



Belgian News - September 2012 - Number 4

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

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A Word from the Ambassador and the Consul General

Dear readers,

Monsoon rains are auspicious, they say. For sure, they are a sign of change and renewal. New families have arrived in India: we wish them a wonderful stay in this fabulous country! Others have left the sub-continent and we wish them farewell. In the last few weeks, new staff has also arrived at the Embassy while others have left New Delhi for a new assignment. Meet them in this newsletter. In August, Belgium's Foreign Minister Didier Reynders came to India and Bhutan for his first official visit in the country. While there are plans for a subsequent mission next year, the Embassy and the Consulate-General are preparing for an eventful year 2013 with, in particular, the [europalia.india](#) festival starting October 2013 and the princely economic mission scheduled in the end of 2013. For now, we hope this edition of our newsletter will meet your expectations. As usual, we always love to receive your feedback!



Pierre VAESEN
Ambassador

Karl VAN DEN BOSSCHE
Consul General

Belgian diplomatic network in India

Belgian Foreign Minister visits India and Bhutan



Meeting with Shri S.M. Krishna, Minister of External Affairs of India. New Delhi, 8 August 2012

In August 2012, H.E. Mr. Didier Reynders, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belgium, was on an official visit to India. The Minister met with key members of the Indian government, including Foreign Minister S.M. Krishna and Commerce & Industry Minister Anand Sharma. Didier Reynders also met with Dr. Karan Singh, President of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, to discuss the preparations of the europalia.india festival in 2013. In the presence of the Indian Railways Minister, a Memorandum of Understanding between the Belgian company Eurostation and Indian Railways was signed to develop world class railway stations in India. The visit in India enjoyed considerable media coverage in the Indian press.



Meeting the Honorable Lyonchhen Jigmi Y. Thinley, Prime Minister of Bhutan. Thimphu, 6 August 2012

Minister Reynders also travelled to Bhutan where he met with various dignitaries including Prime

Minister Thinley, the Minister for Economic Affairs and the Secretary of the Gross National Happiness Commission.

On 6th August, during a highly attended oath taking ceremony at the prestigious Taj Tashi Hotel in Thimphu, *Dasho Wangchuk Dorji*, Vice-Chairman of Tashi Group, was officially sworn in as Honorary Consul of Belgium to Bhutan.

Click [here](#) to view pictures and press releases about the Minister's visit.

New faces at the Embassy



Mathias BOGAERT



Antoine DELCOURT

Mathias Bogaert, Economic Counsellor at the Embassy in Delhi has moved back to the headquarters in Brussels after four years in India. He has been replaced by Antoine Delcourt who was previously posted in Beirut, Lebanon. Farewell to Mathias and welcome to Antoine!



Jean-Pierre MULLER

Jean-Pierre Muller, Trade Commissioner for Wallonia, has been shifted to South Africa. His replacement will arrive in Delhi in November. Good luck to you, Jean-Pierre!



Ralph MOREAU

Earlier this year, Ralph Moreau, Technology Attaché at the Flanders Investment and Trade office in Delhi, has moved on for new challenges in Singapore. We wish him all the best in his new assignment.



Daniel LAGNEAU

Daniel Lagneau has recently joined the Embassy as a Technical Officer. Daniel will supervise the deeply needed renovation and construction work on the Embassy compound. Thank you Daniel for bringing your energy to Delhi!

