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the wallonia patrika

News and updates from the Wallonia region of Belgium

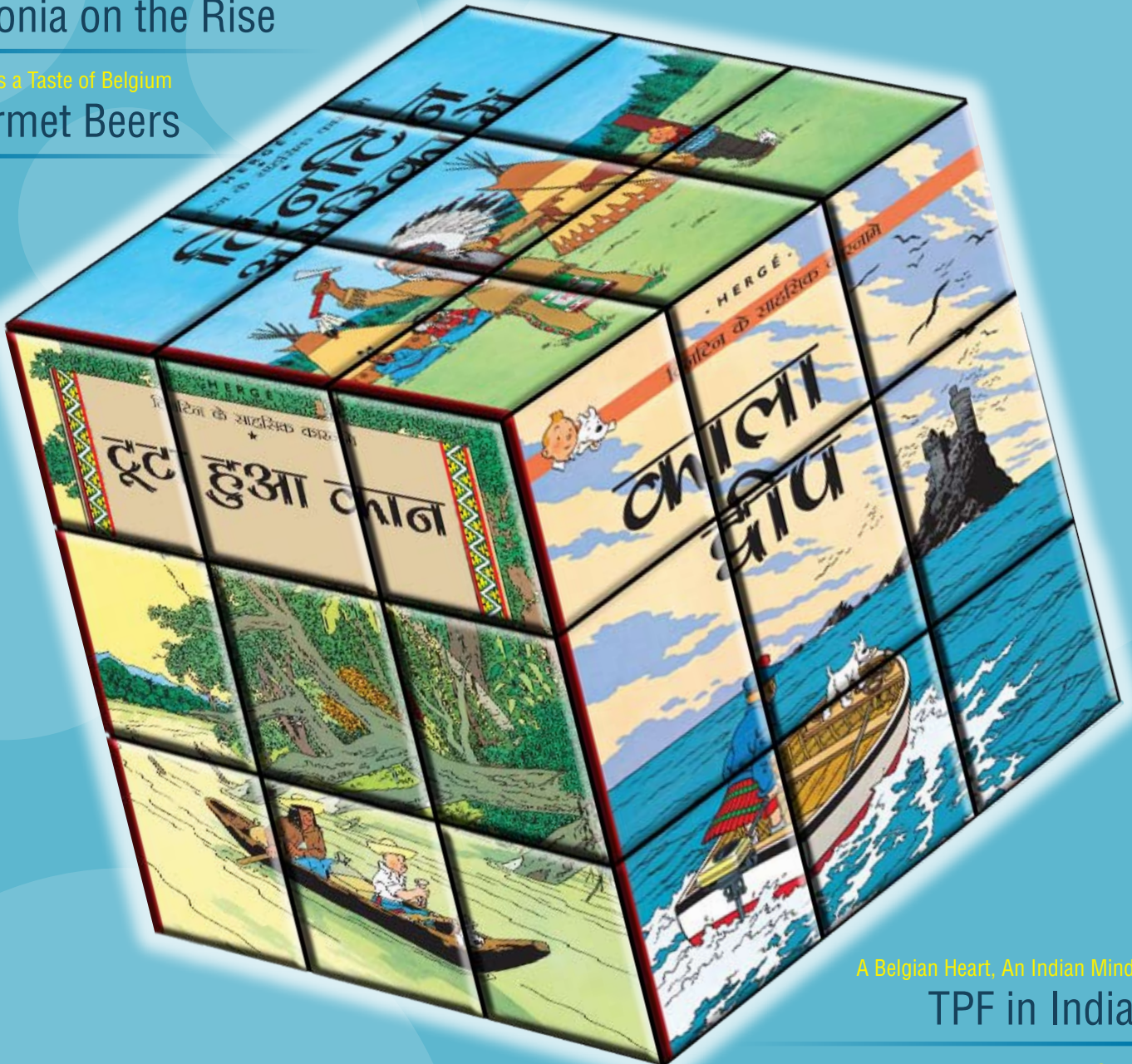
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A Belgian Heart, An Indian Mind

TPF in India

Revive Your Soul

The Genuine Spa

JEETAY RAHO

TINTIN! THE IMMORTAL HERO'S INDIA CONNECTION



Wallonia / Belgium

Where the heart of Europe beats

Wallonia, the Southern, French-speaking half of Belgium, truly is the heart of Europe, at the crossroads of the most advanced regions of Western Europe.

Wallonia now rolls out the red carpet to Indian investors through its unique feature :

“The India Welcome Office”

A business incubator providing soft landing incubation services to Indian investors, absolutely FREE of charge, for up to 6 months.

Like many others, take advantage of this unique value proposition and get your instant office in Liège, the economic power house of the region !



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Revive Your Soul

Editor's Note

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the inaugural issue of "The Wallonia Patrika"!

The magazine aims to increase awareness in the Indian business community about Wallonia - the Southern, French-speaking half of Belgium. We intend to be eclectic and cover a vast spectrum of topics of potential interest. For instance, in this first issue, we will highlight AWEX's trump cards to attract Indian investors, showcase the story of TPF - a Wallonian civil engineering company successfully expanding from its Indian base in Mumbai, and take a trip to the picturesque city of Spa, in the Belgian Ardennes, queen city of balneotherapy, from which all "spa and beauty parlors" in the world take their name. But the hero of the day is Tintin, the Belgian comic character whose chivalrous spirit has inspired many generations of young people from 7 to 77 years of age. Tintin now speaks Hindi. This was definitely worth the lead story of our very first magazine!

The Wallonia Patrika is an initiative of AWEX, a French acronym for "Wallonia Foreign Trade and Investment Agency". AWEX is the economic development agency in-charge of promoting foreign trade and attracting foreign investment in Wallonia. The agency has a worldwide network of 105 Trade and Investment commissioners, including 2 in India.

We sincerely hope that you will enjoy reading our magazine. It is being launched simultaneously with the AWEX website for India: www.awex.in

Feel free to contact us at any point of time if you have questions, remarks, or suggestions. We would love to hear from you!

