




Speech By
Hon. Ros Bates

MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Trade and Investment

 **Hon. RM BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (Minister for Finance, Trade, Employment and Training) (9.56 am): After a decade of Labor's neglect of our trading relationships, we are working hard to share the good news that under the Crisafulli LNP government Queensland is open for business. It is of course no secret that international investment in Queensland creates jobs for local Queenslanders and is critical to the long-term success of our economy. During my most recent trade mission to Singapore and India, I again saw firsthand how Queensland goods and services are held in very high regard by our international trade partners.

Our government is working to ensure Queensland businesses and our broader Queensland economy benefit from restored trade relationships and renewed confidence from our international partners. In Singapore I met with key investors like Keppel which are contributing to Queensland's energy, waste management and infrastructure sectors. I also saw firsthand the contributions that Queensland companies are making to global research efforts, including visiting Icon's Singapore cancer treatment centre and Avcair, which are based in Brisbane but have a hub in Singapore that services the growing fixed-wing air ambulance market.

In India—Queensland's fourth largest goods export market—I again took every opportunity to reiterate that Queensland is open for business. I was particularly pleased to attend BioAsia 2025—one of the leading international life sciences and health tech events where I promoted Queensland's capabilities in biopharmaceuticals, digital health, medical devices and advanced therapeutics. I was joined by numerous leading Queensland health tech and life sciences companies and research institutes, marking Queensland's largest BioAsia showcase to date.

Of course it is not just the health sector where Queensland businesses are excelling. Queensland is also the beneficiary of strong international student enrolment numbers from India, with 20,981 enrolments over the last 12 months, as of November 2024.

I was also pleased to meet with a number of in-market representatives from Queensland universities and education institutions. In Mumbai, I met with some of India's largest steel manufacturers, including Tata Steel and JSW Steel, which are also some of our state's biggest buyers of metallurgical coal, because we on this side of the chamber are not ashamed to talk about coal. When Queensland exports coal—

An opposition member interjected.

Mr Bleijie: You got him; you triggered him. He's awake.

Ms BATES: I did, yes. It does not take much. When Queensland coal exports to India total approximately \$12.8 billion, coal certainly is not a dirty word. Supported by Trade and Investment Queensland, this trade mission was pivotal in highlighting Queensland's export and investment opportunities in two key markets, ensuring Queenslanders reap the benefits.

In these uncertain times, the importance of our state having diversified trade relationships cannot be underestimated. The tariffs implemented by the United States on aluminium and steel last month and the new 10 per cent tariffs on all Australian exports to the US announced by President Trump this morning are very disappointing. I note there are conflicting reports about the President's remarks that beef imports to the US have been banned. Early advice is that this is not the case.

Our government will continue to work with exporters to assist them in diversifying and finding new markets. I acknowledge the early support flagged by the Australian government to help exporters identify and access alternative international markets. We are supporting Queensland businesses by encouraging globally competitive businesses to export, informing exporters of opportunities in new and emerging markets, providing tailored grant funding and strengthening our presence in new markets.

Unlike those opposite, we understand the importance of having strong, stable relationships with our trading partners. That is why our government will continue to take a 'no surprises' approach to all of our dealings in the trade and investment space.