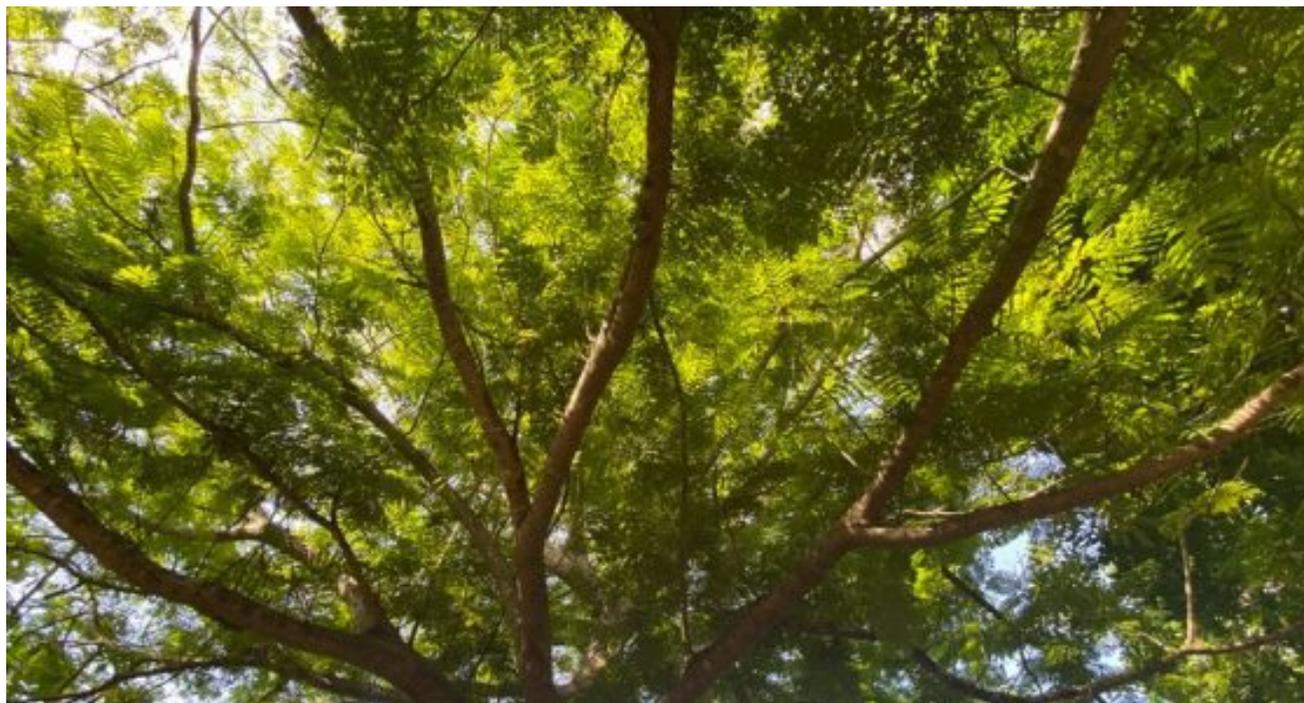


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# Auroville Bulletin 22

## **Urgent Actions, Takeover of Working Groups by AVFO, Visa Updates and the Register of Residents**

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*A Summary of Events Happening in Auroville Today*

8th June, 2022

## **Hot topics**

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## URGENT need to use alternative email address

If you have an @auroville.org.in email address, this means that **you will not be able to receive important communications** from the genuine Auroville Working Groups, the massbulletin, and from many other Auroville services. For instance, the Working Committee of the Residents' Assembly cannot contact many of the Auroville residents via its new email ID ([workingcom@auroville.services](mailto:workingcom@auroville.services))

There is a concerted effort by the Auroville Foundation Office (AVFO) to take control of all communications within Auroville. AVFO now has control over the auroville.org.in email accounts, Auronet and the Auroville massbulletin service. Since Saturday 4th June, the AVFO admins of the auroville.org.in email accounts have blocked @auroville.services email IDs from reaching accounts registered with @auroville.org.in, and vice-versa.

If you wish to continue to receive uncensored communication from the WCom and this Auroville Bulletin, it is imperative that you urgently change to an alternative email address such as Gmail or Protonmail. For Protonmail, you can read [this tutorial](#) on how to set up a Protonmail account. If you need assistance in creating a new Gmail account, you can watch a short explanatory video by clicking on the image below.



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### **Important Action Needed:**

In order to be sure to continue receiving the Auroville Bulletin and massbulletins (including communication from the WCom of the Residents' Assembly) there are TWO places that you must update your alternative email address.

1. To continue receiving massbulletins including communication from the WCom of the Resident's Assembly, please update your email address by completing [this form](#).
2. To continue receiving this Auroville Bulletin, please update the Evolving Galaxy bulletin team with your new email address by emailing [evolvinggalaxy@gmail.com](mailto:evolvinggalaxy@gmail.com). There is no need if you are already receiving the bulletin on your non-Auroville email address.

