



## Belgian News - July 2012 - Number 3

*Newsletter of the Embassy of Belgium in New Delhi  
and the Consulate General of Belgium in Mumbai*

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### Business News

#### Indian Commerce and Industry Minister visits Belgium



On 24-26 June, Mr. Anand Sharma, Minister of Commerce and Industry of the Government of India, visited Belgium for a 3-day long mission. On 24 and 25 June, the Minister headed a high-level FICCI business delegation to participate in the [Global India Business Meeting](#) in Antwerp. The Minister also met with Flemish Minister-president Kris Peeters and visited Antwerp's world-famous diamond trade industry. On 26 June, the Minister met with HRH Prince Philippe of Belgium and with European Union Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht.

### Indian Shipping Minister visits Antwerp



On 4 April, the Indian Minister of Shipping, Mr. G.K. Vasan, headed of a high-level CII delegation from the shipping sector to the Port of Antwerp. In the morning, the Honourable Minister met Mr Kris Peeters, Minister-President of the Government of Flanders, Belgium, where mutual business and trade interests were discussed. The meeting was followed by a Belgo-Indian Seminar on ports, infrastructure, shipping and logistics, which was addressed by both excellencies. Minister GK Vasan was particularly interested in Belgian know how in the development of inland waterway and intermodal shipping. The seminar was followed by an official visit of the Port of Antwerp, and several business to business meetings for the CII business delegates.

<http://www.flanderstoday.eu/content/port-antwerp-confirms-commitment-india>

### Belgian company Amos wins another mega-contract from Indian Space Agency



Amos has recently announced that it has been awarded a 9 million EUR contract for the design and manufacturing of an advanced thermo-vacuum test facility at the Vikram Sarabhai Space Center (VSSC) in Trivandrum (Kerala).

This 65-tonne space simulator measuring 6 meters long and 5 meters in diameter will be the largest of the VSSC and will be used for testing the future telecommunication satellites of ISRO (India Space Research Organisation). Its purpose is to recreate the exact same conditions of vacuum and temperature under which the satellites evolve when they reach their orbit. The two main features to be simulated are the absence of pressure (106 mbar) and the cryogenic temperatures (-180°C).

AMOS, an acronym for 'Advanced Mechanical and Optical Systems', was founded in 1983. It is located in Liège, the economic powerhouse of Wallonia. It employs 80 people and specialises in the design and manufacturing of opto-mechanical systems of very high accuracy. Those are mainly targeted at the space industry as well as professional astronomy.

The VSSC contract is already the fifth project awarded to Amos in India in the recent years. Their most prestigious project to date was the design, development and installation of a 3.6 meters optical telescope at Devasthal, Nainital. The 20 meter high telescope, weighing 150t, will be the largest optical telescope in India.

Other important projects already won by Amos in India include the MAST Solar Telescope in Udaipur for PRL (Physical Research Laboratory), 3 collimators for ISRO in Ahmedabad and another vacuum test facility in Bangalore, also for ISRO.

<http://www.amos.be>

<http://www.isro.org>

### **Belgian company contributes to India's National Solar Mission**



Belgian company Enfinity contributes to 7% of Gujarat's new Charanka Solar Park. The park, spread across a desolate 3,000-acre (1,200-hectare) swath of desert, can supply 214 megawatts of electricity, making it larger than China's 200-megawatt Golmud Solar Park. The new solar park is a unique partnership of 21 companies involved in its management and development.



[www.enfinity.in](http://www.enfinity.in)

### **Port of Antwerp teams up with Essar Ports in India**

Port of Antwerp International (PAI), a subsidiary of Antwerp Port Authority, is to form a strategic alliance with Essar Ports Limited (EPL), the second-largest private port operator in India. The alliance is aimed at structural and commercial collaboration in training and consultancy, port planning, raising the productivity and quality of logistics services and connections with the hinterland in India, and generating freight between the two regions. To cement the relationship PAI is investing 25 million euros in EPL.