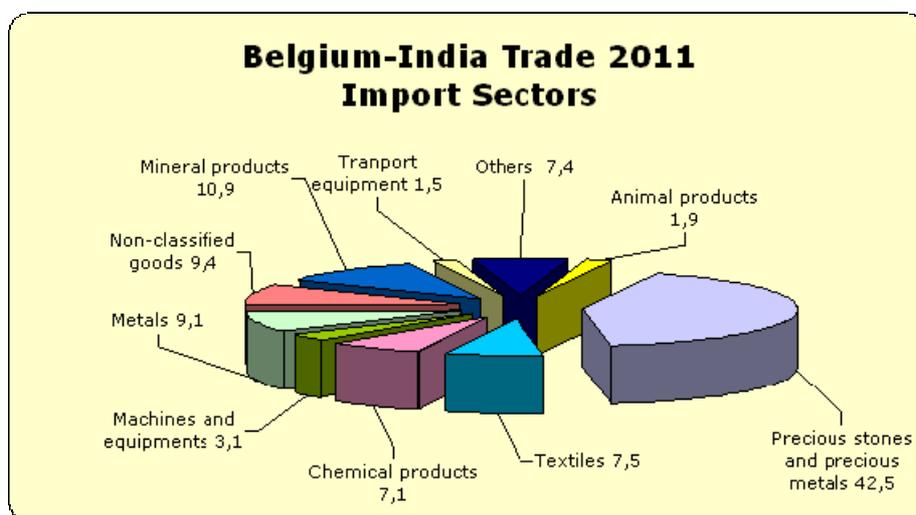
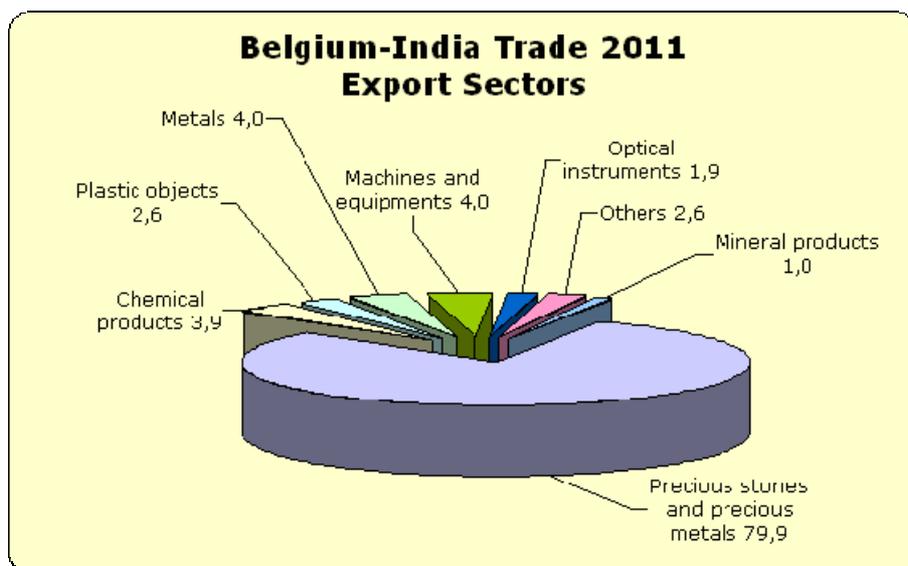
Meet [here](#) the full Embassy staff.

Business News

Update on Belgium-India Bilateral Trade

<i>in million €</i>	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Exports	5.399,0	4.985,6	4.525,4	6.780,3	7.968,0
Imports	3.318,1	3.765,4	2.698,6	3.681,4	5.338,4
Trade Balance	2.080,9	1.220,2	1.826,8	3.098,9	2.629,6
Exports: % growth	16,8	-7,7	-9,2	49,8	17,5
Imports: % growth	9,6	13,5	-28,3	36,4	45,0

Belgium is the second largest trading partner of India in the European Union (just after Germany) with bilateral trade of € 13.3 billion in 2011. During the first five months of 2012, trade between the two countries has already achieved € 5.3 billion (€ 3.39 billion BE exports and € 1.91 billion IN exports). Trade in gems and jewellery constitutes around two thirds of this bilateral trade. Other major items of Belgian exports to India are machinery and mechanical products, base metals, and chemicals. Besides gems and jewellery, major items of Indian exports to Belgium are minerals, textiles, machinery, mechanical products, and electrical equipments.



UNCTAD report ranks Belgium as world n°2



The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development's (UNCTAD) 'World Investment Report 2011' rates Belgium world No 2, after Hong Kong, in terms of policies favourable to foreign direct investments (FDI) as well as the quantity-quality ratio of these investments. In the words of Michael Hanni, UNCTAD economist and co-author of the report, *"the absolute level of investments is very high and their value in relation to GDP is high too"*. The country's notional interest legislation plays an important role in this ranking.
> More information on [UNCTAD](#)

Solvay acquires Indian company in Mumbai



Solvay has recently announced that it has signed an agreement to acquire a controlling interest in Sunshield Chemicals, an Indian company specializing in surfactants, from Amit Choksey Group. This acquisition will enable Solvay's Novacare business to accelerate growth plans in India for the home and personal care, agrochemicals, coatings and industrial applications markets. Solvay is determined to double its sales in India by 2015.