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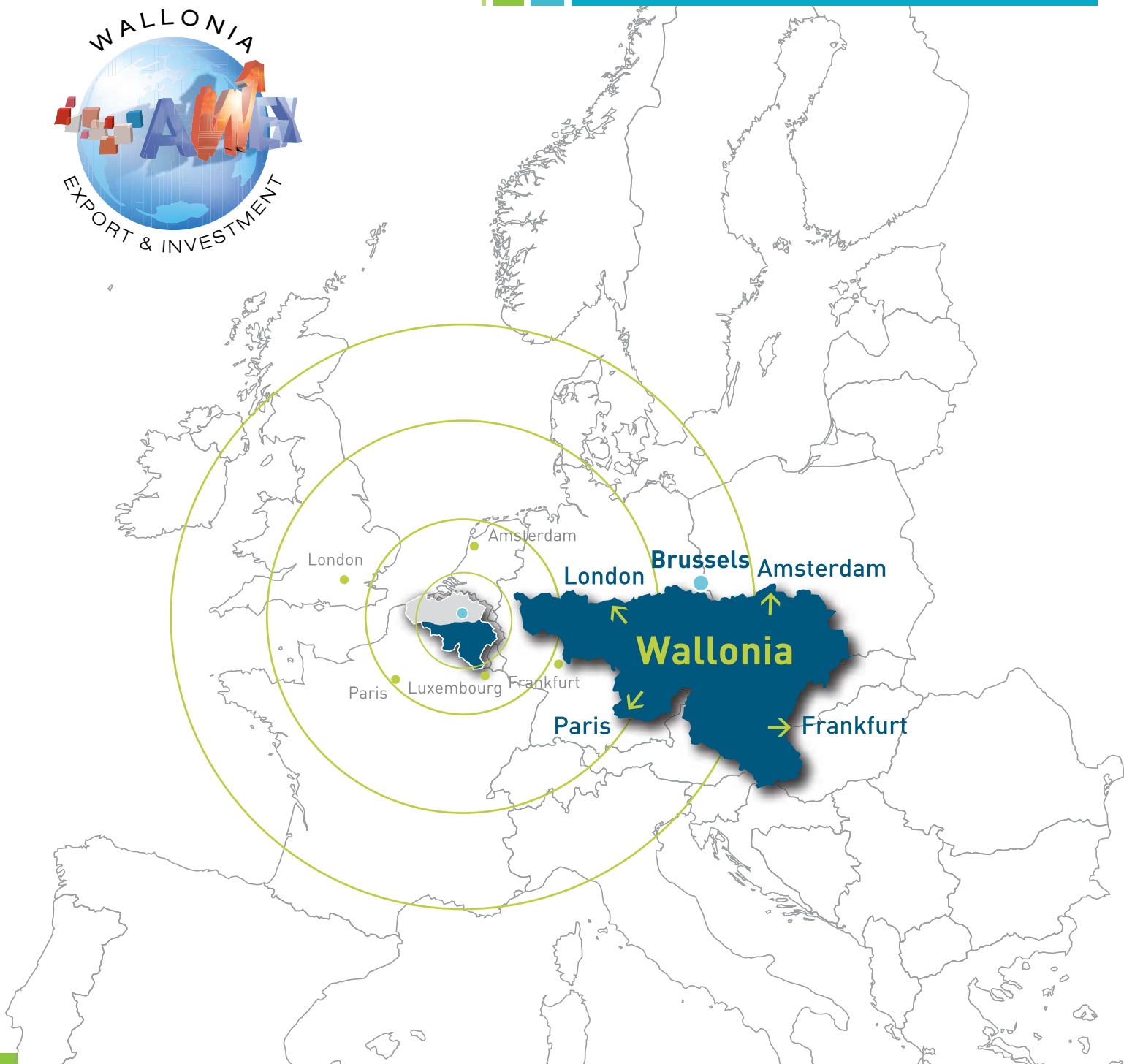
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Wallonia is...

- A welcoming and successful region that has taken control of its future and welcomes you with open arms!
- Located in the backyard of the capital of Europe, at the heart of a market of 400 million consumers, where businesses can set up and develop in a favourable setting.
- A place of innovation and competitiveness where men and women can develop their abilities, deploy their skills and flourish professionally.
- A highly attractive and competitive region offering businesses smart tax regulations and a broad system of financial assistance customised to meet their requirements.
- A quality area open and welcoming to the world where authorities promote creativity and initiative; a land of warmth, friendliness, culture and traditions.



WALLONIA ON THE RISE

Philippe Suinen, CEO of the Wallonia Foreign Trade and Investment Agency (AWEX), speaks to The Wallonia Patrika on the rise of Wallonia as a target for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) by Indian investors and the role of AWEX in attracting businesses.

What is Wallonia doing right in attracting FDI?

There are several ways to convince foreign investors to set up their activities in Western Europe and especially in Wallonia. Assets are the first point. According to Cushman and Wakefield, Wallonia is number one amongst the most interesting European locations to operate distribution centers due to its very central situation: it is the only region in Western Europe from where you can reach two thirds of the EU market in less than one day by truck.

A positive partnership binding all local partners involved in the attractiveness of foreign companies under the leadership of the Wallonia Export and Investment Agency (AWEX), the regional agency in charge of foreign investors, is another asset, with tailor-made packages for all investors, including incentives for economic investments, incentives for applied research and training, benefit of the Notional Interest Deduction and many other special tax vehicles.

There are also excellent partnership opportunities because Wallonia has organised its sectors of excellence

in the framework of 'mega clusters' called 'competitiveness poles'. The competitiveness poles cover five large specific areas: aerospace activities, life sciences and pharmaceutical activities, mechanical engineering, logistics and transportation, and agro-food business. A sixth mega cluster born a few weeks ago covers the field of green and sustainable technologies. This policy gives potential partners the opportunity to be involved, for instance, in EU research programs and in the international markets. These clusters are built around the magic golden triangle involving enterprises, universities with

Wallonia has organised its sectors of excellence in the framework of 'mega clusters' called 'competitiveness poles', which cover five large specific areas: aerospace activities, life sciences and pharmaceutical activities, mechanical engineering, logistics and transportation, and agro-food business.

R&D centers and training institutions (skill centres and governmental bodies in charge of job training).

Moreover, there is the red carpet service that AWEX offers to potential Indian investors through its unique feature 'The India Welcome Office', a business incubator providing soft landing incubation services to Indian investors, absolutely free of charge, for up to 6 months. The incubator is conveniently located in the center of Liège, the economic power house of the region, with easy access to Germany, The Netherlands and France.

Lastly, we provide a very intensive after-sales service to our clients. Each year, our teams pay a visit to existing investors, to see how things are going, what we can do for them, so that we can also assist the investors in extending their investments. This is very significant, because these investment expansions are a vibrant sign that foreign companies trust Wallonia.

When we look at Belgium as a whole, could we say that the growth rate is higher in Wallonia than in the other regions?

Our interest, of course, is that all three Belgian regions are wealthy.

The Flemish and Brussels economies are also the first markets for our companies. In Wallonia, for more than 20 years, we have given priority to internationalisation i.e. exports, FDI, regional airports, and applied research. In the last three years, following recent studies conducted by Ernst & Young and IBM Consulting, we can see a real change in foreign investment and recovery of our true market share within Belgium. It is the opposite of the old image of the industrial sectors (steel and glass, for instance). Wallonia hosts a lot of hidden champions that are now producing new materials, because there is a high rate of diversification at the end of the process. This is largely the product of both the entrepreneurial investments made by the region, and the continuous policy to sustain a high level of applied research in the enterprises. We are now busy with the first implementation of an ambitious program called 'Creative Wallonia'. This framework program provides the opportunity for people from different sectors to work together and to develop new channels of innovation. One of the new projects is to create incubators for our universities abroad in order to help them market their technologies.

In your opinion, what are Indian companies looking for that Belgium and specifically Wallonia are able to provide?

