

India and Belgium call for deeper defence industrial collaboration to build stronger militaries through co-development & co-production

Posted On: 03 SEP 2026 5:45PM by PIB Delhi

Minister of Defence & Foreign Trade of Belgium Mr Theo Francken has emphasised the strong potential for deeper industrial collaboration between India and Belgium to strengthen the defence forces through collective efforts, with Raksha Rajya Mantri Shri Sanjay Seth urging Belgian defence manufacturers to leverage their technological expertise alongside India's manufacturing scale for co-development & co-production of niche products for shared security and prosperity. The two Ministers graced the India-Belgium Defence CEOs Roundtable and B2B Meetings in New Delhi on September 03, 2026. The event was attended by the representatives of the Belgian industry, Confederation of Indian Industry and Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers.



The Belgium Defence Minister underscored the growing strategic partnership between India and the European Union (EU), highlighting the robust dialogue structures developing across maritime security, information security and aerospace. He stated that these institutional frameworks have established India as a trusted partner for the EU.

Commending the dynamism of Indian entrepreneurs, Mr Theo Francken stressed the need to bolster the two militaries in the evolving security environment through joint efforts. "United we stand, divided we fall," he said.

Highlighting the strategic transformation of India's defence manufacturing sector, Raksha Rajya Mantri stated that the nation is decisively moving from import dependence to indigenous capability, trusted partnerships, and global competitiveness through initiatives such as Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Make-in-

India. “This transformation is outward-facing. Strategic autonomy is best secured through credible, mutually beneficial international collaboration,” he said.



Shri Sanjay Seth emphasised that India and Belgium can leverage their strengths and prioritise collaboration in areas including cyber security, AI-enabled unmanned aerial systems, underwater domain vehicles, and complex weapon systems. He stated that innovation platforms like iDEX and ADITI are engaging start-ups and MSMEs in AI, quantum technologies, military communications, anti-drone systems, and adaptive camouflage, providing “excellent avenues for bilateral R&D and industrialisation”.



Raksha Rajya Mantri pointed out that India’s defence industrial base today combines Defence Public Sector Units, a growing private sector, and over 16,000 MSMEs, with domestic industry delivering advanced capabilities across aerospace, naval and land platforms, defence electronics, cyber security, space technologies, and unmanned systems. Through Department of Defence Production-led measures, India is accelerating capacity building, strengthening value chains, and incentivising technology transfer and co-development, he said.



Shri Sanjay Seth underlined that India has liberalised Foreign Direct Investment in defence up to 74% under the automatic route and up to 100% through the government route to enable partnerships in niche technologies. “The new space policy permits 100% FDI. Dedicated Defence Industrial Corridors in Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh, with further corridors planned in Maharashtra, Assam and other regions, offer competitive incentives and ecosystem support for foreign original equipment manufacturers and partners,” he added.



During the event, multiple MoUs were exchanged towards leveraging Belgian technology with Indian skill and scale. These include pacts between SIDM and Belgian Security & Defence Industry; Larsen & Toubro Limited (India) and Exail Robotics SAS (France) and EXAIL Robotics (Belgium); Kalyani Strategic Systems Ltd (India) and FN Herstal (Belgium); Tembo Classic Engineering Pvt Ltd (India) and Lachaussée SA (Belgium); India Optel Ltd (India) and OIP (Belgium); Krishna Industries Pvt Ltd (India) and Pitagone (Belgium); DGVK Enterprises Private Limited (India) and Sol1 BV (Belgium); and Kalyani Strategic Systems Ltd (India) and Thales Belgium SA and Thales India Pvt Ltd.



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