

NEWSFEED



“Big guy” China full of opportunity

China’s growth brings further opportunities.



TRADE PARTNERS: Prime Minister Tony Abbott and Chinese President His Excellency Xi Jinping.

China’s President His Excellency Xi Jinping made the first state visit by a President of the People’s Republic of China since 2007 and it coincided with the announcement of a free-trade agreement between the two countries.

China’s remarkable economic development has propelled it to become our largest trading partner and a significant investor, and President Xi said that economic and cultural interactions and cooperation between the two countries are flourishing.

“Two-way trade grew from US\$86 million in the early years of our diplomatic relations to US\$136.4 billion in 2013, and China has been Australia’s biggest trading partner for five consecutive years while also being Australia’s largest source of international students and tourism revenue,” the President said.

President Xi said that his government has set two goals for China’s future development.

“The first is to double the 2010 GDP and per capita income of urban and rural residents and build a society of initial prosperity in all respects by

2020. The second is to turn China into a modern socialist country that is prosperous, democratic, culturally advanced and harmonious by the middle of the century,” he said.

President Xi noted that some nations have concerns about China—that as a country of over 1.3 billion people, it is the ‘big guy’ in the crowd.

“They wonder how the ‘big guy’ will move and act and they may be concerned

that the ‘big guy’ may push them around, stand in their way or even take up their place,” he said.

“But while China is big in size, our forefathers realised over 2,000 years ago that a warlike state, however big it may be, will eventually fall.”

It is estimated that in the next five years, China will import more than US\$10 trillion of goods, its outbound investment will exceed US\$500 billion, and Chinese tourists will make over 500 million overseas visits.

President Xi said all this will provide a bigger market, more capital and products, and valuable cooperation opportunities for Australia.

“As the Chinese saying goes, true friendship exists only when there is an abiding commitment to pursue common goals. With our joint efforts, the friendship between the Chinese and Australian people will span over mountains and oceans. Such friendship will withstand rain and storm, and will be as strong and everlasting as the majestic Uluru rock in Central Australia and the Great Wall in northern China.” ■

Inquiry votes NO for electronic voting

At the next election, will we be voting with a pencil and paper or the click of a mouse?

Brazil has used electronic voting machines since 2000 and in Estonia, the electorate votes via a click of the mouse over the internet. Advocates for electronic voting argue that it is a logical next step and potentially more secure.

In Australia, we still vote with a pencil and paper and then the sheets are counted manually.

The Electoral Matters Committee has tabled its second interim report on its inquiry into the conduct of the 2013 federal election: An assessment of electronic voting options. The report reveals that, for the present, electronic voting is not a feasible option in Australia.

Committee Chair, Tony Smith (Casey, Vic), said that our voting system has changed and evolved over the 113 years since the first federal election in 1901, but that electronic voting for the next federal election will not happen.

“In logistical terms, it would be impossible for our electoral authorities to roll it out next polling day, which is less than two years away,” Mr Smith said.

But what about future elections? With electronic voting, the results are known within minutes of polls closing rather than hours, days or weeks, and there would be none of the human error that occurs in the long paper ballot count.

With internet voting, voters would no longer have the expense or inconvenience of physically going to the polling booths and waiting in line.