Indian companies are looking for a stable and business-friendly environment where they can get down to work immediately. They want return

'The India Welcome Office' located at Liège is a business incubator providing soft landing incubation services to Indian investors, absolutely free of charge, for up to 6 months.

on their investment without having to waste time on administrative and local issues. Moreover they want to feel at home in a foreign country.

The government of Wallonia, through AWEX, offers preferential treatment to all investors. Once an Indian company decides to invest in Wallonia, it becomes automatically one of our own companies. AWEX will not only help it to cut through the red-tape, but will also assist it in completing various formalities and will provide it with any information that would help it to establish its business. In short, AWEX becomes the new company's guide. Our services are offered free of charge and our officers are fully accessible. With the advent of the India Welcome Office at Liège, Wallonia is pulling all stops to provide the Indian companies with a local community atmosphere. This business centre is looked after by local Indian staff speaking Indian languages. Every effort is taken to not only help settle the company but also to make the company's representative and the accompanying family comfortable.

Another important trump card of Belgium is its intelligent fiscal system, designed to keep the global taxation level at a minimum and allow a tax friendly repatriation of profits.

Last but not least, our region has one of the most generous policies within the European Union regarding investment grants and subsidies.

Do you have any specific efforts that you do towards potential Indian investors? And how do you communicate your strengths to corporate India?

I have already mentioned the India Welcome Office in Liège designed specifically to attract Indian companies. Another major step taken recently is a dedicated branding campaign through a trio of new media focusing on India: a dedicated "Awex India" website, the present magazine designed exclusively for an Indian audience, and a Wallonia dedicated branding ad that will be advertised in local financial newspapers and business magazines.

I would like to add the 'India WalloniaTech program'. The goal of this unique program is to identify the

AWEX staff around the world, including in India, actively work to assist investors and partners as well as build new business ties. AWEX has over 450 employees, of which 200 are posted outside of Belgium.



brightest entrepreneurial talent in India and connect these entrepreneurs with investors and strategic partners in Belgium and Europe in order to turn their innovations into a global success. A dozen innovative Indian enterprises with groundbreaking technologies have already been identified and invited to a 'commercialisation and investment forum' in Wallonia at the end of August 2011, where they have had the opportunity to present their business plan to an audience composed of public and private venture capitalists and technical partners. There was such an enthusiasm for this programme that we have decided to renew and even expand it in 2012. And of course, we will continue, in 2011 and in 2012, our efforts to promote FDI from India through a series of "Invest in Wallonia" roadshows. These roadshows will be held in major financial hubs of India to bring Wallonia to the forefront of the Indian business community and make it aware of the attractive investment opportunities that exist in our region.

There are over 50 Indian implants in Belgium, totaling over 1.2 billion Euros. In 2010, Belgium attracted a dozen new Indian Investment projects, bringing India to the fore as the leading source for Asian FDI in Belgium.

Indian FDI to Europe has been growing the past few years. How successful do you think you have been in being attractive to Indian companies at this time?

Belgium has steadily become one of India's most preferred EU investment destinations outside the UK, as a platform

for operations of Indian companies on the European continent. There are over 50 Indian implants in Belgium, totaling over 1.2 billion Euros. In 2010, Belgium attracted a dozen new Indian investment projects, bringing India to the fore as the leading source for Asian FDI in Belgium. Indian investment is seen in many sectors, including ICT, pharmaceuticals, transport, machinery and equipment. Moreover, most major Indian banks have operations in Belgium, attributable inter alia to the diamond trade.

How many Indian investments are you dealing with at the moment, in the pipeline?

In the pending files, we are presently dealing with a handful of important potential investors from India, in addition to the dozen young Indian innovators selected in the India WalloniaTech Program. So we are reasonably optimistic even though we want to be careful when we call a file 'in the pipeline'. We know that nothing should ever be taken for granted.



INDIA WELCOME OFFICE

RED CARPET TO BELGIUM

State-of-the art, well located and free-of-cost, the new India Welcome Office at Liège offers your business the perfect opportunity to experience the advantages of setting up operations in Belgium, first hand!

Many European nations—and Belgium is foremost among these—are achieving success in inviting investment from India's rapidly globalising corporations. From connectivity to cost, companies need to look at the entire range of location factors before they zero down on where to locate their European service centre, distribution hub or headquarter.

The India Welcome Office, which started in April 2010, is a unique offering that enables overseas companies to test the European market from a base in Belgium. Conceived and managed by AWEX, the investment promotion organisation of the Wallonia region of Belgium, the centre offers Indian companies a business hub with unparalleled advantages.

Conveniently located: Liège, located right between Paris and Brussels, offers maximum ease of travel to all major European cities.

Fully equipped: Located in the SPI+, a unique business centre, you can avail of brand new offices' fully equipped

with state-of-the-art telecom services such as internet access, optic fibres, ADSL/SDSL, video conference, etc.

Free services help lower cost: Many personalised services are available free of charge (excluding telecommunications costs) to Indian companies who can devote themselves exclusively, at very low cost, to the launch of their business in Europe. These services, listed below, go a long way in ensuring comfort and efficiency in a new business environment:

- Access to a multilingual expert of Indian origin
- Help in understanding language and culture
- Logistics advice on issues related to legal, travel permits, accreditation issues, etc.
- Administrative assistance with initial prospecting help in the European market, like conducting market studies
- Networking with leading European professionals in your industry
- Support network of over 50 AWEX offices across Europe

Soft landing pad for Indian investors

In light of growing trade and investment relations between Belgium and India, AWEX is currently promoting the India Welcome Office among Indian companies. Says Nilesh Apte, consultant AWEX in-charge of the India Welcome Office, "We are trying extensively to promote this scheme in Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities in India by organising various road shows and seminars for interested companies. Aside from generating interest among Indian companies and providing the necessary information to make a decision, the idea is to handhold the company in Belgium once the investment is made. From creating a company in Belgium to understanding the Wallonia region and culture, helping the company find right resources and make appropriate business, financial and marketing plans, we offer a one stop shop for all services till the company starts independent operations."

Two new companies have shown interest and will start using the India Welcome Office from October onwards.



JEETAY RAHO TINTIN!

THE IMMORTAL HERO'S INDIA CONNECTION

Born in 1929, Tintin has found his way into the hearts of readers across the world and is more visible today than ever before. With Tintin titles being published in Hindi since last year, his adventures have made a deeper impression on Indian readers. The Wallonia Patrika takes a peek into the life and times of one of the most endearing and internationally successful characters in comic book history.

“Blistering barnacles in a thundering typhoon!” is how Captain Haddock would put it! Tintin, after 80 long, successful years as an investigative journalist has now decided to speak Hindi! Yes, after being translated into more than 58 languages around the world, the Belgian reporter has found his way to India. Now, Tintin lovers in India can read about his great adventures in Hindi.

A most endearing Belgian

The Adventures of Tintin is a series of comic strips created by the Belgian artist Georges Rémi a.k.a. Hergé. The famous characters of Tintin and Snowy were born on January 10, 1929 in Le Petit Vingtième, Belgium. Since then, over 230 million books have been sold and about 2 million are sold every year, with four in ten homes in Belgium and France owning at least one Tintin comic. In China alone, sales are in excess of 600,000 per year!

