



Premier Anna Bligh and Senator Kim Carr inspect the biofuel pilot plant at Racecourse Mill yesterday. Ms Bligh opened the plant, an Australian first.

PHOTO: PETER HOLT 090710/055

Biofuel adds value for cane farmers

Pilot plant will command international attention

By **MELISSA GRANT**
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MACKAY'S cane farmers can look forward to an additional income stream after Australia's first biofuel pilot plant opened at the Racecourse Mill yesterday.

Premier Anna Bligh opened the "world-class" \$10 million facility which she said would help provide farmers with another source of income.

"What will happen here at this plant is that researchers from around Australia and around the world will be able to test-drive new technologies in the biofuel area using products

like the waste from sugar cane – giving sugarcane farmers another outlet for their crop as well," Ms Bligh said.

"It gives added value to the crop and produces cleaner forms of energy and in doing so creates jobs that will thrive in the economy of the 21st century.

"This plant is a very important addition to the Mackay economy, but it is a project of global significance.

"The cleaner, greener fuels of tomorrow will be test-driven at this plant and we expect to see world-class researchers and potentially world investors buying this technology and transplanting it nationally and

internationally," she said.

Biofuel products are fuels, plastics and chemicals made from plants (biomass), instead of petroleum.

Federal Innovation Minister Senator Kim Carr said "cutting-edge" work that would occur at the Mackay plant, owned by the Queensland University of Technology, could lead to a new, productive and profitable bio-refining industry for Australia.

"The new plant will use biomass to manufacture sustainable biofuels and other renewable products," he said.

"I understand that the plant already has a number of major projects on the go and it will be

operating at or near capacity from day one."

Mackay Canegrowers chairman Paul Schembri said the opening of the plant was very positive for the sugar industry.

"One of the things as an industry which we have suffered from, being raw sugar producers, is the exposure to the volatility of world sugar prices," he said.

Mr Schembri said canegrowers were optimistic that the development of biofuel technologies would provide them with an additional source of income.

"It makes us far more resilient," he said.

Wife's grief for her Ravi

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was practical and funny but he was a very religious guy. He used to read out the scriptures. For a young man Ravi was a respected figure in the Indian community.

"Ravi always aspired to be like his dad. He loved his mum and always spoke about his mum, but recently he opened up and shared with me how much he wanted to be just like his dad."

Mr Chandra, a mine contractor, died when the vehicle he was driving and a coal train collided at 10.35am at a level crossing near Goonyella Riverside Mine, north-west of Moranbah. The passenger, 24, with head and chest injuries, is in a critical condition at Townsville.

Paul Burnell, a close family friend who treated Ravi, 28, like a son, said he had lost his best mate.

"Ravi came to Mackay for work and because he loved soccer, I asked him to come down to an indoor game and from there our friendship grew," Mr Burnell said. "He was here for a short time then went back to marry the love of his life Komil, and he bought her back to Mackay.

"Ravi was passionate about soccer. For effort he always scored 110 per cent but he was the managers' worst nightmare – he would make it to games just in time," Mr Burnell said with a smile. "Ravi played for Wanders premier division and played in the premiership final last year. He scored the first goal. Ravi played forward and centre field and always wore the same number. His talent was scoring long-distance goals.

"This year he was playing for Magpies so all the players are going to sign his shirt and his number will be retired for the season."

Mrs Chandra doesn't have immediate family here, but yesterday was surrounded by people Ravi had made friends with and was being treated like family.

"I would say to Ravi why are you helping these people? You don't know them and he would always say to me – 'don't expect help from the people you help, but when in need someone else will help you. And yesterday it only took one phone call and the next thing I was surrounded with people who are just like my family."

Mrs Chandra thanked the Mackay, Sarina and Cairns Indian communities for their love and support.

Mr Chandra died at a crossing – being used as a shortcut to nearby mining operations – Queensland Rail had been warned about for its limited visibility, The Rail, Tram and Bus Union said.

"We are a very big State and with a very big rail network and a very big road network – we have upgraded rail crossings at an unprecedented rate in the last 18 months and we intend to keep doing that," Premier Anna Bligh said. "This latest accident is a good reminder of how important that task is and we will be looking at this crossing to see if it needs prioritisation in that program."

Police are investigating.

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Free Family Law Seminar

Hi, I'm Cathy Krieg, Family Law Solicitor at the Family Law Centre.

I will be conducting a **free information night on Tuesday 20 July, 2010 from 6pm to 7.30pm**, to explain to you "who gets what" property when you separate from your partner.

Because of my experience in Family Law, I understand the pressures of breaking up, and in down to earth language will point out some of the common problems in Family Law property disputes and how you can avoid them. I'll give you tips to help you take control so you can get on with your life, and I'll discuss how your entitlements are worked out.

I'll also talk to you about:

- the **Superannuation** Laws and how **superannuation** is now treated as property;
- how superannuation is now split;
- whether you get more property if the children are living with you;
- what happens if you owned a lot of assets in your own name before your marriage;
- what happens if you have a business, etc.

I'll give you guidance on how to avoid costly court disputes and will also explain the different steps involved when cases

proceed through the Family Court (in situations where there is no choice but to go to court).

There will also be time for questions and general discussion.

The **free information night** will be held:

Venue: The Family Law Centre,
34 Wood Street, Mackay

Date: **Tuesday, 20 July, 2010**

Time: 6:00pm to 7:30pm.

To reserve your place please phone Sam Harris on 4968 5427.



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