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NFP says Goyt's National Development Plan is

Lying about sugar

The National Federation Party says the credibility of Government's 5- year and 20-year National Development Plan (NDP) has been shattered by the use of unbelievable and misleading statistics and projections on sugarcane and sugar production.

The NFP said no Government in the world apart from the “worst dictatorships”, would manufacture statistics in the manner that is contained in the National Development Plan.

NFP Leader Professor Biman Prasad said TCTS (tonnes of cane required to manufacture one tonne of sugar), crop and sugar production statistics, both for the 2016 and 2017 harvesting and crushing seasons, as well as for the future, are “totally misleading and clearly aimed at fooling” not only the people of Fiji but delegations of participating nations to the recently concluded COP23 in Germany where the NDP was launched.

“This National Plan, particularly its section on sugar is a fraud on the nation. Those who should take responsibility for this statistically fraudulent action are the Fiji Sugar Corporation, the Ministry of Sugar and the Minister for Economy himself who has endorsed the Plan in his *Forward* about the unmatched levels of confidence of the people of Fiji in the direction Fiji has and will take in future”.

“Even statistics for the 2016 season are wrong. The Plan states in 2016, Fiji produced 1.6 million tonnes of cane and 164,000 tonnes of sugar. The correct statistics recorded by the industry and is 1.38 million tonnes of cane and 139,503 tonnes of sugar at a TCTS of 9.9”.

“If this is not deliberately misleading the rest of the world then what is?”

“Fraud is the best way to describe statistics and projections for 2017 to 2021. The 2017 cane production is stated to be 1.8 million tonnes and sugar production of 313,000 tonnes at an unbelievable TCTS of 5.75. No sugar producing country in the world has ever achieved or will record such a TCTS”.

“This year's actual production would be around 1.64 million tonnes of cane and around 166,000 tonnes of sugar at a TCTS of about 9.8”.

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“The fraudulent concoction of figures gets worse. For the 2018 cane production is forecasted at 2 million tonnes with 361,000 tonnes of sugar produced at a TCTS of 5.54. In 2019 cane production is predicted to be 2.2 million tonnes and sugar production is stated to be 402,000 tonnes at a TCTS of 5.47. For 2020 and 2021, cane production is listed to be 3 million tonnes and sugar production is forecasted as 438,000 at a TCTS of 6.84”, Professor Prasad said.

The NFP Leader said the Fiji sugar industry’s best TCTS ratio was twice 7.4 in 1977 and 1987, and 7.9 in 1975 and 1994 when the four mills produced 517,000 tonnes of sugar.

“This Government is clueless about how to revive the sugar industry. Bureau of Statistics data shows that in 2015 only 39,000 hectares of cane were harvested compared to 58,000 hectares in 2006. This is a massive decline of 19,000 hectares. This confirms that the industry has taken a nosedive under both the military regime and the Fiji First Government”.

Professor Prasad said the Plan also confirms that Fiji First will not build a new sugar mill in Rakiraki following its decision to close down the Penang Mill because cartage to Rarawai is projected for the next five years.

“Here again, the Plan is incorrect in stating Government provided cartage subsidy to Ra growers for 175,000 tonnes of cane when the total production in Rakiraki this year was only 118,000 tonnes”.

“It is absolutely shameful that the Prime Minister and Minister for Sugar launched a Plan full of false and unrealistic projections. As the Minister for Sugar, he should be concerned about the fraudulent statistics because the buck stops with him”.

“As it is, it is a cardinal sin to launch a plan without it being scrutinised, debated and endorsed by the representatives of the people in Parliament. This is the result of riding roughshod over the mandate the people gave to this Government”, Professor Prasad said.



**Professor Biman Prasad
Leader**