Tintin is so endearing to his readers because of his quick wit, bravery and his uncanny nose for suspense! The other characters of the comic—Captain Haddock, with his love for whiskey and unending sarcasm, or Professor Calculus, the hearing impaired scientist; not to mention, the clumsy Thom(p)son brothers—all of them make for a great read and keep the reader hooked!

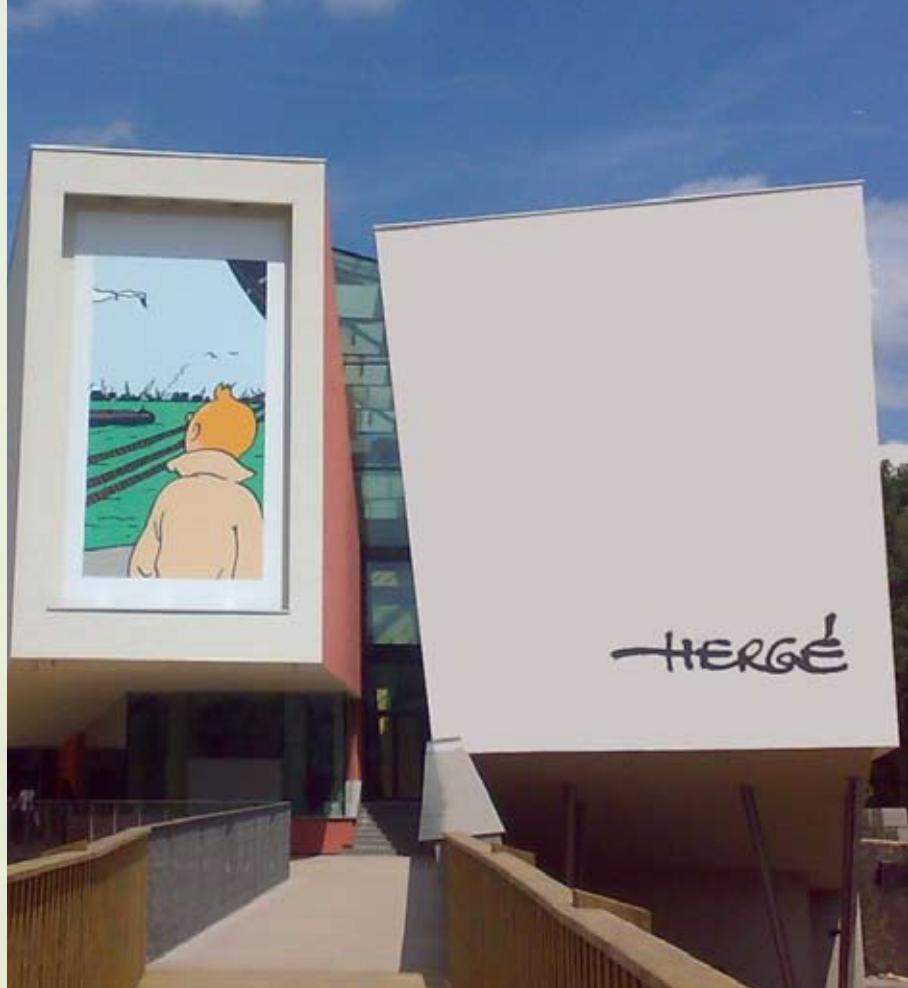
However, Tintin is much more than a comic book character and has

THE HERGÉ MUSEUM: A FITTING TRIBUTE

Since 2010, Hergé has his own museum. It is conveniently located in the picturesque pedestrian city of "Louvain-La-Neuve", in the heart of the Walloon-Brabant province, within a stone's throw of Brussels. The museum invites you on a journey through the life of one of the greatest artists of the twentieth century, offering a comprehensive perspective via thousands of sources related from and related to the life of Hergé.

More than 80 original plates and 800 photographs, documents and objects have been brought together under one roof. The building itself was designed and built by architect Christian de Portzamparc; a little like a Grail hidden within a sacred grove! Hergé's was not only Tintin. Graphic designer, caricaturist, cartoonist, illustrator, storyteller—he was a multitalented artist who was a perfect reflection of the twentieth century.

The Hergé Museum is much more than your average museum; visitors travel deep within the life and work, the trials, tribulations and astounding creativity of one man, and in doing so traverse the era in which he lived. (Source: <http://www.museeherge.com>)



deeply influenced popular art and culture the world over.

Inspiring art worldwide

Tintin is popular for many reasons; however, the "ligne claire" (literally the clear line) style has particularly captured the imagination of people since the late 1940's when Rémi developed it, influencing famous artists such as Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein who cited the "ligne claire" illustrations of Rémi as the influence behind the pop-art scene.

Also tremendously popular are the Tintin animation films that were released in 1991. Subsequently dubbed in Hindi and other Indian regional languages since 2005, these can be found now in every good DVD store throughout India.

The ultimate tribute, however, is the much-awaited trilogy of Tintin movies by the Steven Spielberg (of 'Indiana Jones' fame) and Peter Jackson (of 'The Lord of the Rings' fame). 'The Secret of the Unicorn', which has taken years to produce and uses a completely new and sophisticated performance-capture 3D animation technology, will be released in Belgium in a world première on the 26th of October of this year. In India, the big day will

happen on the 11 of November, that is 11/11/11, an unforgettable date for an unforgettable event!

Collector's delight

The cult of Tintin has also fuelled a huge merchandise empire. Collectors and enthusiasts can find an array of memorabilia at a number of 'Boutiques de Tintin' or Tintin shops that are located around the world, with a growing number in Asian countries like Japan, Korea and Taiwan. Besides the books, the shop sells T-shirts, neck ties, socks, underwear, children's clothing, stationary, posters, china, wristwatches and much more. However, the true collectors items are the 3D figurines, produced as limited series, in metal or resin. One of the most treasured and rare of these is the triumphal scene of Tintin parading on the back of the elephant of the 'Maharaja of Gaipajama' at the end of the adventures of 'Tintin and the Cigars of the Pharaohs'. This figurine, made in lead with a pedestal in resin, would sell at about Euro 1000 on the secondary market today.

Hergé's extraordinary books are an almost inexhaustible resource for the Belgian company Moulinsart that manages the intellectual property rights of Tintin including the chain stores and

the merchandise empire. Moulinsart's successful recipe has been to make Tintin more exclusive and more visible than ever. Though Indian buyers have no Tintin Shop yet, it is possible to order the merchandise from the online store at <http://www.Tintinboutique.com/en/>

Tintin in Hindi

Hergé's brilliant works certainly deserved to be translated into Indian languages so the masses in India could become a part of the growing network of Tintin admirers. Om Books International decided to take on this formi-



Ajay Mago, Publisher, Om Books International was instrumental in bringing Tintin to Hindi readers

dable yet enjoyable task. Ajay Mago, Publisher, Om Books International believes that over the last ten years there has been a very keen interest in *Bhasha* literature in India. Even within India, people from one linguistic community have evinced keen interest to read literature of other linguistic communities. It was this transformation that made Mago approach Willy Fateur, International Rights Director, Casterman Publishers of Belgium, for rights of translation, in 2005.

