

15 March 2020

Inquiry into Western Australia's Economic relationship with the Republic of India

1. Introduction

Grover Projects is an independent strategy and business consulting firm specialising in developing innovative strategies for the successful delivery of major projects in the utility sector.

Grover Projects has significant industry knowledge and experience in the electricity, gas, telecommunications and renewable energy and marine engineering sectors. Our expertise spans the entire business process for developing, managing, and delivering new initiatives, including, strategic planning, product and project development, commercial and procurement strategies, engineering and project execution.

Our Mission is to provide end-to-end support to our clients in achieving business benefits by turning vision to reality.

We are pleased to provide our submission to the Western Australian Government Economics and Industry Standing Committee Inquiry into Western Australia's Economic relationship with the Republic of India (Inquiry).

2. Background

Australia is only recently starting to recognize the geopolitical importance of India and the need to build a strategic relationship not only as a partner in the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) but to increase its engagement with India in trade and commerce for mutual benefit.

The Australian Government report "An India Economic Strategy to 2035" released in 2018 is a definitive reference document about the economic developments in India over the last decade, the growth trajectory of the Indian economy and the accompanying growth opportunities for international trade.

3. Western Australian Context

Western Australia has long standing mutually beneficial trade relationships with China, Japan and South Korea underpinned by its energy and resource exports to these countries. These countries have made significant investments in the energy and resource industry in Western Australia thus contributing to the Western Australian economy.

Amongst the rest of the Asian nations, Western Australia must treat India as the next frontier to build a strategic relationship with due to its growing economy and its geopolitical importance in the Indian Ocean region as a partner of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad).

4. Target Sectors

This submission identifies the barriers and lists opportunities in the target sectors identified by the Inquiry. The aim of this submission is to highlight key issues and opportunities only, recognising that a more detailed discussion will be conducted during the inquiry.

4.1. International education

4.1.1. Barriers

- a. WA universities have a lower profile than the universities in the eastern states;
- b. No coordinated program for delivery of education and training in India

4.1.2. Opportunities

- a. Review university fee scales (lower fees than eastern states);
- b. University scholarships – one at each WA university;
- c. Student housing subsidy;
- d. Universities links with Indian companies for delivering ongoing training/corporate courses;
- e. Reciprocal internship programs with Indian and Multinational companies;
- f. Exchange programs for Australian students to study in India
- g. Conduct a needs analysis in India for training requirements;

4.2. Tourism

4.2.1. Barriers

- a. No WA beacon/icon to attract Indian tourists;
- b. No direct flights between WA and India

4.2.2. Opportunities

- a. Conduct a survey of the Indian diaspora to understand what would attract them to come to WA
- b. Promote Swan Valley wineries and breweries and distilleries as a tourist destination;
- c. Develop water based activities (water based them park, water skiing lessons, sailing lessons) on the Swan river?

4.3. Minerals and energy

4.3.1. Barriers

- a. Government does not have a role here;
- b. Price conscious Indian buyers look for low price deals;
- c. As majority of the minerals and energy production is exported under long term contracts there are limited opportunities for big deals with Indian buyers;
- d. As there are limited relationships between the big WA mining and energy companies with India, there is limited opportunity

for investment by Indian companies in Australian mining and energy sector

4.3.2. Opportunities

- a. WA Government must provide incentives to WA business owners to make investments in India;
- b. Provide mining services for better/efficient/optimum operations of existing and new mines in India;
- c. Improve Indian mines safety and productivity standards

4.4. Advanced manufacturing

4.4.1. Barriers

- a. Limited knowledge and exposure of Indian engineering goods in WA;
- b. Quality of Indian manufactured goods perceived to be inferior.

4.4.2. Opportunities

- a. Engineering Expo in WA to showcase Indian engineering goods;
- b. Promote and foster safety and quality culture in the industries/factories/plants in India that supply goods to WA;
- c. Encourage investment by Indian businesses in WA by offering incentives (e.g. tax breaks, land, services, reduced red-tape) - survey Indian business and entrepreneur diaspora in identifying opportunities and areas of concern for new businesses based on their experience;
- d. Defence industry manufacturing cooperation – Austal ships technology transfer for building patrol boats in India (leverage Indian Government's "Make in India" program)



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