

# IACE

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### HEADLINES

- ❖ Government of India Launches Notary Portal for Online Notary Services
- ❖ Iran's Khorramshahr-5: Reported Development of First Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM)
- ❖ Landslide Injures 12 at Vishnugad Pipalkoti Hydroelectric Project Site in Uttarakhand
- ❖ World Biofuel Day 2025: 10 August
- ❖ Ministry of Textiles Launches "Haat on Wheels" Mobile Handloom Retail Initiative
- ❖ Victoria Mboko defeated Naomi Osaka to win the Canadian Open
- ❖ Huge Opportunities in \$875 Billion Market with EU-India FTA – BCG Report
- ❖ CBSE to Introduce Open-Book Exams for Class 9 from AY 2026-27
- ❖ World Athletics Introduces New Eligibility Regulations for Female Category
- ❖ RBI Keeps Repo Rate Unchanged at 5.5% in August 2025 MPC Meeting
- ❖ India's First Human Stem Cell Bank Launched in Hyderabad
- ❖ Chapters on Manekshaw, Brig Usman, and Maj Somnath Sharma added to the school syllabus by NCERT
- ❖ IDFC FIRST Bank Launches Remit FIRST2 India

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## **Government of India Launches Notary Portal for Online Notary Services**

- Ministry of Law and Justice informed the Rajya Sabha about the Notary Portal.
- It was launched by the Government of India as a dedicated platform for providing online services for the works related to the Notaries Act, 1952 and the Notaries Rules, 1956.
- The objective of the Notary Portal is to provide an online interface between the Notaries appointed by the Central Government and the Government of India for various services like,
  - Submission of applications for appointment as Notaries,
  - Verification of eligibility for appointment as Notaries,
  - Issuance of digitally signed Certificate of Practice as a Notary,
  - Also renewal of Certificate of Practice, change of practice area, submission of annual return etc.
- The Notary Portal provides a faceless, paperless, transparent and efficient system.



# Iran's Khorramshahr-5: Reported Development of First Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM)

- Iran may have developed or prepared for testing its first intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), called Khorramshahr-5, according to recent reports.

## About Khorramshahr-5:

- It is an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) developed by Iran.
- It is said to have an operational range of 12,000 kilometers.
- The missile's speed has been reported to be Mach 16 (approximately 20,000 km/h), typical of ICBMs in mid- or terminal flight.
- It can reportedly carry a heavy warhead weighing approximately two tons.

## About Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM)

- An ICBM is a powerful long-range missile designed mainly to carry and deliver nuclear weapons.
- ICBMs can travel over 5,500 kilometers, with some capable of reaching up to 16,000 kilometers.
- They can fly at speeds faster than 20,000 kilometers per hour, making them hard to intercept. ✓ The countries that have operational ICBMs include Russia, the United States, China, France, India, the United Kingdom, Israel, and North Korea.
- India's Agni V is a solid-fueled ICBM.



## **Landslide Injures 12 at Vishnugad Pipalkoti Hydroelectric Project Site in Uttarakhand**

- Twelve workers were injured, four of them critically, in a sudden landslide that struck the dam site of the under-construction Vishnugad Pipalkoti Hydroelectric Project in Helang, Chamoli district, Uttarakhand, recently.

### **About Vishnugad Pipalkoti Hydro Electric Project:**

- It is located on Alaknanda River, a major tributary of the Ganga River, in the district Chamoli in the state of Uttarakhand.
- It has been designed as a 444-megawatt, run-of-river hydropower scheme, which, when completed, will generate an estimated 1,665 gigawatt-hours, (or million kilowatt-hours) of electricity in a typical year.
- The project will build a 65-meter concrete gravity dam near Helang village in the Chamoli district of Uttarakhand to create a small reservoir in the Alaknanda River.
- It is being developed by THDC India Ltd (formerly Tehri Hydro Development Corporation Limited) and financed by a US\$ 648 million loan from the World Bank.