"The negotiation lasted nearly two years, after which they were happy to grant us the rights. This involved, of course, several sample translations and back and forth, till they had met with the stringent standards of approval at Casterman (which is one of Europe's oldest and largest comic book publishers based in Tournai, Belgium). Thereafter, we set about translating the first eight titles of the 24 part adventures of Tintin", says Mago.

Earlier, the Hindi readership was associated with low

affordability. Today, however, the market reality has changed and Hindi publications are produced very well. Today's generation feels the importance of learning Hindi and parents too, are keen on making their children learn the nuances of our mother tongue. Om Books has priced the Hindi version of Tintin comics at Rs. 195, while striving to maintain the same international standard of production maintained worldwide.

Some fans did fear that the comic characters may lose some of their charm in translation. "On the contrary, the content for these characters was translated very imaginatively. All the characters acquired a fresh charm in the new language," Mago says. "For instance, Captain Haddock has two favourite quotes 'Billions of bilious blue blistering barnacles!' and 'Ten thousand thundering typhoons!' These popular catch phrases have been re-invented in Hindi as- '*Karodo karod kasmate kaale kacchuve*' and '*dus hazaar tadtadate toofan*' while Tintin's catch phrase 'Great Snakes' has been changed to '*Baal ki Khaal*'!"

Special care was taken to keep the integrity of the comic alive and experts in French along with people with an in-depth knowledge of the comic characters and context were hired. "Twelve albums have been translated already and we hope to complete all by November 11, 2011, to coincide with the release date of the movie", reveals Mago. Enthusiastic readers can check out the first 8 copies of the Hindi version at Om Book stores across the country

The universal hero

Isn't it astonishing that over 30 years after Hergé's death, and despite no new books being published in this time, the Tintin phenomena seems to be more alive and visible than ever? We owe this in no small part to the exceptional talent of a great comic's book designer and the business acumen of his heirs.



However, there might be something more to explain this extraordinary success story. Tintin appeals to the world because he is a universal hero, delivering a universal message of peace and true friendship. This is a rare reminder of simplicity in an increasingly complex world. We might call it 'the Tintin spirit'. We project ourselves into him; he in turn awakes in us the adventurer, the freedom fighter, the upholder of the law and the inner child. He battles evil—racists, drug dealers, mad scientists, spies and other villains. He gives us confidence in ourselves and in the world because he makes us believe in a world where justice, equality and freedom will prevail. No wonder that the French General de Gaulle once said about him "deep down, my only international rival is Tintin"....





New Skywalk in Bandra (West) Mumbai, designed by TPF/SN Bhohe in 2011

TPF IN INDIA

A BELGIAN HEART AN INDIAN MIND

The Belgian TPF Group has achieved considerable success in the Indian market owing to its bottom-up approach that synthesises the best of local and global. Today, TPF India is aiming to grow to a 1000-strong engineering services workforce in India by 2013-14.

Headquartered in Belgium, the TPF Group started in 1991 with interests primarily in energy. Today, TPF has a formidable reputation as a multidisciplinary engineering, architecture, and project management consultancy with a presence in 17 countries, including India. In 2010, TPF employed 1700 people and had a turnover of Euro 116 million, which corresponds to approximately Rs 75.4 millions.

An exclusively European company in the '90s, TPF decided to go global in 2005 with a strategy of focusing on growing markets through setting up branches and representative offices or by acquiring strategic companies to benefit from their specific know-how and local presence. India was a target for expansion owing to its democratic government, fluency in English, economic progress and growth in

infrastructure and is now TPF's second largest subsidiary market after Brazil and followed by France and Belgium.

A localised strategy

The TPF Group evolved a localised multicultural approach to its expansion. In India, the focus has remained on acquiring successful small and mid-sized consulting and engineering companies that complement each other in terms of the sectors and geographies they operate in.

Philippe R. David, Director TPF India & Middle East, explains that "The company's motto has always been to adopt local practices and develop business through local networks. We believe that different cultures and language are not barriers to the growth of business."

"We never pretend we are superior or better. In fact, this is the specialty of TPF. We believe strongly in interaction

and multinational expertise. We don't want to be invasive. We want to be local. Of course, we do standardise aspects that impact efficiency, but largely we have a bottom up approach," he adds.



Philippe. R. David
heads TPF in India and the Middle East

A win-win situation

The strategy has clearly paid off for TPF in India, which in 2006 acquired a 51% stake in S.N. Bhohe & Associates Pvt. Ltd., a Mumbai-based engineering company. Explaining the thought process behind the acquisition, Mr David explains, "We were looking for matching targets that could meet our business expectations. Most of all, we looked for a common understanding with the key managers and owners of the companies we were looking to acquire. We don't believe in removing key persons but would rather keep them in their positions even though TPF always comes in as the majority stakeholders. It is important to us to ensure the continuity and the future of the people who made the company successful in the first place."

Both sides have been happy with the experience. As a family-owned company headed by a dynamic young engineer, S.N. Bhohe & Associates was struggling to find commercial credit and often found itself ineligible for big ticket projects. In partnering with TPF, they were able to expand their scope and scale of work and grow faster.

Atul D Bhohe, MD of S.N. Bhohe & Associates and a member of the TPF Group Executive Committee admits that the merger meant a huge change, from a domestic company to a global one. The access to references and TPF's financial muscle was a clear advantage and the company grew rapidly from 78 people to over 300 people in a short period of three years.

Lessons learnt

However, TPF's experience in India has taught the Belgian company valuable lessons for the future. Despite high GDP growth, the Indian market is money driven; corruption and bureaucracy remain major hurdles to conduct ethical business in the infrastructure sector. Quality and sustainability are not vital for the selection of projects and costs as well as fees are low compared to international standards. Though manpower is available, it is tough to find and retain experienced and skilled experts. However, Mr David is quick to clarify that TPF isn't here for cheap labour. "Despite the

substantially higher labour costs in Europe, we do not come to markets like India for cheap labour force. We occupy a service niche and we know that we need expertise that will not be cheap even in India," he explains, underlining TPF Group's long-term commitment to the Indian market.

Expansion and future plans

TPF is continuing to expand in the subcontinent via new acquisitions. In December 2010, it acquired another Mumbai-based company Shrikhande Consultants Pvt. Ltd. with a workforce of 150 people with plans to take that up to 450 people. "Whereas S.N. Bhohe has a good reach into infrastructure like metro, railways, flyovers, expressways and bridges, Shrikhande leans towards buildings, townships, hydraulics, irrigation, etc, helping us expand our sectors of work as well," says Mr David.

After five years of entering India, the net profit of S.N. Bhohe, the spearhead of TPF in India, went up four times and turnover eight times!



Atul Bhohe
heads SN Bhohe & Associates,
TPF's Prime Partner In India

The total workforce of TPF in India is expected to reach 1000 people by 2013-14 and the company is pursuing leads that are at the stage of due diligence for other takeovers in India. In the near future, TPF India is concentrating on projects within India and possibly Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal, with a positive attitude.