> [Press release](#) by Solvay

Solvay increases its specialty polymers production capacity by 70% in India



Solvay also announced a capacity increase of 70% at its Panoli plant, India, for the production of its high performance polymers (PEEK[®] and PAEK[®]). Panoli is Solvay's largest plant worldwide for these two innovative ultra performance polymers, which provide substantial value for design engineers in many industries including aeronautic, automotive, healthcare, electronics, oil & gas exploration and production, and process industries such as semiconductor manufacturing.

> [Press release](#) by Solvay > More about [Solvay in India](#)

Port of Antwerp develops partnership with Essar group

The Port of Antwerp, the second largest port in Europe, recently picked up a four per cent stake in Essar Ports, a listed company, for Rs 175 crore (see the previous edition of this newsletter). In an [interview](#) with The Hindu Business Line, Eddy Bruyninckx, CEO of the Port of Antwerp, details upcoming projects and opportunities for doing business with India.



Picanol India moves to new headquarters in New Delhi



Picanol India inaugurated its new headquarters in New Delhi on 3rd August in the presence of Belgium's Foreign Minister Didier Reynders and the Ambassador of Belgium to India Pierre Vaesen. Luc Tack, Managing Director of the Picanol Group, and Kamal Oswal, Vice Chairman of Nahar Industrial Group, were also present at the inauguration. Picanol, a world leading developer and manufacturer of weaving systems, has been successfully serving the Indian market since 1956.

In view of the potential and expected growth of the Indian market, Picanol decided to set up its own organization in India in early 2008 in order to more actively support its local activities. Since then, Picanol India has been looking after local sales and service activities. Today, the company is focusing on sales of Picanol weaving machines, sales of original Picanol spare parts and accessories, the PCB repair station in New Delhi for the repair of electronic circuit boards of Picanol looms and the complete servicing of Picanol looms.

> [More about Picanol](#)

Le Pain Quotidien opens a second store in Mumbai



Belgian bakery chain Le Pain Quotidien opened a new outlet in BKC, Mumbai. This is the second store in India after their first opening near the Gateway of India in Mumbai over a year ago. Le Pain Quotidien (“LPQ” for insiders) is famous for its bakery products, breakfasts and lunches; but also has some excellent dinner, afterwork and catering options on offer. Do not hesitate to check it out!

> More info: www.lepainquotidien.in

Cultural News

Belgian artists will showcase their work in Mumbai

Belgian art gallery Geukens & De Vil, located in Antwerp and Knokke, is launching a partnership with renowned Mumbai-based Maskara Gallery. As a result four young Belgian contemporary artist will exhibit their work in Mumbai starting from 20 November, in an exhibition titled ‘*Are the limits of my language the limits of my world?*’. In return Maskara Gallery will participate in europalia.india end of 2013 in Belgium.

More info: www.gallerymaskara.com and www.geukensdevil.com

Ambassador visits Belgian NGO project in Jaipur



The Indian *Drydan Social Welfare Society* and the Belgian NGO *Opus III* joined hands in 1998 to provide education for underprivileged children and families in Jaipur. After 14 years, both of them are running the Drydan Public School, 4 Fun & Child Schools, a hospital as well as a hostel for students and volunteers. Moreover, both NGO's also support a microfinance project, managed by a self help group for women in the Hasanpura district of Jaipur.

The Ambassador of Belgium, H.E. Pierre Vaesen, and his wife recently visited the project.

More information can be found on <http://www.dswws.in> (Indian NGO) and <http://www.opusiii.be> (Belgian NGO).

Belgian way of life in India

Did you know that...

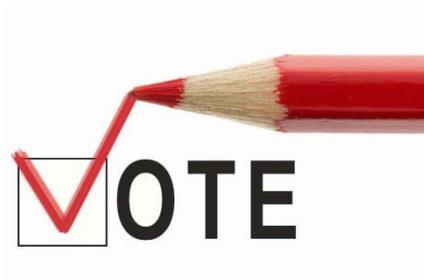


... Chocolate is good for your health? Two recent studies, published in the British Medical Journal and confirmed by the European Food Safety Authority, state that 10g a day of dark chocolate or cacao powder have a positive influence on your blood pressure. So no more excuse not to enjoy one of Belgium's most delicious products!