## World Biofuel Day 2025: 10 August

- World Biofuel Day is commemorated on 10 August every year to spread awareness about the importance of non-fossil fuels.
- On this occasion, the government also highlights the efforts made in the biofuel sector.
- It is celebrated in memory of Rudolf Diesel, who created the diesel engine.
- The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has been celebrating this day since 2015.
- India is the world's third-largest oil consumer.
- India is one of the leading producers of biofuels in the world.
- India has successfully achieved the target of 20% ethanol blending in petrol by 2025, five years ahead of the original target set for 2030.

### Biofuels:

- These are derived from organic sources like plants, crops, and animal waste.
- It is an alternative to conventional fossil fuels.
- It plays a key role in reducing carbon emissions.



## Ministry of Textiles Launches “Haat on Wheels” Mobile Handloom Retail Initiative

- Ministry of Textiles launched the “Haat on Wheels” during the 11th National Handloom Day celebrations in New Delhi.
- It is a mobile handloom retail platform aimed at promoting authentic Indian handloom products in urban areas.
- The initiative is implemented in partnership with the National Handloom Development Corporation (NHDC).
- It promotes the theme “My Handloom, My Pride; My Product, My Pride”.
- The mobile vans travel across Delhi NCR, covering markets, residential areas, and cultural spots.
- It showcases 116 traditional weaves from various regions of India.



## Victoria Mboko defeated Naomi Osaka to win the Canadian Open

- 18-year-old Victoria Mboko pulled off a major upset by defeating four-time Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka to win her first WTA 1000 title at the Canadian Open.
- After losing the first set 2-6, Mboko bounced back with 6-4 and 6-1 wins to claim the title in Montreal.
- She became only the second Canadian semifinalist, finalist, and champion at the Canadian Open since Bianca Andreescu's 2019 victory.
- Mboko, ranked 85th entering the tournament, is now the second-lowest ranked player to win a Tier I/WTA 1000 title since the format's introduction in 1990.
- She is the second player to win her first title at a WTA 1000 event since 2009 and the second wild card player to win the National Bank Open after Monica Seles in 1995.

### Canadian Open winners:

- **Men's Singles:** Ben Shelton defeated Karen Khachanov to win the title.
- **Women's Singles:** Victoria Mboko emerged champion, beating Naomi Osaka in the final.
- **Men's Doubles:** Julian Cash and Lloyd Glasspool won against Joe Salisbury and Neal Skupski, while **Women's Doubles** was won by Coco Gauff and McCartney Kessler over Taylor Townsend and Zhang Shuai.



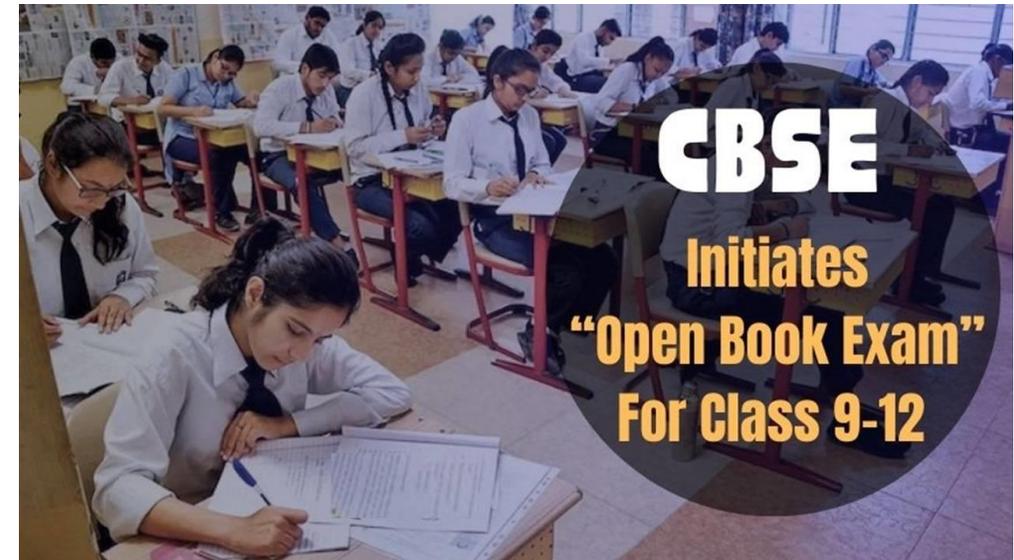
## Huge Opportunities in \$875 Billion Market with EU-India FTA – BCG Report