The Engineering College at Wadala (2005) received the award for innovative design from Design-Share, New York, USA



Water sewage plant 100 MLD in Navi Mumbai (Nerul), another realisation of TPF/SN Bhohe in 2008





Indian beer lovers are getting exposed to a slew of gourmet beers. Excellent craft beers from the Wallonia region in Belgium are playing no mean role in transforming Indian beer tastes, for the better!

GOURMET BEERS

INDIA GETS A TASTE OF BELGIUM

“**B**eer is proof that God loves us and wants us to be happy!” said Benjamin Franklin. He couldn’t have put it better. Beer is easily the favourite beverage all around the world. Indians too, have taken to beer in a big way. We love to cool ourselves in the scorching

summers with a chilled mug of beer. But no matter how much we love our beer, we’re still missing out on variety. It may be shocking to know that out of 90 styles of beer in the world, including several types of ales, lagers, wheat beer and stouts, in India, we know and like just one kind—the lager!

A new beer culture

All that is changing with the advent of a variety of imported beers into the Indian market. Belgium, home to over 800 brands of beer, is playing an active role in influencing the trends. Says Ankur Jain, Director, Cerana Imports Pvt Ltd, “Beer as a category is very diverse, rich and sophisticated. Till date, the

only beers that have been available in India have been mass produced lagers. We have attempted to correct this by bringing in the best, market leading examples of the major beer styles to India including a number of them from Belgium."

The Indian consumer is now becoming aware of the various styles of beer and is demanding variety. The success of several new exclusive beer pubs in the metro cities is proof. "Consumers have woken up to the range of flavours that are possible in a glass of beer", says Jain. Nikhil Kumar, Director of Bangalore-based Nilarya Gourmet Beers feels that the beer

Gourmet beers from Wallonia are all about the flavour, with a distinct taste owing to distinct brewing practices.

market in India is developing slowly but surely. "We for the first time have ales and that is a path breaking entry into a predominant by lager market. With microbreweries and beer pubs opening up, we are only bringing India in sync with other developed countries."

Jain feels the slew of new microbreweries in cities like Mumbai and Delhi are a positive part of the "craft beer" ecosystem as they encourage the consumer to try different styles of carefully produced beers. "Our (imported) beers that are classics in

their respective style are inspiration for the beers that are brewed in microbreweries. Brewmasters aspire to imitate our beers as well as bring in their original creations and experiments. Overall, the result is improved choice and lot more fun for consumers", he adds. Kumar agrees, "With the entry of importers like us and the start of microbreweries; this is only the beginning of the exposure to different varieties of beers in India."

The premium taste of Belgian beer

So what makes Belgian beer click? What makes it so different from international beers such as Heineken and Carlsberg that are already available in India? "I would call these 'industrial beers' or mass market beers that have a focus on volume instead of quality", says Jain. "Our beers from Belgium, most of which are traditionally produced, use local ingredients, are unfiltered and are full of flavour. In fact some of our Trappist beers such as Chimay are still brewed by monks in abbeys. So, the quality is vastly different – it is like the difference between a Mercedes and a Ford!"

Gautam Aurora, CEO of The Living Room (TLR) café in New Delhi is a fan of Belgian beers. The café serves over seven varieties of Belgian beers, five of which are specific to Wallonia, including three varieties of Chimay, along with Saison Dupont and Leffe from the Namur region in Wallonia. They also offer other lesser known brands, such as Bink and XX Bitter.

Gourmet beers, he adds, are all about the flavour, "They have a



Ankur Jain, Director, Cerana Imports Pvt Ltd, has been a driving force in promoting Belgian beers.

PARTY LIKE A BELGIAN

There's no better way to celebrate the love for Belgian beer, than by living it up at the Belgian Beer Fridays! Celebrated all over the world, this Belgian beer fest has finally come to India. AWEX, along with the Embassy of Belgium, the Belgian Luxembourg Business Association (BLBA) and Cerana organised the "quick off" event at the Royal Plaza hotel in New Delhi, on September 23, 2011. This is a great platform to discover the delights of Belgian ales and truly savour the taste of Belgium! The next "Belgian Beer Fridays" event in Delhi is scheduled to will take place on the 16th of December.

Chimay, the most famous Trappist beer, is still brewed by Cistercian monks in or around the Notre-Dame de Scourmont Abbey





Know your Brews

It is believed that Belgians have been brewing beer since as early as the Middle Ages. There are close to 125 breweries strewn across the country and statistically, Belgians are known to drink up to 93 litres of beer on an average, in one year! So one needs to drink like a Belgian to truly savour the taste of Belgian beers! Get familiar with some of the most common Belgian beers that have now come to India.

Chimay

The most famous of the Trappist beers, Chimay is brewed at the Notre-Dame de Scourmont Abbey by a community of monks. The beer gets its name from the Cistercian Trappist monks of Chimay who have developed the production of Belgian beers since 1862, starting with Chimay Première and going on to Chimay Red and Chimay Blue in 1948. Many more beers followed in the years to come, making this Trappist beer a class apart. Chimay beers are manufactured in close proximity to the monastery or on-site.



Saison Dupont

The Saison Dupont is a top fermentation beer that allows refermentation in the bottle. This helps it to develop into even more complex tastes and aromas, even if it is kept lying in a cellar. It is considered a classic among all Belgian season beers, due to its unique 'thirst quenching' properties. Brewed first on a farm brewery in the winter of 1844, the Saison Dupont ale is coppery blond in colour with a fine aroma and a strong bitterness is what makes it loved by one and all. It is now brewed in the famous Dupont brewery, located in Tourpes, in the centre of West-Hainaut, Belgium.

Moinette Blonde

Also brewed by Wallonia's Dupont brewery, the refreshing Moinette Blonde fermentation beer was first created in 1955. It brings forth a subtle balance between sweet, bitter and fruity flavours and is coppery blond in colour. It presents a pleasant aroma and taste and is one of the most sought-after beers in the Belgian market.

distinct taste and feel in the palate due to their individual brewing practices, and, although it is believed to be an acquired taste, this really doesn't take too long to acquire". His personal favourite? "My favourites are Kwack (although not available in Delhi), Leffe, Duvel and Chimay, although with 400 beers to choose from, it is tough to narrow down to a single one!"

Ankur Jain points to an interesting new phenomenon in the market, like the number of women who have started enjoying craft beers. "For them, we have recently also launched the fruit beers of Liefmans, which are sparkling and sweet and contain five fresh fruits in them," he tells us.

Quality matters

Indians love their beer, but they also love the fact that it's cheap and easily available. Some fear Belgian beers may not do so well since they would be a tad pricey. Kumar explains, "We are high priced since the duty structure is such. But then there is a market willing to pay the price for such high quality, premium products. So the key is in placing the products in the right outlets". Jain, on the other hand, seems unperturbed, "Belgian beers are known to be the highest quality gourmet product in the category globally. Since we offer unmatched quality, we are not really concerned about prices of other lower quality products. It's a whole different category!" Cerana Imports claim to have the largest and most exclusive

portfolio of Belgian beers in India. Their brands include Trappist beers of Chimay, Farmhouse beers of Moinette and Saison Dupont, Blonde Ales of Duvel and Fruit Beers of Liefmans.

