

# 'Third World' Bruce Highway causes an uprising Poll bid for \$2b upgrade

LOBBYISTS from Cairns to Sarina have begun a bid to get \$2 billion from the Federal Government in an election year to upgrade the Bruce Highway.

Calling itself an "uprising" in the forgotten Far North, the North Queensland Road Alliance of mayors and business groups between Cairns and Sarina yesterday began its big campaign to drag the badly needed money from the federal purse.

Their target is the money set aside for Auslink 2 major national highway projects.

At the launch, Cairns Deputy Mayor Terry James admitted it was "a big ask" but the Far North had big needs neglected for too long.

In the belief the timing was right in

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the lead-up to the federal election the pressure the alliance intends to apply will not be subtle.

It wants the road work done within seven years.

"We will clobber them wherever we can," Cr James said.

"We want as much money as we can get.

"We have a united front and at least \$2 billion is needed to bring the highway up to the standard required."

He said the southern Cairns region wanted \$250 million to get a six-lane upgrade of the section of highway between Sheehy Rd and Ray Jones Drive

to relieve "chronic" traffic congestion.

Roadwork cost estimates and needed work projects north of Sarina are detailed in a booklet to be sent to Deputy Prime Minister and Transport Minister Mark Vaile, Local Government Minister Jim Lloyd, along with Labor opposition leaders.

Sick of the costly economic impact the highway causes, the alliance will take its fight to the ministers in Canberra.

Cr James emphasised the group was bipartisan, drawn together by the common cause, "a Third World highway".

Two candidates for the federal seat of Leichhardt, Liberal Charlie McKillop and Nationals Ian Crossland at the launch said their campaigns would focus on the highway shortfalls.



**All aboard:** Cairns Deputy Mayor Terry James (centre) was joined by two candidates for the federal seat of Leichhardt, Liberal Charlie McKillop and Nationals Ian Crossland at the launch of the Bruce Highway campaign.

## All set for inaugural Japan flight



**High hopes:** The 303-seat Jetstar A330-200 arrival in Cairns marks the start of a new era in Far Northern tourism.

Picture: NELLIE PRATT

THE arrival of Jetstar's A330-200 Airbus in Cairns signals the start of a new era in Far Northern tourism.

The 303-seat aircraft takes off for its inaugural flight to Japan at 12.25pm today, replacing Qantas services to the region's most important tourism market.

Mayor Kevin Byrne and Tourism Tropical North Queensland's Rob Giason and Stephen Olle will join Jetstar chief executive Alan Joyce and key Japanese wholesalers on the flight.

Jetstar has launched \$329 all-inclusive, one-way fares between Cairns and Nagoya to spark outbound interest in the route.

Services between Cairns and Nagoya would initially operate six times a week, followed by a service to Osaka from September 8.

The low-cost airline will also announce its Far North base will be ramped up to 120 staff after its Cairns to Singapore via Darwin service is transferred to an Australian operation in February.

"Jetstar is celebrating two firsts: our inaugural, branded international flights to Japan from Cairns and the first taste of our international long-haul product from tropical Australia," Mr Joyce said.

## Mum fined for beating child

A MOTHER who bashed her four-year-old daughter and lied about it to authorities has been convicted and fined in Cairns Magistrates' Court.

The girl received large bruises to her face and back after her 31-year-old mother attacked her at their Moorooloolooloo home in May.

Prosecutor Sen-Constable Gordon Noble yesterday told the court how Department of Child Safety officers were

alerted to the matter and interviewed the woman on May 28.

Sen-Constable Noble said the mother initially denied hitting her daughter and blamed the injuries on an attack from her two-year-old son.

But the department officers returned two days later to confront the woman after a doctor examined the girl and declared her injuries so severe they had to be inflicted by an adult.

The woman, who has a long

history of serious drug abuse, then confessed to attacking her daughter.

Magistrate Margaret Cassidy considered imposing a custodial sentence but decided against it on the advice of a Corrective Services employee.

"It was a very small child and it was a very serious assault," Magistrate Cassidy said.

She convicted the woman and fined her \$500.

## Aurukun pair remains in custody

AN Aurukun duo who allegedly threatened police with spears and burning wood in a riot last week will remain in custody until their next court appearance.

Aelen Henry Wolmby, 26, and Colin Bert Wolmby, 32, have been charged with going armed to cause fear in public, four counts of serious assault against police officers, wilful damage and causing a public nuisance.

All charges relate to a 100-strong riot which broke out at Aurukun between two warring families.

Eighteen people have been charged from incidents arising from the riot.

Yesterday Magistrate Margaret Cassidy remanded both men in custody and scheduled the matter for committal mention on September 17.

Neither of the accused has entered a plea.

## Stalker case date set

AN alleged stalker will spend six weeks behind bars until his next court appearance.

Ky Joseph Malayta, 28, has been ordered to appear in Cairns Magistrates' Court on October 12 for committal with cross-examination.

Police have alleged that Mr Malayta broke into his former girlfriend's house on multiple occasions and threatened to burn her in it.

Mr Malayta, who will defend the charges, was taken in to custody in June and refused bail.

On Tuesday, his lawyer David Ritchie sought for the matter be dealt with as quickly as possible but did not reapply for bail. Magistrate Margaret Cassidy set the matter down for October 12.

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