- India and the European Union are negotiating a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) worth \$875 billion in bilateral trade potential, according to Boston Consulting Group (BCG).
- The deal is expected to boost India's exports to the EU by \$34 billion, with 99% of Indian exports gaining duty-free access.
- EU imports from China are worth \$570 billion, while imports from India are \$98 billion; the FTA could help India increase its share in EU markets.
- The FTA will strengthen India's geopolitical position, enhancing political, economic, and security cooperation with Europe.
- Indian sectors like textiles, pharmaceuticals, leather, engineering goods, and chemicals are expected to benefit significantly.
- India should focus on core sectors like semiconductors, electronics, and high-value goods to maximise benefits.
- India needs to expand participation in international value chains.
- India should pursue similar free trade agreements with other nations to diversify trade opportunities.
- The agreement can position India as a stronger global manufacturing and export hub.



## **CBSE to Introduce Open-Book Exams for Class 9 from AY 2026–27**

- CBSE Governing Body approved in June 2025 to introduce open-book assessments for Class 9 from academic year 2026–27.
- The format will be implemented in languages, mathematics, science, and social science, with three written tests each term.
- Supports the National Education Policy 2020 and NCFSE 2023 by shifting focus from rote learning to competency-based learning.
- Aims to enhance comprehension, application, and analytical skills rather than memorization.
- Pilot conducted in Dec 2023 for Classes 9–12 showed student scores ranging from 12% to 47%, highlighting challenges in using reference material effectively.
- Teachers believe open-book exams, with proper guidance, can improve critical thinking skills despite initial low scores.
- CBSE will create standardized sample papers; schools can adopt the system optionally, not mandatorily.
- Similar Open Text Based Assessment (2014–15) was discontinued in 2017–18 due to limited improvement in critical thinking.
- The scheme will begin in 2026–27, be optional for schools, and follow a structured rollout with sample frameworks.



## **World Athletics Introduces New Eligibility Regulations for Female Category**

- The World Athletics Council has announced a significant change in its eligibility rules for the female category in world ranking competitions.
- Starting 1 September 2025, all athletes wishing to participate in the female category will be required to undergo a once-in-a-lifetime SRY gene (Sex-determining Region Y) test.
- This landmark decision will first be implemented at the World Athletics Championships Tokyo 25, beginning 13 September 2025.
- The SRY gene (Sex-determining Region Y) test will be conducted through a cheek swab or blood test, whichever is more convenient for the athlete.
- The new regulations are rooted in the protection and integrity of women's sport.
- “For you to compete in the female category, you have to be biologically female.”



## **RBI Keeps Repo Rate Unchanged at 5.5% in August 2025 MPC Meeting**

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) kept the repo rate unchanged at 5.5% during its August Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting, following a unanimous decision by all six MPC members, citing easing inflation and favourable economic indicators.
- Retail inflation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) dropped to 2.10% in June 2025, the lowest since January 2019. Food inflation turned negative at -1.06%, while the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) also declined to -0.13%.
- This decision comes after a 50 basis point cut in June 2025, which brought the repo rate down from 6% to 5.5% due to falling food prices and improving inflation trends.

