

# LALIT

153 Main Road, GRNW, Port Louis.

Dear Member of the National Assembly,

We write with 10 urgent demands that we request you to highlight in your speech on the Budget next month. The demands all concern “the Land Question”. We call for a total HALT to all new *Gated Communities*, IRS, PDS, RES, and those Smart City projects that are real estate speculation in disguise. This type of so-called development is in fact dangerous. It is not production at all. It is the opposite of production: *destruction*. It means the ruination of the land, the spoilation of the very capital from which production can be relaunched, from which jobs of all imaginable kinds can be created, housing ensured, and food security secured. We oppose this new colonization. Government must stop just tail-ending the sugar and real estate bosses, who panic with the end of protected colonial markets, especially for sugar. We oppose being reduced to unemployment and domestic service just because the sugar estates are in debt. We propose, instead of selling off arable land, that Government instead promotes real *production* (See enclosed the visual representations of what we do want and what we don’t want).

The following 10 demands came from 30 meetings LALIT held in neighbourhoods over a year.

## **1. Revoke all laws that encourage villas on agricultural land**

This involves removing all the concessions and enticements for:

- land conversion
- agricultural land parcellization
- selling of agricultural land to foreign millionaires
- tax reductions. The sugar bosses and their millionaire clients no longer pay 15% VAT for construction materials; every worker in the country pays this tax. When we sell family land, we pay 11% registration duty. Government allows capitalists to avoid this duty. All these tax concessions must immediately be abolished. Permits for land conversion must be cut completely.

## **2. Government must get the land used for “Agricultural Villages” not for “gated communities”!**

Government must create “agricultural-industrial villages and towns” not “smart cities”. Agricultural villages with industries that grow from them is what is really smart. It addresses food security, massive under-employment, and over-crowded “lakaz zeritye” – all at once. Instead of building, say, 100 NHDC houses any old where, Government can take 100 arpents of sugar cane land, and build houses around it, while in the centre land is dedicated to farming and animal rearing. The late Prof. George Chan was a world leader in this kind of sustainable production. The Sugar Estates, remember, still owe 700 arpents to Government by way of the 2008 agreement, according to the March 2017 Audit Report. This is in addition to another 14,000 arpents of Government agricultural land. In Rodrigues, similar villages can be encouraged on State Land.

## **3. Interline cropping on ALL cane land within 7 years**

Sugar estates must be forced, by tax laws, to organize their land so as to enable inter-line cropping in all their land. We do not say pull out all the cane. We propose a gradual diversification, year after year, for 7 years through interline cropping. In the past, there was interline cropping. It was only in newly planted cane, i.e. one-seventh of the land. The other 6/7ths, where there is “repus”, there was no interline cropping; the rows of cane were planted too close. But if the fields are correctly planned as they are now replanted every 7 years, they can gradually all be arranged so as to allow interline cropping with potatoes, beans, peanuts and so on. The estates will have to rethink their irrigation to plant two rows of cane close together then leave a space for interline, then two close together again. This has been researched. Within seven years we can be assured of massive agricultural diversification on all the estate land.

## **4. Before the first harvest, factories must already be set up to transform produce**

Government must take the initiative so that, before the first harvest, factories are already set up for the preservation and transformation of the produce – all over the country, including Rodrigues. These factories include canning, industrial ovens for drying pulses, freezing and freeze-drying machinery, infrastructure for “sun-drying”, factories for cooking oil (peanut and sunflower can be planted for this). Planters will get paid a price guaranteed by the Marketing Board, which will supply the factories with produce.

## **5. Shift subsidies from cane to food**

At present the sugar and cane industry only exists because the State subsidises it. The State has always subsidised cane massively. And right now it is a loss-making industry. The Government and the *Sugar Insurance Fund Board* pour subsidies into a “lame duck” industry. And there is, meanwhile, no subsidy on food production – even though it creates jobs, while cane destroys jobs. All the subsidies that for 200 years

have fattened up the cane and sugar industry must be shifted to food production, because it creates jobs, assures food security, and brings in foreign exchange.

a) MSIRI must shift its research from cane and milling to food production research.

b) *Sugar Industry Mechanical Pool* must shift from machinery for cane planters to machinery for food planters and animal husbandry.

c) *Sugar Insurance Fund Board* must shift insurance schemes away from cane and towards food. And so on for a dozen parastatals.

The State even took huge delegations to Brussels so heavy was its subsidy on cane. Nothing like this has ever been done for food production.

#### **6. Fishing and Sea Food Preservation and Transformation industry**

While Mauritius is small in terms of land, we have the 18th biggest sea area in the world: 2.3 million square kilometers. And we have no fishing industry! In the Freeport, fish comes from Korean, Spanish, French ships. We need canning factories, and value-added products like vinday, rogay, kari, etc in jars.

#### **7. Job creation**

All our proposals put emphasis on jobs for existing people – in the fields, in factories, at universities, in transport and marketing. Jobs for all decreases a host of social problems: drugs, break ins, hold-ups, insecure forms of prostitution.