<http://www.portofantwerp.com/en/news/port-antwerp-teams-essar-ports-india>  
[http://www.essar.com/article.aspx?cont\\_id=qgycq66MFKM=](http://www.essar.com/article.aspx?cont_id=qgycq66MFKM=)

#### **Belgo-Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry (BICC&I)**



The Belgo-Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry (BICC&I), located in Brussels, Belgium, is at the heart of a growing network with 140 active members and has access to more than 1400 contacts in Belgium directly involved with business in India. Throughout the year BICC&I organises several seminars on various topics related to India in order to enhance information exchange and to promote the commercial, industrial, scientific and financial co-operation between Belgium and India.

#### Activities in 2012:

26/01/12: New Year reception

26/04/12: seminar 'India & Green Technology', Diamond Centre, Brussels

30/05/12: seminar 'India Finance & Tax', Brussels

26/06/12: CEO round table with an Indian business delegation led by Minister Sharma, Indian Minister of Trade & Industry

04/09/12: Lunch causerie in honor of the Belgian Ambassador in India

Oct. 2012: seminar 'India & Aero' (project)

29/11/12: seminar 'Catching the Indian Tiger', National Bank of Belgium, Brussels

Further to the above seminars, BICC&I takes an active participation in several India-related events, organised by our members or other organisations.

BICC&I also supports educational, cultural and social exchange.

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#### **India & Green Technology discussed in Brussels**

On 26 April the Belgo-Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in cooperation with the Agoria-Renewable Energy Club, and the European Business and Technology Centre, organised a very well attended seminar in Brussels focusing on the market potential of India in the green technology field.

While Mr. Johan Vande Lanotte, Vice Prime Minister of Belgium and Minister for Economy, Consumers and the North Sea, highlighted the cutting-edge technologies developed by Belgian greentech companies, a number of Flemish companies (VITO, Waterleau, Enfinity, etc.) presented their operations in India.

More info: [www.bic-belgium.com](http://www.bic-belgium.com)

#### **'Leading Expo Design' chooses Wallonia**



'Leading Expo Design', a 100% owned company of 'LED Concepts and Design Pvt. Ltd.' based in New Delhi, has recently established a base in Liège, Belgium.

The company proposes complete publicity solutions with in-house design and fabrication facility. The Belgian entity will focus on handling projects for companies based in India that participate in European exhibitions.

The company will initially operate out of the [India Welcome Office](#), a free business incubator for Indian companies based in Liège.

More info: [www.ledglobal.eu](http://www.ledglobal.eu)

#### **Indian business mission focuses on Belgium's logistics and shipping**

On 20-25 May, the Mumbai-based Indo-Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce & Industry (IBLCCI) has undertaken its first economic mission to Belgium. The focus was on logistics and shipping, with visits to the ports of Antwerp, Zeebrugge, Liège and Ghent. A visit to the Annual Break Bulk Conference in Antwerp was also scheduled, as well as networking dinners and B2B meetings in order to interact with local forwarders and terminal operators.

More information:

<http://www.iblcci.net>

or contact the Secretariat – IBLCCI

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Email: [iblcci08@gmail.com](mailto:iblcci08@gmail.com)

#### **Belgium: Gateway to Europe for Indian exports**

On 22 February, the Belgian-Luxembourg Business Association (BLBA) in partnership with the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO), with the support of the Embassy of Belgium, FIT and AWEX, organized a seminar on 'Belgium, the Gateway to Europe for Indian exports'. Belgium, at the heart of Europe, is already the 10<sup>th</sup> biggest trading partner of India worldwide. The seminar showcased the advantages of using Belgium as a European hub for warehousing and distribution. The event especially targeted Indian exporters to the EU who want to streamline their operations in Europe either by setting up a distribution centre in Belgium or by partnering with local logistics players. The seminar was addressed by H.E. Mr. Pierre Vaesen, Ambassador of Belgium to India; Mr Ajay Sahai, Director General & CEO, FIEO; Mr. P Ratna Rao, Vice President of the BLBA, the Belgian Ports of Antwerp, Zeebrugge and Liege, and senior global logistics experts. A large number of senior representatives from leading SMEs and logistics companies were present.

