

आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः
ऋग्वेद -1.89.

Let noble thoughts come to us from all directions in the universe.

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Secretary (West) visits Brussels



The 3rd India-EU Strategic Partnership Review Meeting was held in Brussels on October 19, 2021. The Meeting was co-chaired by Mrs. Reenat Sandhu, Secretary (West) in the Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. India and Ms. Helena König, Deputy Secretary General for Economic and Global Issues, European External Action Service. The discussions focused notably on cooperation in addressing the challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, and contributing to the success of the upcoming Climate COP26. India and the EU also discussed next steps to operationalise the decision of Indian and EU Leaders to resume negotiations for a balanced, ambitious, comprehensive and mutually beneficial trade agreement and launch negotiations on a stand-alone investment protection agreement and on a separate agreement on geographical indications.



Ms. Reenat Sandhu, Secretary (West) also met DG, Mr. Jeroen Cooreman, Bilateral Affairs, Govt. of Belgium on the same day. Both sides discussed ways to enhance cooperation in health, renewables, digital & migration & mobility as well as celebrating 75 years of diplomatic ties in 2022.



Secretary (West) also met Mr. Enrique Mora, DSG, EU for the India-EU Foreign Policy & Security Consultations where both sides exchanged views on regional & global issues of mutual interest.

An Indian parliamentary delegation visited Brussels



An Indian parliamentary delegation visited Brussels from 12-14 October 2021. A group of ten (10) Members of the European Parliament and five (5) political advisors from across the political spectrum of the European Union participated in the meeting with the visiting delegation held on 13 October 2021. They had cordial and productive exchange of views and emphasized on the need for stronger India – EU Cooperation in all areas including political – security, trade and our respective green and digital transitions. They recalled the importance of preserving the rules-based international order and effective multilateralism and the role of India and the EU therein as the two largest democracies in the world".

India achieves the major milestone of 'one billion' vaccinations



In a historic achievement, the cumulative COVID-19 vaccine doses administered in the country has surpassed the 1 billion. In a tweet, Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi congratulated the countrymen and expressed gratitude to the country's scientific community and health professionals for working towards achieving this stupendous feat.

Indian startup funding crosses US\$ 10 billion in Q3, first time in any quarter

Indian startups received record funding in Q3 of CY21, with investment totalling US\$ 10.9 billion through 347 deals, it is the first-time investments in a quarter that funding have crossed the US\$ 10 billion mark, as per the PwC India. This was double the amount of funding received in Q3CY20 and was up ~41% over the Q2CY21 figure, stated the outcomes of the report titled 'Startup Perspectives-Q3CY21'. The growth in funding activity was observed across all sectors, both in terms of value and volume. Although, fintech, edtech and SaaS are the leading three investment sectors in CY21, collectively accounting for ~47% of the total funding activity. The fintech sector saw a quadruple increase in funds raised in the first three quarters of CY21, over the first three quarters of CY20. Six fintech companies achieved unicorn status. (Source: IBEF, 20 Oct. 2021)



Exports increase 40.5% to US\$ 15.13 billion during October 1-14



India's exports rose by 40.5% to US\$ 15.13 billion during October 1-14 owing to healthy performance by key sectors such as petroleum products, engineering and chemicals, according to preliminary data of the commerce ministry. Imports during the period grew by 60.72% to US\$ 14.82 billion, the data indicated. India's merchandise exports grew by 22.63% y-o-y to US\$ 33.79 billion in September on improved performance by key sectors, despite the trade deficit expanded to a record high of US\$ 22.59 billion. Export sectors which are logging positive growth include coffee, cashew, petroleum products, handloom, engineering, chemicals, man-made yarn/fabrics, gems and jewellery, plastic and marine products. Cumulatively, exports rose by 57.53% to US\$ 197.89 billion during April-September this fiscal year as opposed to US\$ 125.62 billion during April-September 2020. (Source: IBEF, 20 Oct. 2021)

India retains 3rd position in RE investment attractiveness index



According to EY, India has retained the third rank in the Renewable Energy Country Attractiveness Index. India stayed at the third position in the 58th edition of EY's Renewable Energy Country Attractiveness Index' (RECAI), which classifies the world's top 40 markets on the attractiveness of their renewable energy investment and deployment opportunities. With the environment, social and governance (ESG) measures surging to the top of the agenda for companies and investors, RECAI also features that corporate power purchase agreements (PPAs) are evolving as a key driver of clean energy growth, it added. A new PPA Index - presented in this edition of RECAI - concentrates on the attractiveness of renewable power procurement and ranks the growth capability of a nation's corporate PPA market. India was ranked sixth among the top 30 PPA markets. India's flourishing renewable energy market conditions, comprehensive policy decisions, investment and technology advancements focusing on self-reliant supply chains have driven the clean energy transition to new levels, the statement added. (Source: IBEF, 14 Oct. 2021)

