

## CURRENT AFFAIRS= 22-01-2021



The Union Cabinet has approved **850 megawatt (MW) Ratle hydropower project** worth a **Rs. 5281.94 crore** on **Chenab river** in **Kishtwar district of Jammu and Kashmir**.

The project is being implemented under the Centre's plan to expedite strategically important hydropower projects in the union territory post its reorganization.

It will be developed by a new **joint venture company** between state run **National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) Ltd** and **Jammu & Kashmir State Power Development Corporation Ltd (JKSPDC)**, where NHPC will have a 51% stake in the JV firm, while the balance will be held by JKSPDC.

### Indian Railways Renames Howrah-Kalka Mail as Netaji Express



Indian Railways has renamed the **Howrah-Kalka Mail** as '**Netaji Express**', in a tribute to freedom fighter **Subhas Chandra Bose** who is also known as 'Netaji'.

The Howrah-Kalka Mail train has been in service for more than 150 years, after coming into operation in the year 1866.

The Howrah-Kalka Mail runs between Howrah in West Bengal (Eastern Railway) and Kalka in Haryana (Northern Railway) via Delhi.

### Indo-French Air Exercise 'Ex-Desert Knight 21' Begins in Jodhpur

The five-day long **Indo-France bilateral Air exercise 'Ex-Desert Knight 21'** kicked off on **20 January 2021**. It will continue till **24 January 2021**.



The exercise is being conducted between the Indian Air Force and French Air and Space Force in **Jodhpur, Rajasthan**.

From the Indian Air Force side, aircrafts participating in the exercise includes **Rafale**, **Mirage 2000**, **Sukhoi-30 MKI** among other aircraft.

The French side will participate with **Rafale**, **Airbus A-330 Multi-Role Tanker Transport**, **A-400M Tactical Transport aircraft**.

The most interesting part of the exercise is the participation of **Rafales** from both the air forces.

## Airtel Payments Bank launches 'Airtel Safe Pay'



Gurugram-based **Airtel Payments Bank** has launched a safe mode of pay gateway called '**Airtel Safe Pay**', to protect Airtel customers from the growing incidents of online payment frauds.

The Airtel Safe Pay will prevent online frauds when customers transact through **UPI (unified payment interface)** or net-banking using the Airtel Payments Bank.

Using the feature, customers of the payments bank can make secure digital payments across millions of merchants, online retailers and utilities, and even send money.

The new payment gateway is free of cost. It will offer protection against phishing, stolen credentials or passwords, and phone cloning.

## Axis Bank launches Aura Credit Card with health, wellness benefits



Private sector lender **Axis Bank** has unveiled a credit '**AURA**' exclusively loaded with several health and wellness benefits for its users at an affordable price.

Axis Bank has partnered with Poshvine to offer benefits and specialists such as Decathlon, Practo, Fitternity, IndushealthPlus, IMG etc., to offer a complete and unique health & wellness solution to the cardholders.

## Joe Biden takes oath as 46th US President while Kamala Harris as 49th Vice President



Joseph Robinette Biden Jr., famous as **Joe Biden**, has been sworn in as the **46th president of the United States**.

The **78-year-old**, Biden took the oath of the office on 20 January 2021, becoming the **oldest president** in American history.

Apart from this, Kamala Harris took oath as **49th Vice President** of the country, becoming the **first women** to hold the post in the history of United States.

She is even the first Black American and first person of South Asian descent to hold the nation's second highest office.

## Siddhartha Mohanty set to take over as Managing Director of LIC w.e.f Feb 1, 2021

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of **Siddhartha Mohanty** as the new **managing director (MD)** of **Life Insurance Corporation (LIC)**.



He will assume charge with effect from **February 1, 2021**, till his superannuation on **June 30, 2023**.

He will replace **TC Suseel Kumar**, who will retire on January 31, 2021.

Mohanty is currently serving as the managing director (MD) and chief executive officer (CEO) of LIC Housing Finance. The Board of LIC comprise of **four MDs and one chairman**. The current Chairman of LIC is MR Kumar. TC Suseel Kumar, Vipin Anand, Mukesh Kumar Gupta, and Raj Kumar are the MDs of LIC.



### **Former Arunachal Pradesh Governor Mata Prasad passes away at 95**

**Former Governor of Arunachal Pradesh** and senior **Congress leader Mata Prasad** has passed away. He was 95.

Mata Prasad hailed from Jaunpur district of Uttar Pradesh.

He had served as the Governor of Arunachal Pradesh in 1993 and as Minister in the Congress government in UP in 1988- 89.

### **Malayalam actor Unnikrishnan Namboothiri passes away at 98**

Veteran **Malayalam actor Unnikrishnan Namboothiri** has passed away while contracting COVID-19. He was 98.

Unnikrishnan made his acting debut in 1996 with Desadanam. However, he became a household name among the Malayalam film audience for his performance as a witty grandfather in Kalyanaraman (2002).

He is well known for movies like Kaikudunna Nilavu (1998), Kaliyattam (1997), Pammal K Sambandam (2002), Sadanandante Samayam (2003), Madhuranombarakattu (2000), Rappakal (2005), and Pokkiri Raja (2010).