<http://blbanewdelhi.org/2012/02/belgium-the-gateway-to-europe-for-indian-exports-22-february-2012-at-the-lalit-hotel-new-delhi/>

### **Binani Industries invests in Belgian fibreglass**



In February, Indian holding Binani Industries Ltd announced its acquisition of Belgium-based 3B-The Fibreglass Company ('3B') for €275 million (\$360 million or Rs 1,796 crore). Binani Industries is one of India's leading global diversified business houses, with interests in cement, zinc, glass fibre, composites and ready-mix concrete. Headquartered in Battice, Belgium, 3B is Europe's leading manufacturer of fibreglass products and technologies and is a preferred supplier to global leaders in industries including automotive and wind energy.

<http://www.3b-fibreglass.com>

<http://www.binaniindustries.com>

### **Solvay opens a new RD&T centre in Gujarat**



Belgian chemical giant Solvay has opened on 25 May a new research facility in Savli, near Baroda in Gujarat. This RD&T centre will focus on the development of high performing polymers, organic chemistry, nanocomposites and green chemistry. Once fully operational it will house 200 researchers. Solvay Group is active in India since 2000 and employs over 900 people. Last year it realised a turnover in India of EUR 180mn, which it plans to double by 2015.

More about [Solvay in India](#)

### **McCoy to start top class production facility in Haryana**



McCoy Soudal has invested approximately INR 500mn (Rs. 50 Cr.) to build one of Asia's finest and largest sealants & adhesives manufacturing plants with 2lacs sqft built up area. The world's best

equipment has been used to ensure that there is high level of safety built in for the products and people who are working in this plant, located at Bawal, Haryana. This plant, equipped with state-of-the-art fully automatic machines and equipment from Europe, including stringent fire safety norms, will be a signature for the Indian sealant and adhesive community.

<http://www.mccoysoudal.com>

### Brussels Invest & Export opens office in Chennai

Brussels Export recently reorganized and merged with Invest In Brussels to improve the quality of their services. The new entity of the Ministry of the Brussels Capital Region is called Brussels Invest & Export. It will be a one-stop shop for Brussels exporters as well as for potential foreign investors into Brussels.

Brussels Invest & Export also recently increased its presence in India by opening up a Trade Office in Chennai.

Following this new opening, a first delegation of four Brussels-based IT companies came to India in March for a week full of exciting business meetings. From Chennai to Bangalore and to Hyderabad where they participated in the flagship IT exhibition IndiaSoft, the group had a first-hand experience of India's booming IT sector. Investment opportunities offered by the Brussels Capital Region were of particular interest for Indian partners.



<http://investinbrussels.com/en/>

### AWEX and ISBA sign Letter of Intent



On the occasion of the 6<sup>th</sup> ISBA conference in Pune, on 19 March 2012, AWEX was given the opportunity to sign a Letter of Intent with ISBA, in relation with its 'WalloniaTECH India' programme. This flagship programme of AWEX aims to create high-profit sustainable global companies from pioneering start-ups, using Wallonia as a hub for their international expansion in Europe.

ISBA – the Indian STEP and Business Incubators' Association – is already the 4<sup>th</sup> Indian partner supporting this new programme. The role of the partners consists of indentifying and recommending AWEX the most innovative companies with groundbreaking technologies and global market potential among their communities.

The selected companies will be invited by AWEX to participate at no cost, in October this year, in the second edition of the 'WalloniaTECH India' programme in Wallonia/Belgium. The programme will include an entrepreneurship bootcamp as well as B2B meetings with potential customers and technical partners. It will culminate with a 'Technology Commercialisation conference and Investment forum' where participants will have the opportunity to pitch their business plans to an audience composed mainly of public and private investors and technical partners.

### **The Wallonia Patrika: second edition**

In this magazine, Awex has chosen to showcase Val Saint Lambert, the iconic crystal glass maker which remains emblematic in India. But the magazine also focus on a number of other Wallonian success stories in India, for instance Magotteaux, a world leader of wear-resistant castings for the cement industry, power plants, and mining, present in India since 1989 with its own factory in Rajkot, Gujarat, and AMOS, a top specialist of huge telescopes and thermal vacuum space simulators, for whom India is by far the largest market in the world.

