY PROGRAMMES

India has the largest renewable energy programme, with a target of 175 GW renewable energy capacity by 2022, and it announced plans to shift completely to electric vehicles by 2030 P T I

RANKINGS

AMONG INDIA'S emerging market peers, Brazil stood at the 38th place, Russia at 70th and China at 76th place

THE OVERALL list was topped by Sweden, followed by Norway at the 2nd position and Switzerland at the 3rd rank.

OTHER COUNTRIES on the top 10 include Finland (4th), Denmark (5th), the Netherlands (6th), the UK (7th), Austria (8th), France (9th) and Iceland (10th)

INVESTMENTS NEEDED

ENERGY TRANSITION in the country will require "large investments, and an enabling environment and robust regulatory frameworks to support the transition"

INTERNATIONAL

Vladimir Putin - Russia

- ❖ Vladimir Putin won his fourth term as president and will continue to lead Russia for the next six years.
- ❖ According to central election commission data, with 99.8 percent of ballots counted Putin received 76.67 per cent of the vote.
- ❖ This year's victory has marked an increase in Putin's share of votes from 2012 when he won 64 per cent of the votes.
- ❖ Under the current Russian constitution, this should be Putin's last six-year term in office.
- ❖ As per Russian constitution one can be a president of Russia maximum 4 times.
- ❖ By this win, Putin will be in power until 2024.
- ❖ Vladimir Putin is already Russia's longest-serving leader since Stalin, former Russian president.

Russia presidential election



ECONOMY

Cost of Living Index 2018

- ❖ As per The Economist Intelligence Unit's report "Worldwide cost of living 2018; Which global cities have the highest cost of living", Bengaluru is the world's fifth cheapest city among 133 global cities.

BENGALURU, DELHI AMONG WORLD'S CHEAPEST CITIES



Bengaluru, Chennai and New Delhi are among the cheapest cities in the world, according to an Economist Intelligence Unit survey which names Singapore as the priciest city. The Worldwide Cost of Living 2018 survey says South Asian cities, particularly those in India and Pakistan, offer the best value for money.

The cheapest cities in the world

Rank	City (Country)
133	DAMASCUS (Syria)
132	CARACAS (Venezuela)
131	ALMATY (Kazakhstan)
130	LAGOS (Nigeria)
129	BENGALURU (India)
127	KARACHI (Pakistan)
127	ALGIERS (Algeria)
126	CHENNAI (India)
124	BUCHAREST (Romania)
124	NEW DELHI (India)

The most expensive cities in the world

Rank	City (Country)
1	SINGAPORE (Singapore)
2	PARIS (France)
2	ZURICH (Switzerland)
4	HONG KONG (Hong Kong)
5	OSLO (Norway)
6	GENEVA (Switzerland)
6	SEOUL (South Korea)
8	COPENHAGEN (Denmark)
9	TEL AVIV (Israel)
10	SYDNEY (Australia)

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit

- ❖ Chennai and New Delhi, at eighth and tenth places, respectively, are among the top ten cheapest cities to live in.
- ❖ War-torn city of Damascus in Syria was the first in the cheapest cities list followed by Caracas, the South American city in Venezuela.
- ❖ Singapore retained its title as the world's most expensive city for the fifth consecutive year. Singapore was ranked ahead of Paris placed second on the list, Zurich (3rd) and Hong Kong (4th).
- ❖ The Worldwide Cost of Living report is a biannual Economist Intelligence Unit survey that compares more than 400 individual prices across 160 products and services that prevails in various cities.

- ❖ This reports gives in status of the world cities by comparing various price aspects of food, drink, clothing, household supplies, home rents, transport, private schools, recreational costs.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

India's first cloned Assamese buffalo born

- ❖ The Central Institute for Research on Buffaloes (CIRB) has claimed that a cloned Assamese buffalo male calf was born for the first time in India.
- ❖ A team of researchers used unique methods and produced the clone calf 'Sach-Gaurav' through a normal delivery. The CIRB cloning team was led by PS Yadav.
- ❖ It was born to Murrah buffalo, at Hi Tech Sach Dairy Farm, and making it first buffalo calf to be born in field.
- ❖ This is second cloned male buffalo produced by ICAR-CIRB after Hisar-Gaurav, born in December 2015.
- ❖ The genotype of the calf was confirmed through microsatellite analysis for parentage verification and chromosome analysis.



SPORTS

Table Tennis in Odisha

- ❖ Odisha will host the 80th Senior National Table Tennis Championships after a gap of 12 years.
- ❖ The state had hosted the event in 2001 and in 2006.

- ❖ The decision to allot the event to Odisha was taken during the 81st AGM of the Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI), held at Gurugram.

Personalities, Awards and Events

Nabakalebar festival

- ❖ President Ram Nath Kovind released commemorative coins in denominations of ₹10 and ₹1000 on Lord Jagannath's Nabakalebar festival.



About Nabakalebar festival

- ❖ The Nabakalebara is an ancient ritual associated with most of the Jagannath Temples when the Idols of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra and Sudarshan are replaced by a new set of Idols.
- ❖ A year with an extra Ashadha masa/month as per Hindu Calendar is considered auspicious for conducting the ceremony. This usually occurs every twelve to nineteen years.
- ❖ The Deities are made from a special type of Neem wood known as Daru Bramha.



- ❖ The most recent ceremony was in 2015, following the 1996 ceremony.
- ❖ This festival is celebrated at the Jagannath Temple in Puri, Orissa.