Aurora of TLR feels Belgian beers are getting a good response too. "People are generally excited by this, especially if they have been to Belgium at some point in their life. For me, having these beers in stock was more a personal choice, for posterity and nostalgia. I guess I miss this variety since I came to Delhi, and it's great to share this experience."

So the next time you want to try a unique, quality and premium drink, don't reach for the wine list—ask for a pint of Belgian beer!



SEMINAR REPORT

DOING BUSINESS WITH BELGIUM

New Delhi, 14 April 2011

In light of the growing bilateral trade between Belgium and India, this seminar highlighted recipes for success as well as future opportunities. Experts spelt out the key advantages of Belgium as a trading partner for Indian companies and as a European landing pad for Indian investors, offered tips on practical aspects of setting up a company, taxation, etc. The sessions were followed by a warm reception at the Ambassador's residence. A great way to be introduced to Belgium!

In the framework of the Joint Economic Commission between India and Belgium-Luxembourg, the Belgian-Luxembourg Business Association in cooperation with the Confederation of Indian Industry and with the support of the Embassy of Belgium in New Delhi, organised a Business Seminar "Doing Business with Belgium, at the heart of Europe". The Seminar took place on April 14th at the Residence of the Belgian Ambassador to India, H.E. Mr. Pierre Vaesen at Chanakyapuri, New Delhi. Active support was also given by the Wallonia Foreign Trade and Investment Agency, Brussels Export and Flanders Investment & Trade. The event was sponsored by Barco, BNP Paribas and Bekaert.

Indo-Belgium trade relations: An advantageous partnership

Business relations between Belgium and India are flourishing. Belgium is currently the 3rd most important trading partner of India within the European Union, preceded by Germany and the United Kingdom. The total bilateral import and export was close to USD 10 billion in 2009-2010. At present, there are about 150 Belgian companies formally established in India and several distinguished Indian companies are active in Belgium, for example Jet Airways, Tata Consultancy Services, Crompton Greaves, Raymond and others.

Belgium has one of the most dynamic and open economies in the world. Foreign trade is the lifeblood of the Belgian economy. Belgium is

the 8th largest exporter of goods worldwide and the 13th largest exporter of services. It is also amongst the top ten destinations for foreign direct investments in the world.

The Seminar showcased Belgium's numerous advantages as a trading partner and outward direct investment partner for India. The speakers explored the advantages of using Belgium and its regions as a part of a European growth strategy for Indian companies. The seminar was attended by close to 110 invitees.

H.E. Mr. Pierre Vaesen, the Belgian Ambassador to India opened the seminar by welcoming the invitees. Having taken up his posting in India about a little over a month ago, he briefly talked about Belgium and its strategic location within Europe from

where Indian companies could run their European operations. He spoke about the exciting opportunities available to both the Belgian and Indian companies in expanding their trade.

This was followed by a Special Address by Mr. Geert Muylle. Mr. Muyle is the Director-General of Bilateral Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belgium. He spoke on the growing importance of India from a Belgian perspective and emphasised on the thriving bilateral relations between India and Belgium. Mr. Frans De Keyser, Senior Advisor at the Brussels Import Agency (BIA) gave a presentation on Export to Europe. He outlined how BIA could be of assistance to Indian companies who are eyeing the European market. He pointed out that since Belgium is a country with a multicultural population and the buying power of any developed West-European country, it is considered to be the ideal test-market for companies looking to test the acceptability of their products in Europe.

Mr. Jean-Pierre Muller, head of the Wallonia-Brussels Economic Representation in New Delhi emphasised on the theme 'ONE very good reason to set up in Belgium – Location, Wealth and Connection' where he spoke about the various advantages of Belgium's location within Europe and its easy connectivity to other European countries by road, railway, air and water.



Setting up a company in Belgium

This was followed by a technical session where the audience learnt about the technical, financial and social aspects of setting up a company in Belgium. Ms. Sonu Iyer, Partner, Human Capital at Ernst & Young spoke on the 'Social Security Agreement existing between India and Belgium' and how it could be beneficial to both Indian and Belgian companies to send their employees abroad.

Mr. Marc De Mil, Counsellor at the Fiscal Department of Foreign Investments, Ministry of Finance elaborated on the 'Fiscal Aspects of Doing Business with Belgium'. He spoke about the main tax incentives granted to companies such as the Notional Interest Deduction, Dividend withholding tax exemption and some singular tax benefits for Research & Development.

Belgium is currently the 3rd most important trading partner of India within the European Union. The total bilateral import and export in 2009-2010 was close to USD 10 billion.



H.E. Mr. Pierre Vaesen
Belgian Ambassador to India



Mr. Geert Muylle
Director - General Bilateral Affairs,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belgium



Mr. Frans De Keyser
Senior Advisor, Brussels Import Agency (BIA)

'Future Perspectives for India-EU Trade & Investment' was presented by Mr. Peter Young, Counsellor, and Head of Trade & Economic Affairs at the EU delegation to India.

The keynote address was delivered by Mr. Ashwani Gupta, President, Group Strategy & Business Planning, Crompton Greaves/Avantha Group. Avantha Group is presently one of the major Indian investors in Belgium. In his address, Mr. Gupta highlighted the key points that were decisive in his company's decision to set up their operations in Belgium. Due to the multilingual workforce, his company was able to integrate very well with the local population. He was most appreciative of the healthy investment climate, supportive governmental organisations and the friendly atmosphere prevailing in Belgium.

A perfect networking opportunity

The seminar was followed by a reception with cocktails and snacks on the lawns of the Belgian Ambassador's residence. This reception was a perfect networking opportunity for the guests to interact and share experiences with the speakers and with people who are already doing business with Belgium.



Mr. Jean-Pierre Muller
Head of the Wallonia-Brussels Economic Representation in New Delhi



Mr. Ashwani Gupta
President, Group Strategy & Business Planning, Crompton Greaves Avantha Group



Ms. Sonu Iyer
Partner, Human Capital at Ernst & Young



Mr. Marc De Mil
Counsellor at the Fiscal Department of Foreign Investments, Ministry of Finance





EVENT REPORT

AWEX AT

MEDICAL FAIR INDIA

New Delhi, 25 March 2011

At the event, AWEX got the opportunity to showcase the Wallonia region's prowess in the medical sector as well as focus on recent medical innovations. About 40 companies from Wallonia were represented at the fair. Representatives from two companies—IT4IP and Medisoft SA—were present to interact with visitors.

The Wallonia Foreign Trade and Investment Agency (AWEX) participated in the Medical Fair India from 25 to 27 March 2011 held at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi. This was the third time that AWEX participated in this fair after 2008 at Mumbai and 2009 at Delhi.

