



Honorable Charan Jeeth Singh
Minister for Multi-Ethnic Affairs and Sugar Industry

Reply to Written Question 302/2025

Hon. Viam Pillay to ask the Minister for Multi-Ethnic Affairs and Sugar Industry–

“Can the Minister update Parliament with respect to the following –

- (a) sugar production for the last 5 years per tonne;
 - (b) export price per tonne for the last 5 years;
 - (c) amount topped up by Government to meet the payment to farmers per tonne for the last 5 years”
-

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for the question, and I am pleased to provide the following update.

1.0 Five-Year Sugar Production Trend (TCTS)

Mr. Speaker Sir, the Table1 below outlines the tonnes of cane crushed, tonnes of sugar produced, and the TCTS ratio for the last five seasons.

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Tonnes of Cane Crushed	1,729,170	1,417,185	1,638,967	1,565,564	1,331,922
Tons of Sugar Produced	151,591	133,209	155,812	139,628	126,522
Tonnes of Cane to Tons of Sugar (TCTS) Ratio	11.4	10.6	10.5	11.2	10.5
Pure Obtainable Cane Sugar (POCS)	9.75%	10.06%	10.28%	9.78%	10.27%
Cane Purity	79.2%	79.5%	80.0%	79.1%	78.3%
Burnt Cane	53%	54.4%	45.8%	49.2%	55.3%

Table 1 – shows the tons of Sugar produced along with other parameters

Summary of trend

- Crushing seasons 2021, 2022, and 2024 recorded significantly better TCTS ratios compared with 2020 and 2023, largely due to improvements in cane quality delivered to the mills.
- One of the key indicators of cane quality is POCS, which measures the percentage of recoverable sugar in cane. Ideally, POCS should exceed 12% for higher sugar recovery.
- However, the Mana variety, which accounts for nearly 90% of cane grown in Viti Levu, is a mid-to-late maturity variety. This means that sugar content is naturally lower at the beginning of the crushing season. While the variety begins to reach maturity around August, this period also coincides with widespread cane burning, leading to premature harvesting. Burnt cane deteriorates rapidly, resulting in longer cut-to-crush delays, reduced sugar purity, and higher losses during processing.
- Compounding this issue is the challenge of an ageing ratoon population, which generally produces cane with lower sucrose content and weaker yield potential. Factors such as declining soil fertility, poor farm husbandry practices, and inadequate fertilizer application also negatively impact cane quality and overall productivity.
- In seasons where cane quality improved, the mills experienced better processing performance, reduced losses, and higher operational efficiency. This trend was also supported by a lower proportion of burnt cane being delivered, which directly contributed to improved factory throughput and greater sugar recovery. Together, these factors explain the superior outcomes achieved in the 2021, 2022, and 2024 seasons.

2.0 Export Price per Tonne (Last Five Years)

Mr. Speaker Sir, the export price per tonne of sugar over the past five years is tabulated below:

Years	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Export Price per tonne of sugar sold (\$FJD)	\$727	\$737	\$1,068	\$1,485	\$1,088

Table 2 – Sugar Export Price

Summary of trend

- Export sugar prices are driven primarily by global supply and demand dynamics.
- Prices were stable in 2020–2021, increased sharply in 2022, and peaked in 2023 due to lower global sugar production, increased ethanol production and stronger international demand.
- Prices declined in 2024 as global supply conditions stabilised but still remained higher than 2020–2021 levels.
- The export price figures provided relate only to sugar exports and do not include regional or domestic sugar sales. Molasses revenue is also not included in the export price figures.
- All these revenue streams — export sugar, regional and domestic sales, and molasses — must be combined to calculate the final cane price paid to farmers.

3.0 Government Top-Up per Tonne to Farmers (Last Five Years)

Mr. Speaker Sir, Government has continued to ensure stable and predictable returns for cane farmers through top-up payments over the prevailing FSC share.

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
FSC Payment (70% Sales Proceed)	\$57.14	\$68.28	\$86.38	\$103.65	\$87.86
Govt Top-Up	\$24.92	\$13.65	\$5.00	\$1.43	\$13.27
Total Cane Payment	\$82.06	\$81.93	\$91.38	\$105.08	\$101.13

Table 3 - Government Top-Up

Summary of trend

- Government introduced guaranteed cane price of \$85 per ton from the 2018 season onward.

- However, under industry cost-sharing arrangements outlined in the Master Award, certain deductions are applied to cane proceeds, which meant that the net payments to farmers for the 2020 and 2021 crops fell below the guaranteed \$85 per tonne.
- The Coalition Government has since taken the decision that farmers must receive a minimum net payment of \$85 per tonne, ensuring that deductions no longer reduce the final amount paid below this threshold.
- Over the last three crop payments, farmers have received more than \$85 per tonne, driven by favourable global sugar prices and supported further by Government top-up contributions.

4.0 Conclusion

Mr. Speaker Sir, the last five seasons reflect both industry performance and Government's ongoing commitment to stabilising farmer livelihoods.

Mr. Speaker Sir, I assure this House that the Ministry, together with FSC and all stakeholders, remains committed to strengthening the resilience, productivity, and long-term sustainability of Fiji's sugar industry.

Thank you, Mister Speaker Sir.
