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Current Affairs:- March 01 – March 11, 2019

- Union Railway Minister Piyush Goyal announced a new railway zone for Andhra Pradesh, that is the Southern Coast Railway and it will be headquartered in Visakhapatnam. It will be the 18th zone in the country. Note: ESL Narasimhan is the present Governor of Andhra Pradesh. Chandrababu Naidu is the present CM of Andhra Pradesh.
 - NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and Adobe signed a Statement of Intent (SOI) to collectively drive the charter of developing creative skills and spreading digital literacy across all Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL) in India.
 - Union Minister of Tribal Affairs Jual Oram launched the ambitious scheme of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs named Van Dhan. The scheme is for Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Minor Forest Produce (MFP) and Development of Value Chain of MFPs.
 - According to BCG-IBA Report - EASE Reforms for Public Sector Banks, released by Union Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs, Punjab National Bank (PNB) secured the top spot among all public sector banks in the implementation of 'Reforms agenda'.
 - National Boxing champion Deepak Singh (49kg) was the only Indian boxer to notch up the gold medal, while five
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others claimed silver medals in the Makran Cup in Chabahar, Iran.

- West Indies opener Chris Gayle has become the first batsman ever to smash 500 or more sixes in international cricket.
 - IRCTC launched its own digital payment aggregator called 'IRCTC iPay'. With iPay, passengers will not need any third-party platforms as it will provide payment options like credit card, debit card, unified payment interface and international card.
 - The Reserve Bank of India has constituted an eight-member task force on offshore rupee markets, headed by Usha Thorat, former Deputy Governor, to look into issues related to the markets and recommend appropriate policy measures to ensure the stability of the external value of the rupee.
 - The Centre and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have signed a 926 million dollar loan agreement to operationalize two lines of the Mumbai Metro Rail System. It is the single largest infrastructure project loan in ADB history approved by the ADB Board.
 - Rice Knowledge Bank-Assam, is an agriculture web portal. It is dedicated to magnifying knowledge on rice production technologies and techniques, best production practices and state agriculture facts. It was launched under the World Bank funded project – Agri-business and Rural Transformation (APART).
 - India has signed a deal with a Russian firm to manufacture 7.5 lakh AK-203 rifles. These are the latest derivative of the AK-47 rifles. The AK-203 rifles will be produced at the Indian Ordnance Factory at Amethi's Korwa. The new rifles will replace the indigenous INSAS rifles in the Army, Air Force, and Navy.
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- ASSOCHAM (The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India), which is one of the apex trade associations of India has conferred 'Non-Life Insurer of the Year Award 2019' to Bharti AXA General Insurance.
- A water conservation scheme 'Jal Amrutha' was launched by Karnataka chief minister H D Kumaraswamy, in Bengaluru. The scheme plans to make people aware of the importance of conserving water and to prompt them to come up with ways to avoid wastage of water. The state government has declared 2019 as the Year of Water.
- 'Mukhyamantri Parivar Samman Nidhi' scheme was launched by Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar in Chandigarh. It is primarily meant for farmers of the state who cultivate on land with areas up to 5 acres and the families with an income of less than Rs.15,000 per month. The scheme would provide a sum of Rs.6,000 yearly and each family has to nominate a member who will be provided with this amount.
- Gram Samridhi Yojana, a Rs.3,000 crore scheme funded by the World Bank and the Government of India, is being worked upon by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries in order to strengthen the unorganised food processing sector concentrated in rural areas. World Bank will be giving Rs.1,500 crore, Rs.1,000 crore will be borne by the Centre while state governments will put in Rs.500 crore.
- IFFCO Tokio General Insurance has launched 'bank locker protector policy', the first stand-alone bank locker cover offered by any insurance company with a plan to protect the contents of a bank locker such as jewelry, title documents, and other valuables.
- Roger Federer has claimed the 100th ATP title of his career after beating 20-year-old Greek Stefanos Tsitsipas in the final of the Dubai Tennis Championships. The 20-time grand slam

champion is the second man, after American Jimmy Connors to claim 100 titles. Federer will have to win 10 more titles to beat Connors' men's record of 109, while Martina Navratilova holds the all-time record having won 167 women's singles crowns during her career.

- Border Security Force (BSF) and Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB) took part in the 3-day 'Mainamati Maitree Exercise 2019' as a part of 'Confidence Building Measures' between India and Bangladesh held in Agartala, Tripura.
 - PM Narendra Modi launched the indigenously-developed National Common Mobility Card (NCMC) to enable people to pay multiple kinds of transport charges, including metro services and toll tax, across the country. Dubbed as 'One Nation One Card', the inter-operable transport card would allow the holders to pay for their bus travel, toll taxes, parking charges, retail shopping and even withdraw money.
 - Bhagwan Lal Sahni has been appointed as the chairman of the newly constituted National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC).
 - Tata Steel has received the award as one of the 2019 World's Most Ethical Companies. The award has been given by Ethisphere Institute, USA.
 - The government of Tripura announced 'Notun Disha' (New Direction) for assessing the academic level of students in classes III-VIII and then improving their current level.
 - Abu Dhabi hosted the 46th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC). This is the first time that India participated in the meeting. Sushma Swaraj attended the inaugural session of the Organisation of Islamic Co-
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operation meeting in Abu Dhabi where she was welcomed as a “guest of honour”.