About the fair

This is one of the largest fairs for medical equipment and latest technologies in India. This year it saw 261 exhibitors from 14 countries and 5,910 visitors in New Delhi. The fair is held in close cooperation with Medica Düsseldorf, the world's leading international trade fair for medical products. It covers all the

medical-hospital sectors and especially targets medical equipment, hospital supplies, surgical items, diagnostics, etc.

The AWEX contingent

At this fair, AWEX presented 40 companies in the medical sector from the region of Wallonia. These companies were from all areas of activity ranging from medical software to diagnostics and to state-of-the-art medical equipment.

Out of these 40 companies, two – IT4IP and Medisoft SA – were physically present with their demonstration equipment and brochures. IT4IP SA was present at the fair through its representative Mr. Henri Hanot. The company manufactures precision



membranes widely used for bacteria detection in the healthcare sector (cancer diagnostics, cell culture media etc.). Medisoft was represented by Mr. Emmanuel Malherbe. The company controls and produces a comprehensive range of devices and tests on the market for Cardio Pulmonary Function testing.

Both these companies witnessed a continuous flow of visitors to their stands and were immensely satisfied with the quality of visitors as well as with the organisation of the Belgian Pavilion managed by AWEX.

Great networking opportunity

The fair had good ambience, pleasant surroundings, good facilities and attracted a variety of exhibitors from the relevant industries. The excellent stand design and the professional organisation of the Belgian pavilion were an important support for the Belgian companies, giving them the confidence to take on the international competition in India too.

The event proved to be a good opportunity for Wallonia to showcase its prowess in the medical sector and to share information about recent medical innovations from Belgium as well as make contacts from around the world.



SMALL & MEDIUM BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CHAMBER OF INDIA
Empowering SMEs for Global Competitiveness

Exploring Business Opportunities In The European Market

The seminar 'Exploring Business Opportunities in the European Market' was conducted jointly by the Wallonia Foreign Trade and Investment Agency in Mumbai (AWEX Mumbai, based out of the Consulate General of Belgium) and the SME Chamber of India in Mumbai on April 27, 2011. It was targeted at Indian companies looking to invest in Europe, specifically the Wallonia Region of Belgium, through exports, tie-ups or setting up base for the long term.

Highlights

Prospective Indian investors were informed about the various advantages of investing in the Wallonia region of Belgium and how it has a competitive edge over other European region. These included low real estate prices, dedicated inland ports, cargo airports and extensive network of roadways and railways, attractive and innovative tax incentives and support and cooperation of local government authorities.

The location of Wallonia, at the centre of the Amsterdam – Paris – Frankfurt triangle, also proves to be an added advantage to Indian investors. This is because it is at the heart of 430 million consumers with highest purchasing power in the world and provides the lowest transportation cost and time for major European cities. Wallonia also has dedicated business centres that offer incubation services for Indian companies that prove helpful in setting up base in the country.



◀ THE GENUINE SPA ▶ REVIVE YOUR SOUL

Quietness, serenity, solitude and relaxation—these are some feelings we associate with visiting a spa. However, the ultimate experience of rejuvenating and reviving your tired soul would be a visit to the ‘real’ Spa, a quaint little town in Southeast Belgium that ensures the experience of a lifetime and more!

SPA = Relaxation
Located in the province of Liège, in the heart of the beautiful lush forests of the Belgian Ardennes, the city of Spa is renowned the world over for the quality and diversity of its natural springs and in fact has been home to health, beauty and rejuvenation treatments since the dark and celtic ages.

Rejuvenation is a very important

part of the Belgian culture and is taken very seriously by the local experienced people, for centuries. Though other sources of healing hot mineral springs have become famous throughout the world over time, it is the city of Spa that has become eponymous with any place having a natural water source that is believed to possess special health-giving properties, as a spa. The name originates from the word ‘espa’

that means spring or fountain in the Wallonian dialect.

History

Known as the site of healing hot springs, Spa has been frequented as a watering place since as early as the 14th century. In the first half of the 16th century the town became famous as a health resort after Henry VIII, who was occupying the city of Tournai at

Recently, Spa has been receiving a whole lot of attention for its newly built Thermes de Spa, an ultra-modern thermal centre located on the top of a hill directly overlooking the picturesque town.

the time, first experienced the curative powers of Spa's waters.

Ever since, royalty (among them Charles II and Peter the Great of Russia), statesmen and aristocrats from all over Europe, flocked to the town in search of an elixir, and by the 18th century the flow of well-heeled visitors transformed the little town of Spa into 'The Café of Europe'.

By the turn of the 19th century, the town was flooded with British tourists, and such was the frequency that not only were several streets given English names, but also one of the town's 200 springs was named after the Duke of Wellington who frequented the town along with Disraeli.

Spa's ultra-modern avatar

Today, Spa is still famous for its natural springs, with waters from these springs being bottled and sold in the UK supermarkets, known as Spa Reine (still) and Barisart (sparkling). However recently the town has been receiving a whole lot of attention for its newly built Thermes de Spa, an ultra-modern thermal centre located on the top of a hill directly overlooking the picturesque town.

This beautiful modern-day spa facility, has been designed in glass and wood by one of Belgium's foremost architects, and is equipped to provide up to 35,000 treatments a year to those with heart and respiratory problems or rheumatism. Facilities include two large heated circular indoor and outdoor swimming pools

with hydro-massage jets, each heated to a blissful 32°C, so one can sit out in the exterior pool overlooking the woods even in cold weather, as well as Hammams, Jacuzzis, relaxation rooms and an infrared lamp area.

Treatments range from bathing in carbogaseous water in brightly polished copper tubs to soaking in glorious mud baths containing rich peat originating from the High Fens of Spa. A more conventional beauty center offers face and body pampering, and a Mother-Baby Institute, which runs five-day packages for mothers and babies up to six months, helps new mums regain their shape while getting babies relaxed at the same time.

Of shopping, sport, nature and more luxury

The Thermes de Spa is located right in the centre of the pretty town, making it an ideal base for exploring the many other attractions the town has to offer, such as shopping in the many boutiques or at the Sunday flea market, playing a round of golf at the Royal Golf des Fagnes, or long walks and excursions in the forests and marshes of the Ardennes where many of the natural springs can be visited.

A glass funicular connects the Thermes de Spa to the newly opened Radisson SAS Palace Hotel, a chic 120-room hotel, which also offers its own spa facilities and treatment rooms. The hotel complements the already existing Radisson SAS Balmoral, with fully equipped guestrooms complete with modern amenities.

To pump your adrenalin

Besides the cutting edge spa centre, the town is also home to one of the world's most exciting F1 grand prix racing tracks, known as Cirque de Spa-Francorchamps, Belgian F1 Grand Prix (www.spagrandprix.com), attracting hoards of visitors from every corner of the globe.

Put it on your to-visit list

With so much on offer, Spa promises to put a spring in your step in more than one way! Add it to your 'must vacation in' list today!



Brussels and Wallonia

Belgium beyond expectations



Photo - OPT / J.L. Elgmal
Produced by Wallonie-Bruxelles Tourisme (WBT) - Office de Promotion du Tourisme de Wallonie et de Bruxelles (OPT D.V.A.S.B.)



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