> More info [here](#) (in Dutch and French)

Consular News

Upcoming provincial and municipal elections: information for Belgian expatriates



On 14th October 2012, provincial and municipal elections will take place in Belgium.

If you are a Belgian citizen officially registered in Belgium but residing or travelling to India, provided you meet certain conditions, you must cast your vote. Find out all about it on the following links:

[FR site](#) | [NL site](#)

Biometric Passport Launched in Delhi



From 3rd December 2012 onwards the Belgian Embassy in Delhi will start issuing biometric passports for Belgian citizens.

While this new procedure is already in place for Belgians registered at the Consulate General in Mumbai, Belgian citizens registered at the Embassy in New Delhi (from North of India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Maldives) and requiring a new passport will, as of 03/12/2012, need to apply **in person** at the Embassy. For those Belgians who have a valid passport, their passport will remain valid until its expiry date; it does not need to be changed.

For more information please check: <http://passport.belgium.be/> or contact the Embassy's consular section: [newdelhi\[at\]diplobel.fed.be](mailto:newdelhi[at]diplobel.fed.be)

Agenda

Bhutan festival in Antwerp



From 9th to 12th October, the University for the Common Good is organising a 4 day festival on Bhutan in Antwerp, Belgium. The festivities will open with a congress on Gross National Happiness where different speakers will shed their light on this 'made in Bhutan' concept. The congress will then be followed by a film festival, with a focus on Bhutan.

More info on <http://www.festivalvandeerbeelding.be>

Brussels Sustainable Development Summit



VITO (Flemish Institute for Technological Research) and TERI (The Energy and Resources Institute) are setting up a platform for stakeholders to discuss, define and implement action plans and recommendations to sustainable development, particularly in the aftermath of the 'Rio+20 Conference' that took place in Brazil on 20-22 June 2012. The project will act as a channel to report these actions plans to the European Commission and other international leaders. As part of this project, VITO and TERI will organise from 2012 onwards BSDS (Brussels Sustainable Development Summit). BSDS will be preceded by an online consultation process open to all stakeholders – the “BSDS Dialogues” (for further details please visit this website again in September, or contact our Secretariat at bsds@vito.be). The Summit, taking place on **17-18 December 2012**, will spread over two days and open with the organisation of thematic workshops as part of the BSDS Dialogues, lead into a political dialogue between stakeholders and political representatives, and conclude with an eminent public event. Particular focus will also be given to the necessary partnerships between political authorities, private companies and the civil society on the road to sustainable development.

More info: see the [BSDS website](#)

Belgians in India

Alain Baran, a Tintin expert in India



Alain Baran was born in 1951 in Belgium. While studying journalism at the Université Libre de Bruxelles, he learnt classical dance at the Conservatoire de la Danse affiliated with the prestigious Brussels-based opera house Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie. In 1971, he joins the Ballet du XXe Siècle where he will dance during 7 years for the French choreographer Maurice Béjart. In January 1978, Alain Baran starts a new career by becoming the personal secretary of Hergé, the creator of the comic character Tintin.

In 1983, after Hergé's death, Alain Baran is in charge of the future developments of Tintin's activities worldwide. He is a co-founder of Fondation Hergé, Moulinsart and the Centre Belge de la Bande Dessinée and dedicates his work to the promotion of Tintin books through all possible media. After different assignments in the socio-cultural sector, Alain Baran moves to India in 2003 and joins the international audit firm Trainor & Partners (quality management in clinical trials & systems) as General Manager in charge of worldwide development. Since 2005 Alain is CEO of the Indian company Sutra Quality Management in charge of cultural projects. He shares his time between India and Greece where he works for both the audit firm and the cultural projects.

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If you do not wish to receive our newsletter in the future, or any socio-cultural information from the Embassy or the Consulate General, let us know by sending us an e-mail to newdelhi@diplobel.fed.be with as subject title "unsubscribe".

Ideas, comments, requests? We look forward to your feedback at newdelhi@diplobel.fed.be

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