#### **8. We want food security**

We live in times of all the dangers of armed conflict. LALIT's emphasis on food security is particularly relevant when food supplies may be blocked by war, or decreased by climate change.

#### **9. Foreign Exchange to avoid bowing down to the FMI**

The balance of payments, the most important purely economic indicator, will improve.

#### **10. Housing**

The LALIT campaign aims to stop selling off good land to millionaires from abroad, and to prevent land speculation going berserk, while bringing Government to build houses and ensure a good environment for living for everyone in the country.

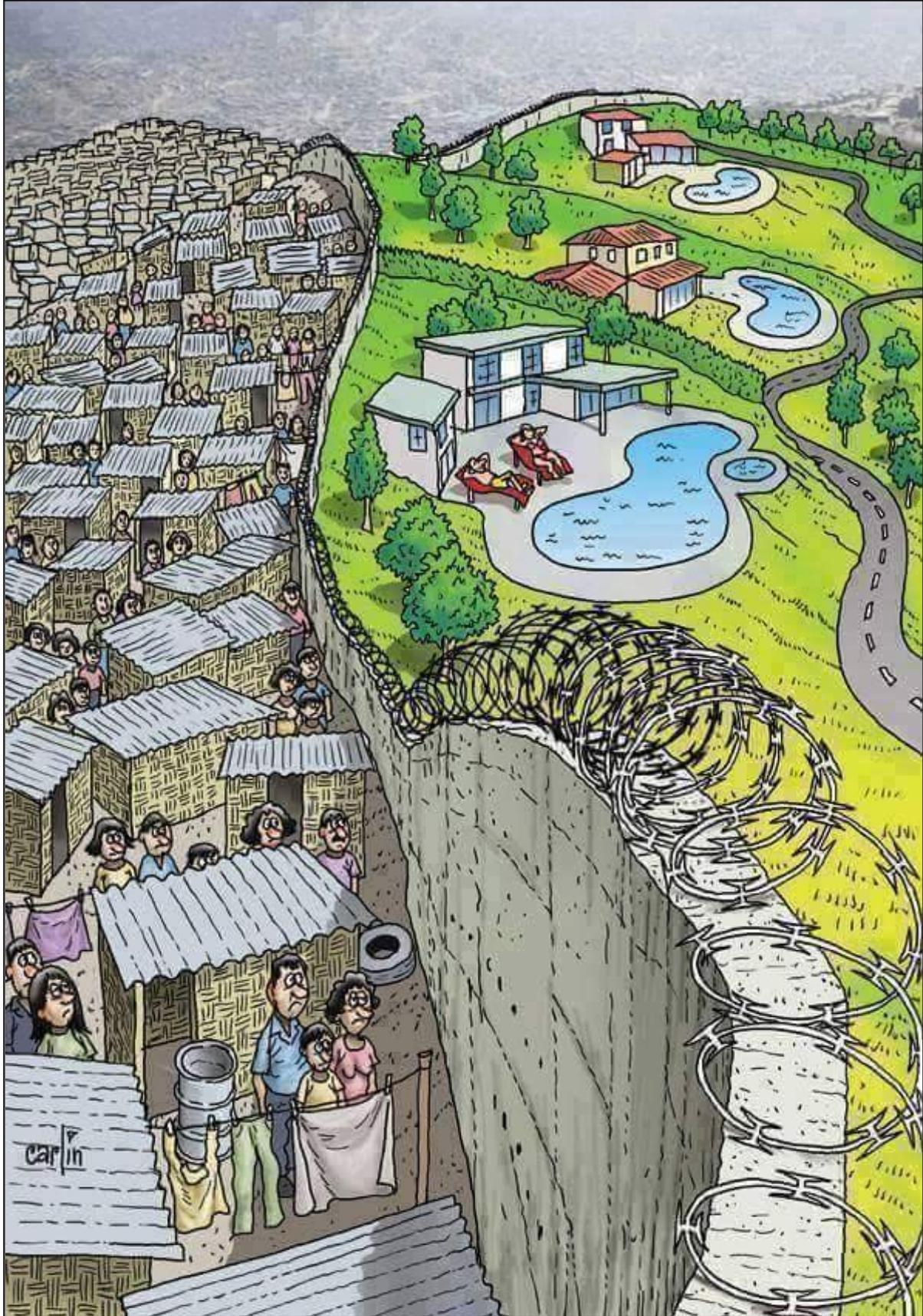
#### **Conclusion**

We want more than your agreement. We want you to take a stand in the National Assembly during the debate on the Budget.