### **RBI Current Policy Rate are as under –**

- **Policy Repo Rate – 5.50%**
- **Standing Deposit Facility (SDF) – 5.25%**
- **Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) – 5.75%**
- **Bank Rate – 5.75%**
- **Reverse Repo Rate – 3.35%**
- **Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) – 3%**
- **Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) – 18%**



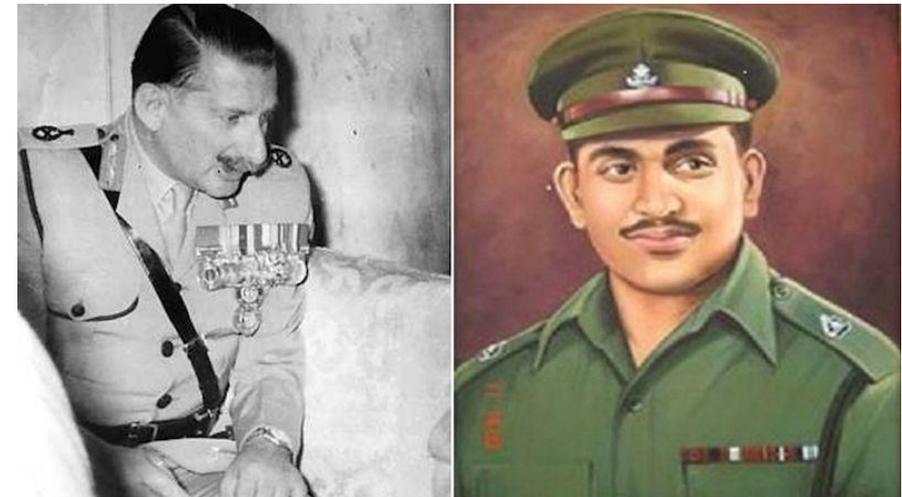
## India's First Human Stem Cell Bank Launched in Hyderabad

- India's first human stem cell bank (Cryo-Cell Laboratory) was inaugurated at the National Institute of Animal Biotechnology (NIAB), Hyderabad.
- The launch was done by Union Minister of Science and Technology, Dr. Jitendra Singh.
- The facility will focus on research, development, and application of stem cell-based therapies in regenerative medicine.
- It is built with an investment of ₹19.98 crore, including land and infrastructure.
- The Telangana government has allotted 5 acres of land for the facility at Genome Valley.
- It will enable preservation of stem cells, advanced regenerative therapies, and medical innovations in India.
- The bank will store stem cells for treating diseases like cancer, genetic disorders, and degenerative conditions.
- It will also promote indigenous biotechnology capabilities and reduce dependency on foreign facilities.
- The initiative includes cryostorage technology, 3D bioprinting, and advanced cell culture labs.
- This is considered a significant milestone for India's healthcare and biotechnology sectors.



## **Chapters on Manekshaw, Brig Usman, and Maj Somnath Sharma added to the school syllabus by NCERT**

- NCERT has introduced new chapters about military icons—Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, Brig. Mohammad Usman, and Maj. Somnath Sharma—into the school curriculum.
- These lessons have been included in Class VII and VIII English and Urdu textbooks to honour their service and sacrifice.
- The initiative was carried out jointly by the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Education, and the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT).
- Field Marshal Manekshaw, the first Indian officer to be awarded the five-star rank, is remembered for his decisive leadership during the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971.
- Brigadier Usman, known as the ‘Lion of Nowshera,’ laid down his life in service of the nation and was posthumously awarded the Mahavir Chakra.
- Major Somnath Sharma, the first recipient of the Param Vir Chakra, also laid down his life in service of the nation and was posthumously awarded the Param Vir Chakra.
- The chapters are intended to build patriotic spirit and educate students on India’s military legacy.
- The National War Memorial, which was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on February 25, 2019, is located at the 'C' Hexagon near India Gate in the national capital.
- It is a tribute to over 26,000 soldiers who have made the supreme sacrifice in the service of the nation since Independence.



## **IDFC FIRST Bank Launches Remit FIRST2 India**

- IDFC FIRST Bank has launched RemitFIRST2India, a digital and zero-fee platform for NRIs to send money to India.
- This platform allows the bank's existing NRI customers to make instant transactions through the mobile banking app.
- For new or non-IDFC FIRST Bank customers, there is a simple, paperless onboarding process via a web interface
- The platform has been launched with transfers available from Singapore and Hong Kong, with plans to expand to other countries.
- RemitFIRST2India supports live tracking of transactions, enabling customers to check the status of their transfers at any moment.
- Key features include zero transfer fees, competitive and guaranteed forex rates, and a fast, transparent process.