Some cultural events are also presented in the magazine; for instance, a full-day celebration in Delhi dedicated to Tintin, the immortal hero with strong Belgian roots, and a recital given in Delhi by a Belgian soprano with Indian roots... To read more on these stories and many others, just follow this [link](#). You will also have the opportunity to order a print copy on the same web page.

## **Education News**

### **Higher education: Belgium achieves good results compared with European counterparts**



A recent study by the European Statistical Office revealed that in 2010, over 44% of the Belgian population aged between 30 and 34 held a higher education diploma, putting Belgium in seventh position in the European Union (27 countries), i.e. better than average. Only Ireland, Denmark, Luxembourg, Sweden Finland and Cyprus do better.

Women achieve far better results than men almost everywhere in Europe. In Belgium, half of

women in the 30-34 age bracket have a higher education degree, against 39% for men of the same age.

See [details of the study](#)

#### India in the focus @ Leuven University



Leuven  
India  
Focus



Over [300 Indian students](#) were enrolled at KU Leuven in Belgium during the 2011-2012 academic year, making it the third largest non-European foreign community in this little Flemish town. In the other direction, around 50 [KU Leuven students](#) travel every year to India. For some, it's about joining social projects in Varanasi, for others, like the Master students in Theology and Religious Studies, the objective is to learn about India's rich culture and religion. On the research side, the [Leuven India Focus](#) aims at developing, broadening and deepening knowledge and expertise on India and South Asia by organising conferences, lectures and seminars and stimulating interdisciplinary research. The Leuven India Focus regularly invites scholars and experts from India, Europe and elsewhere to teach and debate on vital issues facing Indian society and the neighbouring region. Through this and other exchanges, it aspires to foster research on India and to cultivate academic networks and partnerships. Last but not least, the University and the City of Leuven, together with a number of other stakeholders, are preparing the foundation of an India House Leuven. More news on this ambitious project will follow in upcoming editions!

Learn more: <http://www.kuleuven.be/international/india/>

#### Cultural News

**According to the OECD, life is good in Belgium!**



The OECD has just launched a new version of its ['Better Life' index](#) – an online interactive tool that makes it possible to measure and compare your quality of life by going beyond the traditional framework of GDP statistics.

It reveals that Belgium performs very well on well-being indicators and, what is more, ranks among the top countries in several topics in the 'Better Life' Index.

Thus for example, Belgians are more satisfied with their lives than the OECD average. In Belgium, 74% of people say that they have more positive experiences in an average day (feelings of rest, pride in accomplishment, pleasure, etc.) than negative ones (pain, worry, sadness, boredom, etc.). This figure is higher than the OECD average of 72%.

[www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/countries/belgium/](http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/countries/belgium/)

## Full gear towards europalia.india!



For its 24<sup>th</sup> biennial, Europalia International will bring India to the heart of Europe. During 4 months, starting October 2013, europalia.india will translate India's immense cultural wealth into a multidisciplinary programme comprising exhibitions, concerts, dance and theatre performances, conferences, cinema and literature events. Europalia International and its Indian partner the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) have recently appointed two General Commissioners for the organisation of the festival, i.e. Baron **Philippe Vlerick**, a respected Belgian business entrepreneur and Chairman of the Belgo-Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry (BICC&I) and **Dr. Karan Singh**, President of the ICCR since 2005.

Both partners have also recently concluded a framework agreement to move ahead with the organisation of this landmark cultural event which will kick off in October 2013.

[www.europalia.be](http://www.europalia.be)

<http://www.bic-belgium.com/file?fle=1399&ssn=>

## The Costume of Hindostan



Balthazar Solvyns was born in Antwerp, Belgium, and sailed for India in 1790. Soon after his arrival in Calcutta, the Flemish marine painter began work on what was to become life consuming project – a collection of engravings/etchings portraying the natives of India in their costumes, occupation and cultural life. He drew their musical instruments, their boats, and their modes of smoking. With genuine curiosity and a keenly observant eye, Solvyns recorded an India few Europeans really saw.