Yours sincerely,

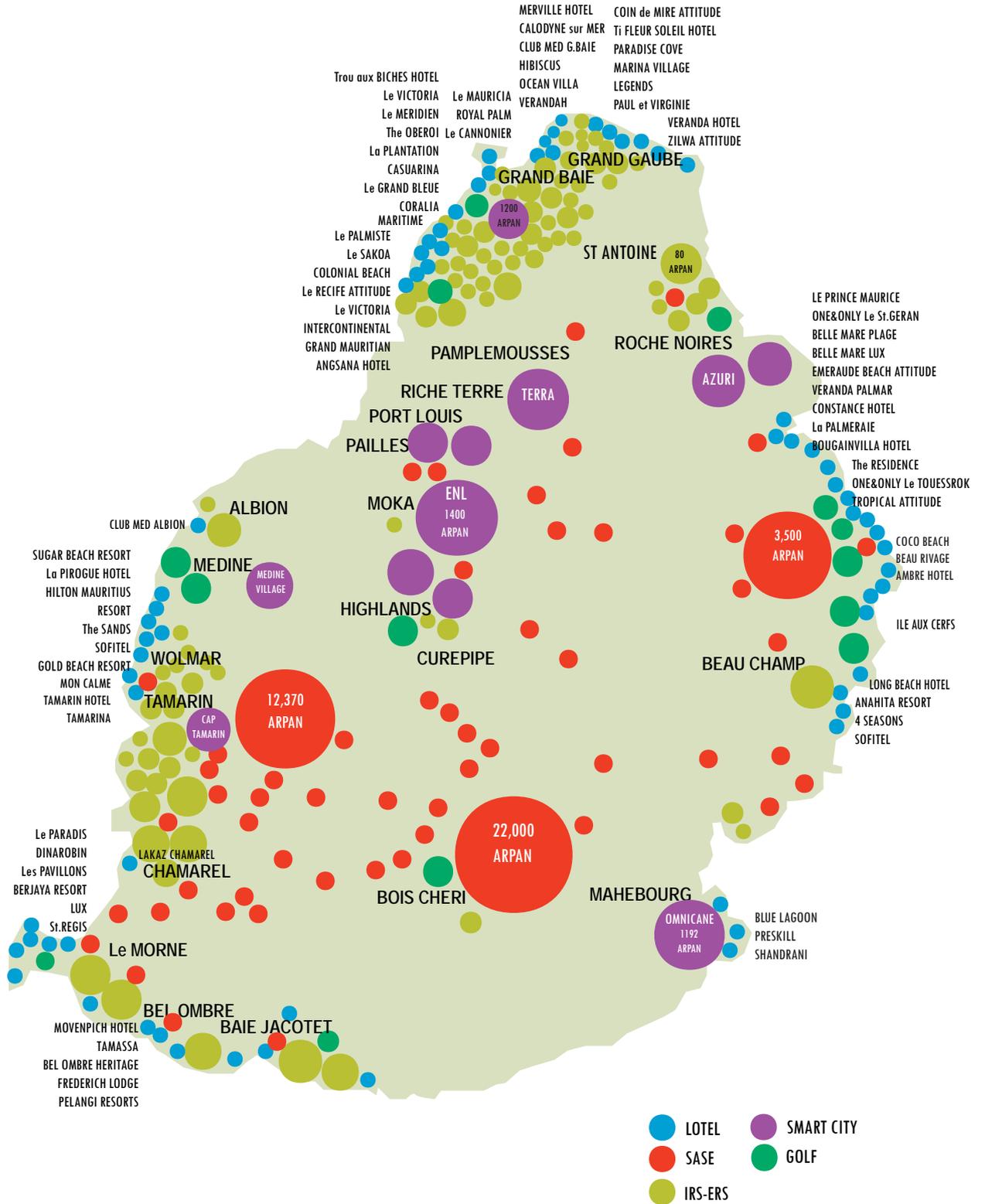
Rada Kistnasamy  
LALIT, 24 May 2017.

# SEKI NU PA'LE



AGOS TRAVAYER MORIS, ADRWAT MILYONER DAN VILA: Ki kalite devlopman?

# MAPPING KUMA PE RE-KOLONIZ LATER MORIS



# ELEMAN PU LAVIL INTEGRE VILAZ INTEGRE

## LOZMAN + PRODIKSYON

agrikiltir, lelvaz, lapes, lizinn,  
transportasyon,  
resers, antretyin.

### SEKIRITE ALIMANTER

Kuma Prof Georges Chan fer:  
integre manze/lenerzi/dese.



Travay dan karo, lizinn, lelvaz, letri, labusri, transportasyon, marketing



ANPLWA DAN  
ANTRELIYN & PLENTER

## ANPLWA DAN RESERS, LINDISTRI, TRANSPOR



Zimnaz, libreri,  
vilej horl, sinema,  
ledikasyon



Verze fri Foraz



## ANPLWA DAN MEYNTENENNS ek KONSTRIKSYON



Lozman pu fami ki pe res dan sere  
dan lakaz zeritye.

## ANPLWA DAN MARKETING LOKAL E MONDYAL

## ANPLWA DAN LAPES ANDEOR PU VILAZ LAKOT



Repeple lagon



Parkur siklis tu-terin

Parkur kros, jogging.



Bazar lokal