India begins its journey in the large-scale Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) for 1,000 MW hour project

Government has given the go-ahead for inviting the expression of interest for installation of 1,000 MWh Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) as a pilot project. This is the joint effort of both Ministry of New and renewable energy and Ministry of Power who have been working on this to provide a road map for the installation of the energy storage system in the country. In order to support the ambitious goal of achieving 450 GW renewable energy target of Ministry of New and renewable energy by 2030, it is important that it gets duly supported with installation of energy storage systems (battery energy storage system, hydro pump storage plants etc.). Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI), a

CPSU under Ministry of New and renewable energy, has called for the expression of interest for procurement of 1,000 MWh BESS. This will be published along with the RFS bid document and the draft comprehensive guideline for procurement and utilization of BESS as a part of generation, transmission and distribution assets and with all ancillary services. (Source: PIB, 18 Oct. 2021)

India set to achieve 450 GW renewable energy installed capacity by 2030: Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) Invites global stakeholders to invest in India's RE sector

The Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE) in partnership with FICCI, organised a series of events, from October 6th-8th, 2021 during the Climate and Biodiversity Week at Expo 2020 Dubai. The events covered the themes of India's Renewable Energy Achievements and Ambitions, Emerging Areas and Opportunities for Renewable Energy in India, and also focussed events anchored by the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) and Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA). An event on the theme of One Sun One World One Grid (OSOWOG) was also organised by International Solar Alliance promoting interconnective across borders to harness solar energy without intermittency. Addressing the MNRE-FICCI – SECI event, Mr. R.K. Singh, Minister of Power, New and Renewable Energy, emphasized that the world is on the cusp of transformation, and immediate corrective steps are needed to mitigate climate change. He highlighted that energy transition needs to be the first step in this direction. Mr. Singh also said that SECI has had promising growth and is expected to continue this momentum as new and emerging areas in the clean energy space are set for a boom and stated his vision of SECI becoming an energy conglomerate of the new world. India has embarked on an exciting journey and is treading where no one has ventured before, and SECI will continue to work towards meeting the ambition of 450 GW by 2030. (Source: PIB, 12 Oct. 2021)

Embassy of India to Belgium, Luxembourg and the European Union and Coffee Board of India organised a coffee event in Brussels on 5 October 2021

On 5 October 2021, the Embassy of India in Brussels in collaboration with the Coffee Board of India organised a coffee-tasting event at the Chancery: Aroma & Taste of Indian Coffee. This event was held in the context of promoting exports of Indian coffee, and is part of the "Target \$400 million exports" for the current financial year, a target set by the Government of India. The Department of Commerce has set a coffee export target of \$67.7 million for Belgium, up by almost 20% compared to last financial year. This event

was thus held in order to raise the profile of Indian coffee in the European capital, and to interest coffee importers in the qualities of this commodity export. It attracted a large number of guests including coffee importers, senior guests from the European Commission and the Council of the European Union, as well as business people from across Belgium. (Source: EOI Brussels, 25 Oct. 2021)



Embassy of India and India House Leuven organized an interaction in Leuven on October 6, 2021

Ambassador Santosh Jha met with Mayor Mr. Mohamed Ridouani at the historic City Hall of Leuven. He signed the Golden Book and interacted with Indian students in Leuven. A cultural performance was done by the members of Indian Students of Leuven on the occasion. Thereafter, Ambassador visited the company imec for insight into cutting-edge nano & digital technologies and for exploring further cooperation.



Embassy of India, Brussels celebrated Gandhi Jayanti 2021

Embassy of India, Brussels in association with friends of India celebrated Gandhi Jayanti 2021 with the theme India@75 : Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav on 2nd October 2021 in Antwerp Province, at park Marie Josee in Belgium as well as in Luxembourg.

In Antwerp, Ambassador Santosh Jha, Governor Ms. Cathy Berx and Vice Mayors Jinnih Beels and Nabila Ait Daoud along with other dignitaries offered floral tribute at Gandhiji statue at Province Antwerp and Palace of Justice. These dignitaries also shared their views on importance of Gandhiji's teachings in today's world with the Indian diaspora and friends of India. A shadow puppetry show on teachings of Gandhiji and rendition of his favourite bhajan was also performed by artists of Art India Belgium on the occasion.

Apart from Antwerp, Embassy of India was represented by DCM, Debashish Prusty in Luxembourg and by Counsellor (Consular & Diaspora) in Brussels for offering floral tribute at Gandhiji's statue respectively.