Solvyns' book "The Costume of Hindostan" was first published in London in 1804. Containing sixty coloured engravings accompanied with descriptions in English and French, it recently enjoyed a fine re-print by Aryan Books publishers.

The Costume of Hindostan  
Aryan Books International | 2012 | pp. 128  
ISBN-978-81-7305-426-6

## Belgian way of life in India

### Belgian Food Festival in Mumbai



From 9-17 February the delicacies of Belgian gastronomy were presented to Mumbai during the Belgian Food Festival, organised by the Taj Mahal Palace and the Consulate General of Belgium. Four Chefs came over from Belgium to prepare some typically Belgian dishes together with famous Taj Chef Hemant Oberoi. Of course Belgian sweets and beers completed the meals, but some excellent Belgian wines were presented as well.

At this occasion the Consulate General also organised some dedicated events together with several partners, welcoming among others the diamond community, various business partners and newly appointed EU Ambassador João Cravinho on his first trip to Mumbai.

As cherry on the cake some lucky gourmets won a trip to Belgium or an exclusive Belgian watch. Hopefully a nice start of Belgian gastronomy conquering India!

### Education in Dutch in Mumbai?

The Dutch-Belgian Club Mumbai would like to know if there is an interest in launching an education program in Dutch in Mumbai. The foundation NOB (Nederlands Onderwijs in het Buitenland – Dutch Education Abroad) supports Dutch-speaking education abroad for Dutch and Belgian citizens. To that end language and cultural classes are organised by qualified teachers.

Please let us know:

- 1) If you are interested in Dutch speaking education;
- 2) for which children of what age;
- 3) which school your children are currently attending;
- 4) your location preference – north Mumbai (Bandra/Powai), south Mumbai (Colaba) or in between (Worli/Breach Candy);
- 5) the day you prefer (weekday or weekend);
- 6) if you are a qualified primary or secondary school teacher.

You can react by e-mailing Rachel Viersma ([rachel\\_assen@hotmail.com](mailto:rachel_assen@hotmail.com))

More information about NOB: [www.stichtingnob.nl/index\\_real.jsp](http://www.stichtingnob.nl/index_real.jsp)

Have a safe travel to India!



Belgian Foreign Affairs issue 'travel advice' for almost all countries of the world. These are updated on a regular basis. To know everything about your next holiday destination, the security or health risks involved, key local legislation and practical information, we encourage all Belgians travellers to consult the dedicated travel advice before their departure. Travel advice for India are available in [French](#) and [Dutch](#).

## Belgians in India

### Belgian doctor receives International Gandhi Award



On 28 May, Vice-President of India Mr. Hamid Ansari presented the 'International Gandhi Award 2011' to Dr. Claire Vellut at a function organized by the Gandhi Memorial Leprosy Foundation in New Delhi. Dr. Vellut, a doctor from Belgium who was determined to serve leprosy affected persons, has rendered more than five decades of selfless service to alleviate the sufferings of leprosy patients in India. She founded the [Damien Foundation India Trust](#) in 1955 and opted for Indian nationality in 1979 as she wished to continue to live in the country she had adopted.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Ansari said the social stigma associated with leprosy had imputed moral and social overtones to a medical condition leading to ostracism. The Vice President said that the introduction of multi-drug therapy in the early 1980s had changed the scenario for the disease, curing over 13 million leprosy cases and bringing down the prevalence rate in the nation from around 150/10.000 population in 1983 to less than 1/10.000 population today. By the end of 2005, India had achieved the goal of eliminating leprosy as a public health problem at the national level, he added.

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=84532>

<http://www.damienfoundation.in>

<http://www.facebook.com/DamienDFIT>

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Ideas, comments, requests? We look forward to your feedback at [newdelhi@diplobel.fed.be](mailto:newdelhi@diplobel.fed.be)

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