



English Translation of Prime Minister's Press Statement during the Joint Press Statement with the Prime Minister of Belgium

Posted On: 03 SEP 2026 2:29PM by PIB Delhi

Your Excellency, Prime Minister,
Delegates from both countries,
Friends from media,
Namaskar!

I am delighted to warmly welcome the Prime Minister on his first visit to India.

This is certainly his first visit to India, but he has a long-standing association with India. He served as the Mayor of Antwerp for many years and has always supported the large Indian community in Antwerp and India–Belgium diamond trade.

Friends,

The roots of India–Belgium relations run deep in history. The courage and sacrifice of thousands of Indian soldiers in Belgium during the First World War are an important part of our shared memory.

Today, democratic values, market economy, and deep people-to-people ties make us natural partners.

Friends,

Ten years ago, I had the opportunity to visit Belgium, and I am very pleased that our partnership has made remarkable progress over the past decade.

Today, the scope of our cooperation has expanded beyond traditional sectors to strategic areas such as defence and clean energy. We are working together on advanced defence equipment, such as the Zorawar tank. In Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh, we are developing one of the world's largest green ammonia projects.

Friends,

Today, the world is going through a period of great upheaval. Conflicts continue to persist in many parts of the world. Whether it is food, fuel, or supply chains, every sector is being impacted by uncertainty.

In this challenging environment, India's economy has maintained its momentum. We recorded 7.8% growth in the last quarter. Today, India's growth story is becoming a source of confidence and new opportunities for the world.

Friends,

At the beginning of this year, we concluded the historic India–European Union Free Trade Agreement. This unprecedented cooperation between two of the world's largest democratic powers will also give new impetus to global stability, development, and shared prosperity.

India's sustained economic progress and this Agreement have opened new avenues for our economic relations. Today, we have taken several important steps to translate these possibilities into concrete outcomes.

Friends,

For Belgian companies, we have established an Investment Fast-Track Mechanism in India. We have decided to make the India–Belgium Business Forum a regular mechanism. We will strengthen coordination among the financial, fintech, and regulatory institutions of both countries.

Through all these initiatives, we will realise our goal of doubling bilateral trade over the next five years.

Friends,

Defence and security cooperation is a key pillar of our relationship. Today, we agreed to enhance military exchanges and training cooperation between the two countries.

The agreements between our governments and defence industries will open up new opportunities for defence co-development and co-production. We will also further strengthen intelligence sharing and cooperation between our agencies in combating crime.

Friends,

A clean energy future and reliable supply chains are our shared priorities. The MOU on Renewable Energy signed today will give new momentum to our sustainability cooperation. In critical minerals, we have decided to enhance cooperation in processing and recycling.

Belgium's expertise in semiconductors and India's scale are complementary to each other. In this direction, we will work together to connect Belgium's IMEC Institute with India's semiconductor ecosystem.

Friends,

People-to-people ties are the greatest strength of our relationship. Today, we agreed to strengthen connections between our start-ups and enhance capacity building in the maritime sector.

We will also strengthen university and research cooperation. And, to facilitate talent mobility, we will soon conclude a "Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement".

Friends,

Today, we also had detailed discussions on regional and global developments. Both India and Belgium believe in the rule of law, dialogue, and diplomacy.

Whether it is Ukraine or West Asia, we support all efforts aimed at an early end to conflicts and the restoration of peace. And eliminating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations is our shared commitment.

Your Excellency,

Last month, Belgium and the Netherlands jointly hosted the Hockey World Cup. I congratulate you on the successful organisation of this grand World Cup. I also commend our players for their hard work and performance.

Diamonds have long been a link between India and Belgium. Today, we are transforming this historic connection into a new and more comprehensive relationship.

I am confident that today's discussions mark the beginning of a new chapter in our bilateral relations. Once again, I extend a warm welcome to you and your delegation to India.

Thank you very much.

DISCLAIMER: This is the approximate translation of Prime Minister's statement. Original statement was delivered in Hindi.

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(Release ID: 2306295) Visitor Counter : 535

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