- According to the Delta ranking report released by NITI Aayog, Assam’s Hailakandi has become the top aspirational district among the 112 aspirational districts of the country.
 - World Wildlife Day is observed on 3rd March every year to spread awareness about wildlife. The theme for World Wildlife Day 2019 is ‘Life below water: for people and planet’, which corresponds to goal 14 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which is 'Life below water'.
 - President Ram Nath Kovind has presented Swachh Survekshana-2019 Awards in New Delhi. Indore bagged award for the cleanest city for the third straight year in Swachh Survekshan. New Delhi Municipal Council area gets cleanest small city award while Uttarakhand’s Gauchar was adjudged Best Ganga Town in the survey.
 - Union Minister Mahesh Sharma has inaugurated ‘Azaadi Ke Diwane’ museum, dedicated to the unsung heroes of the country’s freedom struggle, on the Red Fort premises in New Delhi. Built by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), the museum is the fifth in a series of recently inaugurated ones — the others being the Subhash Chandra Bose and INA museum, the Yaad-e-Jallian museum, the Museum on 1857 (on the country’s first war of Independence) the Drishyakala (a museum on Indian Art) on the sacrifices of India’s freedom fighters.
 - Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), a defence public sector undertaking, presented SWAGAT – the Automatic Fare Collection Gating System.
 - Kylie Jenner was named the youngest self-made billionaire of all time by Forbes magazine, thanks to the booming cosmetics company she founded three years ago.
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- TVS Motor Company has recently bagged the International Sustainability Award – ‘Green Era Award for Sustainability’ in Lisbon, Portugal. The company also won the ‘Quality and Business Excellence Award’ in acknowledgment of its endeavor to create new benchmarks in product quality.
 - Janaushadhi Diwas was celebrated across the country on 07th March.
 - In Madhya Pradesh, ancient tribal language Gondi will be taught in tribal districts.
 - Google launched a free app called "Bolo" that parents can download to help primary grade children improve their Hindi and English reading skills. Launched in India first, the app is designed to work offline and comes with a built-in reading buddy, "Diya", who encourages, aids, explains, and corrects the child, as they read aloud.
 - Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Puri has launched e-Dharti app where all the three modules- Conversion, Substitution and Mutation related to properties have been made online. The payment system in Land and Development Office, L&DO has also been completely digitized.
 - Indian-American television personality and food expert Padma Lakshmi has been appointed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as its newest Goodwill Ambassador, supporting the agency’s fight against inequality and discrimination around the world.
 - Mizoram Governor Kummanam Rajasekharan has stepped down from his post. Governor of Assam, Prof. Jagdish Mukhi, has been given temporary charge of the Aizawl Raj Bhavan.
 - International Women's Day was observed on 08th March. The theme for this year's women's day is 'Think Equal,
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Build Smart, Innovate for Change'. International Women's Day 2019 campaign theme: #BalanceforBetter.

- The Government of India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed in New Delhi a \$26 Million Loan Agreement to provide additional financing for improving drainage infrastructure in Dibrugarh town of Assam under the ongoing Assam Urban Infrastructure Investment Program.
 - The World Bank, the Government of India and representatives of 5 States of Government of India and Implementing Agencies signed in New Delhi the Loan Agreement for Additional Financing of \$137 Million for the *Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP)*.
 - Idukki's The Marayoor Jaggery, the traditional and handmade product from Idukki district of Kerala received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag from the Central Government. Note: A geographical indication (GI) is a name or sign used on products which correspond to a specific geographical location or origin (e.g. a town, region, or country).
 - Soumya Swaminathan, a Deputy Director-General of the World Health Organisation has been named Chief Scientist of the WHO.
 - Distinguished scientist Ajit Kumar Mohanty was appointed Director of Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), the country's premier multi-disciplinary nuclear research facility.
 - National space agency ISRO and its French counterpart CNES sealed an agreement to set up a joint maritime surveillance system in the country in May. K.Sivan, Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation, and Jean-Yves Le Gall, President of CNES of France, signed the agreement in Bengaluru.
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- The Supreme Court ordered a court-monitored mediation in the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid land dispute case to arrive at a "*permanent solution*" to the politically and religiously sensitive issue. The five-judge constitution bench headed by CJI Ranjan Gogoi appointed a panel of 3 mediators in the title suit with Retired Justice Kalifullah chairing the court-appointed and monitored mediation process. The other two members are spiritual leader Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and senior advocate Sriram Panchu.
 - The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved designating Shri Subhash Chandra Garg as Finance Secretary.
 - The Madhya Pradesh government issued an ordinance increasing reservation quota for the Other Backward Classes (OBC) to 27% from the current 14%.
 - A 116-year-old Japanese woman 'Tanaka' has been honoured as the world's oldest living person by Guinness World Records.
 - Mohammad Shtayyeh has been named as Palestinian Prime Minister by President of Palestinian Authority Mahmoud Abbas.
 - ACKO General Insurance, a new-age digital insurance company, was awarded the coveted Golden Peacock Innovative Product Award – 2019, for their contextual micro insurance product - "*Ola Ride Insurance*". The award ceremony was held in Dubai.
 - The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India has won the First Prize in the category of TV Cinema Spot at the prestigious international Golden City Gate Tourism Awards 2019.
 - State Bank of India has become the first domestic bank to link the interest rate it offers on savings account deposits to
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an external benchmark — the Reserve Bank of India's repo rate.

- Kavinder Singh Bisht, in the 56kg-category, struck gold while Shiva Thapa in the 60kg category and three others claimed silver medals to end a fine Indian campaign at the 38th GeeBee Boxing Tournament in Helsinki, Finland.

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