### **Takeover of all working groups by the AVFO is in process**

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Assembly and who answers only to the Foundation Office, two more Working Groups are also being set up by the AVFO without following due process or input from the Residents' Assembly. On 3rd June, the residents of Auroville were [informed](#) through Auronet that both the FAMC and the ATDC were 'reconstituted' by the Auroville Foundation Office. This information was also published [in the media](#). In complete disregard of Auroville processes, new members were appointed directly by the Governing Board of the Auroville Foundation, allegedly on the recommendations of the Secretary. The communication on the matter was left unsigned and did not give the names of the newly appointed 'members'.

Important information regarding the FAMC: In 1997 when the Auroville Foundation Rules were published, an error was found in referring to the FAMC as 'constituted by the Governing Board', while in the rest of the document it was referred to as 'constituted by the Residents Assembly'. The Secretary of the Auroville Foundation at the time, Mr. N. Bala Baskar, wrote to the Ministry of Human Resource Development with the request to rectify the error however change was never made since for the past 25 years, all successive Governing Boards of the Auroville Foundation, including the former Governing Board, have always recognized the FAMC as a committee of the RA.

For a detailed account of the events leading up to this take over and a summary of the legalities regarding the FAMC & the ATDC and their processes, please [see here](#).

## On the Register of Residents (RoR)

On Wednesday 1st June, the RAS held an information meeting regarding the recent request by the AVFO for all Aurovilians to fill in the RoR. Numerous [questions](#) were asked. The RAS also shared [two emails](#) they sent to the AVFO.

On Friday 3rd June, the WCom further clarified in [an email](#) that "there is no legal basis for the Secretary of the Auroville Foundation to 'strike off' names from the Register of Residents for not completing their recent requests for information" and that they would "stand up against any improper practice or mistreatment of residents resulting from them filling, or not filling the requested form".

As the Master List is updated regularly by the Residents Services, many concerned residents do not recognise the need to fill in the new registration form as requested by the Secretary of the AVFO. In addition, this new form contains questions that have not been approved or gazetted for use. Auroville residents who prefer to only submit forms previously approved and gazetted can use these here: '[Form B](#)' and [Form I](#)'. If you wish, you may also sign an [open letter](#) to the Office of the Secretary requesting only forms approved by RA, GB, and IAC be used for updating the RoR. Even if you are planning on completing the form, or you have completed it already, it could still

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An [information](#) update published by the ex-WCom & their interim members (Anu, Arun, Joseba, Partha, Selvaraj, Srimoyi, Tine) states that the deadline for updating one's RoR information has shifted from 10th of June to the end of July.

## Visa updates - communication from the WCom

On June 7th, the WCom shared an [email](#) that they sent to the Secretary regarding her misleading statements about the number of pending or shortened visas, both in her recent [YouTube video](#) and in the [meeting](#) with the LtGov of Pondicherry. These misleading statements were also [repeated](#) by the ex-WCom 4 and their interim members.

In their email, the WCom of the Residents' Assembly detailed the true number of Aurovilians experiencing visa related problems since December 2021 due to delays on the part of the AVFO, including the fact that 33 Aurovilians are currently stuck outside of India and unable to return to their home in Auroville, or the fact that 40 long-term residents of Auroville "have been arbitrarily given reduced recommendations". Since December 2021, only about half of the 281 visa requests made to the Secretary have had their Letters of Recommendation duly issued, often after considerable delays.

## Community Gathering on Monday 13th June

A community gathering has been organised by a group of Tamil Aurovilians, to be held **at the Unity Pavilion on Monday 13th June 4-6pm**. Please see [here](#) for the poster in English, and [here](#) in Tamil. Plans are for the meeting to be held both in English and in Tamil. The following message has accompanied the flyers on various Whatsapp/Telegram groups:

"Dear friends, A group of Tamil Aurovilians have come together in a small meeting and felt that there is a need for us to meet with the wider community to talk for ourselves and clarify our stand in the current situation. And also discuss the strength and importance of the RA and all our collective participation to keep up our governance stronger. We are looking forward to see all the community members in this gathering. Please share the invite below and spread the word to your friends."

## RRO recent visits to Aurovilians

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officers. It is unclear why some foreign Aurovilians are still receiving such visits, as the AVFO have not offered any proof of Aurovilians committing illegal acts, despite the Secretary stating on numerous occasions that illegal acts have taken place. In case you are visited by RRO officers, please remember that these are public servants diligently doing their work, often with care and respect. RRO visits so far have always been reported as being cordial. If you receive the visit of RRO officers, please send an account of this to [workingcom@auroville.services](mailto:workingcom@auroville.services) as well as to [evolvinggalaxy@gmail.com](mailto:evolvinggalaxy@gmail.com)

## Other Updates and Information

### Land Board report of May 2022

In its informative [report](#) to the Governing Board and International Advisory Council, the Land Board points out the fact that collaboration with the Secretary, as the Estate Officer, has not been fruitful in many cases - such as for two purchases which were not executed because “the Auroville Foundation offices hadn’t provided the required authorization letter despite many requests thus the parties sold elsewhere”. This reported lack of collaboration from the Office of the Secretary is also said to greatly undermine the Land Board’s efforts to fight against encroachments and damage to Auroville Foundation property.

