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## INDIA, EU VOW TO BOOST ANTI-TERROR TIES

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Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a summit with EU leaders yesterday (30 March) to strengthen ties with bloc, vowing to boost counter-terrorism cooperation as he paid tribute to the victims of the Brussels attacks.

The 22 March suicide attacks on the Belgian capitals airport and metro system loomed large over Modis visit to Brussels for the 13th EU-India summit, with the premier saying his country shared Belgiums pain.

In a joint statement after talks with European Council President Donald Tusk and European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, the leaders condemned last weeks carnage, which killed 32 people and were claimed by the Islamic State group, as an unacceptable affront to our open democratic societies.

The EU and India will remain united and firm in the fight against hatred, violent extremism and terrorism, they said.

Also on the agenda at the summit were efforts to boost trade and investment.

The 28-member European Union is the South Asian nations biggest trading partner and its largest source of foreign investment, accounting for around 26% of total inward investment, or \$69 billion (€61 billion).

Indian nationals protest Modi visit. Brussels, 30 March.

Modis right-wing nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) swept to power in 2014 promising to revive Indias economy and create much-needed jobs.

But while India is the worlds fastest-growing major economy, experts say it is still not expanding at a fast enough pace to provide employment for a burgeoning young population.

The EU and India launched negotiations on a free-trade agreement in 2007 but progress has been held up due to differences over intellectual property rights and efforts by Brussels to link trade with climate change action.

The economic ties between the two sides were put in the spotlight by Indian giant Tata Steels announcement on the eve of the summit that it plans to sell its British assets, with thousands of jobs at stake.

### **BREXIT CAMPAIGN SEEKS GAINS FROM TATA STEELS UK EXIT**

Britain battled to save its steel industry on Wednesday (30 March) after Indias Tata Steel put its British operations up for sale, leaving thousands of jobs at risk as a result of cheap Chinese imports.

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The last EU-India summit was held in 2012 but a series of spats over trade, and then over the fate of two Italian marines who skipped bail while on trial for murder in New Delhi, got in the way of organising the next meeting.

### **EU-INDIA TRADE DEAL NOT YET IN SIGHT**

European and Indian officials dont expect much will come out of the EU-India Summit today (10 February) in New Delhi, but leaders on both sides will assess progress on negotiations towards a Free Trade Agreement, which seems stuck in disputes over tariffs.

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With ties between the two countries already strained, Italy upped tensions further on Wednesday by launching a legal battle at an international tribunal to bring home one of the marines, who has been living in Italys embassy in New Delhi after the 2012 killing of two Indian fishermen who Rome says were mistaken for pirates.

The other marine has already returned home. The EU and India failed to make any progress in resolving the row during their one-day talks.

The EU shares Italys concerns to find an expeditious solution for the prolonged restriction of liberty of the two marines, their statement read, while India stressed the need for rendering due justice for the families of the fishermen.

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Kaynak/Source: