PRESS RELEASE

India’s Contribution on the Western Front in the First World War Commemorated in Brussels

Indian Ambassador to Belgium, Manjeev Singh Puri, presenting a book on Indian Memorials of the First World War to General Gerard Van Caelenberge, the Chief of the Belgian Armed Forces, at a function held in Brussels.

The Embassy of India in Brussels organized a presentation seminar to remember the Indian war heroes of yesteryears who participated in the Great War. The event was organized at the prestigious Royal Museum of Armed Forces and Military History located in the picturesque Cinquantenaire Park in Brussels on October 22, 2014.

The Royal Museum of Armed Forces and Military History was deliberately chosen as the venue of the seminar since it houses rare collection of military equipment of the Belgian army including those that were used during the First World War.

General Gerard Van Caelenberge, the Chief of the Belgian Armed Forces, was the Chief Guest at the event, which was attended by around 200
distinguished members of the diplomatic corps, military officials, parliamentarians, think tanks and the Indian community.

Speaking at the event, Ambassador of India to Belgium, Luxembourg and the EU, Manjeev Singh Puri, recalled the huge contribution of over 130,000 Indian soldiers who fought in the Ypres salient during 1914-15 and the supreme sacrifice by nearly 10,000 of them. He also highlighted India’s participation in the Versailles Peace Conference and its membership as a founding member of the League of Nations.

Sq. Ldr. Rana T.S. Chhina (Retired) of the Centre for Armed Forces Historical Research, United Services Institute, New Delhi, made the main presentation on the role of the Indian Army on the Western Front. He was complemented by Mr. Dominieck Dendooven, prominent Belgian researcher of the In Flanders Fields Museum, Ypres in Belgium, and Brig. M.S. Jodha, a serving officer of the Indian Army, who added a personal touch by speaking of his grand-father’s participation in WWI in Belgium and France, Egypt and Palestine.

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