

Breathing new life into the Grand Harbour region

100 projects to be ready by 2020, for better economic growth - Sant

Kurt Farrugia

While the Nationalist Party was inaugurating the upgrading of the Cirkewwa/Mgarr terminals, the quintessence of GonziPN's inefficiency, Labour party top officials toured the area of the Grand Harbour from one pole to the other explaining its vision for developing the whole area within strict timeframes and targets.



During a tour for journalists to explain Labour's plan for the development of the Grand Harbour region, Alfred Sant said that the Labour party is putting forward 100 projects for the towns and cities around the harbour area which will be ready by the year 2020. This will be done through a one-stop-shop authority which will take care of seeing that the projects are ready on time and on budget and in a transparent manner.

These plans will spearhead Labour's promise to increase Malta's economic growth to levels 4 to 6 per cent in real terms, creating more and better jobs for all.

Charles Buhagiar, Labour's spokesperson on infrastructure, explained how Labour is planning to relocate all the industrial areas of the Grand Harbour region to one area. At the same time a Labour government will be building three new promenades, from Valletta to Floriana to Marsa, another one from Floriana to Pietà, Msida, Ta' Xbiex, Gzira and Sliema and another one from Kalkara, to Vittoriosa, Cospicua and Senglea.

The site of the power station will be converted into a garden village and a residential complex with gardens. The Rinella bay will be embellished and Fort Ricasoli will be converted into film facilities.

Perit Buhagiar also said that with the closure of the last hotel in the south of Malta in Marsascula, Labour will endeavor to try and convert the Bighi complex in Kalkara to a five star facility tourist complex.

The Plan for the Development of the Grand Harbour Region also foresees that Dock no. 1, another project which has been abandoned by the PN administration, will be converted into another esplanade. Labour will be building a cruise liner terminal in Senglea.

The revitalising of the Grand Harbour region by the year 2020 proposes, amongst the other projects, a plan to introduce sea transport linking the 12 localities bordering the two main harbours which are home to a population of 73,000 persons.

The plan is aimed at turning the Grand Harbour and Marsamxett Harbour region into buzzing centres of entertainment, commercial, industrial and vibrant residential zones. The plan will fast-track the recovery of the region and boost the economic activity in the area by regenerating the sites across the area.

One of the biggest innovations, which will improve the quality of life of people from Sliema, to Gzira, to Ta' Xbiex, across to Valletta, Marsa and Cottonera, is the sea public transport project.

Labour's plan proposes a sea transport service which links the Grand Harbour and Marsamxett by digging deeper in the ditch which goes through Valletta and passes the sea through it. The project was initiated by the Knights of Malta hundreds of years ago, but was abandoned through the years. Special boats will be transporting commuters to ferry stages. On such stage will be under the Valletta City Gate where vertical communication systems such as lifts will be installed for the people to be lifted to the centre of Valletta right from the stage. The plan also proposes new parking facilities in the Floriana/Marsa area, San Giljan/Pembroke area, Cospicua and Fgura.