The report also provide important figures, such as the fact that the Master Plan area includes “368.4 acres of village settlements and 342 acres [of] Temple and/or Poramboke lands”, or that within the Master Plan the Auroville Foundations owns “82% of the city area” and “32% of the Green belt”.

### ATDC Halts all Construction

Quoting the NGT as a reason, the ATDC has called for a complete halt of all construction within Auroville, including the construction of established sites such as Vibrance (almost at completion after 3 years of building). As there was a general understanding within Auroville that the NGT Stay Order applied only to new construction projects, and that construction projects that are ongoing could be completed, further clarification is needed from the ATDC on their reasonings.

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## **Ex-WCom proposal to rotate farm stewardship every three years**

Recently the meeting minutes from the ex-WCom members working for the AVFO and their 'resource persons' (Arun, Anu, Joseba, Partha, Selveraj, Srimoyi, Tine) were widely leaked. They contained a number of causes for concern, including the plan to "rotate the stewards of 27 farms, 5 acres max for 3 years". How this would be possible in practice is unclear, as each farm has its own unique way of operating and the skills needed to manage each farm can vary and take many years to acquire. It is also unclear why this group feels it is necessary to do this and what the supposed benefits would be.

## **LtGov of Pondicherry addresses Tamil Aurovilians**

On 28th May, Lt Governor of Pondicherry Tamilisai Soundararajan, who is also a member of the Auroville Governing Board, addressed a meeting at Bharat Nivas. The meeting was promoted as being primarily for Tamil Aurovilians, to update them on recent events and to increase their engagement in community matters. However, it appears that very little mention was made regarding the recent events and there was no mention of the recent actions by the AVFO in taking over Auroville communication systems and the internal Working Groups. Instead it was a repetition of previous rhetoric such as '3000 people occupying 3000 acres of land'. Attendance was low and some who did attend shared that they felt part of a Public Relations stunt as the event was widely reported in the media and on YouTube. For a summary of the event please see [here](#).

## **On the implementation of Conflict Resolution Policy**

The Auroville Council has explained on [Auronet](#) how the Auroville Conflict Resolution Policy is being implemented and who is working on it. They have also circulated a call for additional Resources Persons who could help with specific tasks on the matter.

## **Collective Kinhin every two weeks**

Aloka is offering a guided Kinhin (walking meditation) around the lotus pond of the Matrimandir every other Sunday from 5-6pm. The next one is scheduled for Sunday 19th June at 5pm. It is a welcome offering of silent togetherness during these challenging times. All are welcome to attend.

## Action needed

- **Urgent - update your email address** : In order to keep receiving massbulletins & to ensure you can still receive this Evolving Galaxy Bulletin in the future, please send your non auroville.org.in email address to [evolvinggalaxy@gmail.com](mailto:evolvinggalaxy@gmail.com)
- Complete [this form](#) to receive a new massbulletin administered by Sysop managers.
- **Attend the Collective Gathering on Monday 13th** at Unity Pavilion, from 4 to 6 pm.
- **Call for financial support:** If you would like to contribute towards legal and delegation fees please email [evolvinggalaxy@gmail.com](mailto:evolvinggalaxy@gmail.com).

## Media & Other Links

- [In conversation with Francois Gautier on Conflict in Auroville: The Tyranny of Babudom](#) (12 minutes, PGurus Podcast).
- An [inspiring story](#) of reforestation in Tamil Nadu

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current crisis situation in Auroville in order to find a way forward together.

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We stand for:

- Respecting our community processes for decision-making
- A collaborative approach in developing Auroville using integrated methods such as the Dreamweaving initiative
- Transparency and fairness in the organisation of Auroville
- Creating unity with our diverse voices

Please note that the website <https://standforaurovilleunity.com/> contains a great deal of information and a detailed timeline.

With regard to future actions, those who have particular skills such as writing, social media, film editing etc. are welcome to write to [evolvinggalaxy@gmail.com](mailto:evolvinggalaxy@gmail.com).

**Please also share your thoughts and suggestions** by replying to this email.

We hope this has been helpful. Let's keep working to find a way to bring us closer together to the beautiful dream of human unity in Auroville. We can do it ... together.

For those who have had previous technical problems receiving the Bulletin, the list of all previous Bulletin issues is accessible here: <https://linktr.ee/evolvinggalaxy>

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