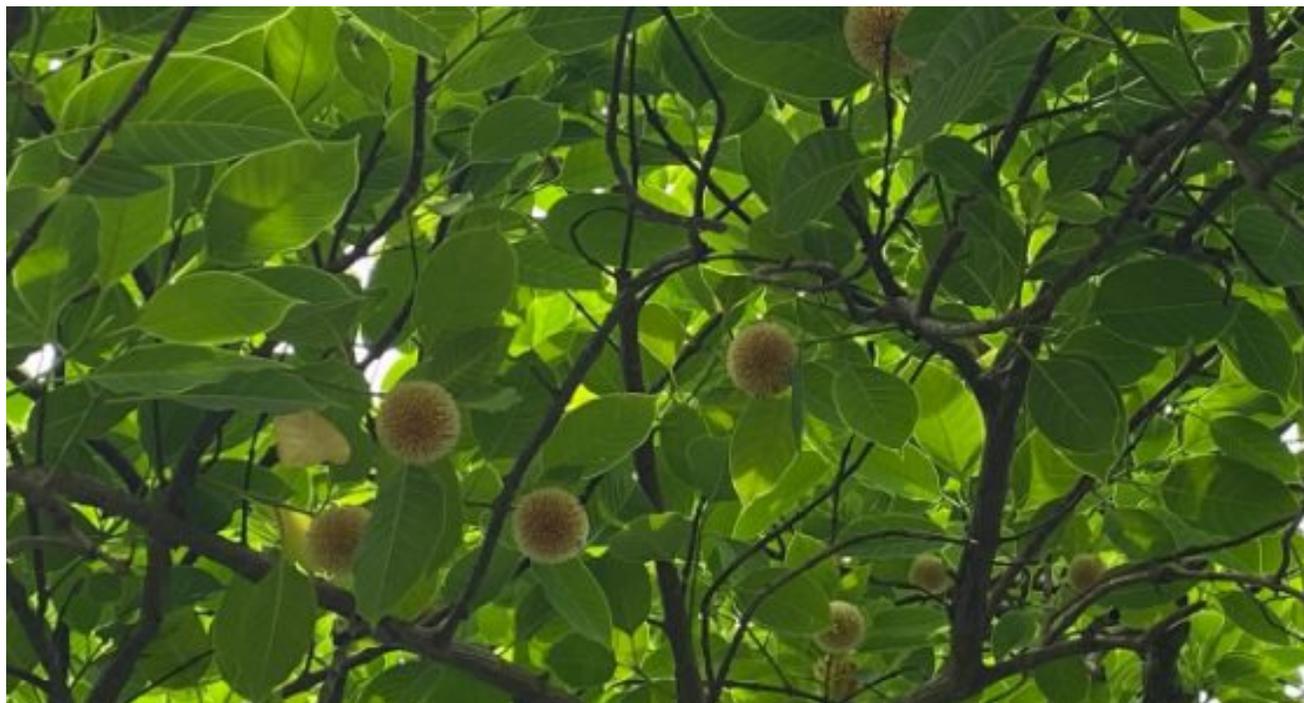


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Auroville Bulletin 28

Court Cases Update, AVC room presence & Community Potluck a success

A Summary of Events Happening in Auroville Today

20th July 2022

Note: There are important actions to take at the end of each Bulletin, if you are reading on your phone you may need to click 'see more' to view the entire bulletin.

Please find a glossary of acronyms and terms used in this bulletin [here](#).

Hot topics

Update on three court cases heard on Monday 18th July

On Monday 18th July, the three court cases relating to the Working Committee (Wcom), the ATDC and Outreach media (ORM) resumed at the Madras High Court. For the Residents' Assembly Sauro, Hemant L, Carla, Krishna D and Sandeep were present in court. For the Secretary of the AVFoundation, Joel, Sindhuja, the Secretary, Dev Mohanty were present in court.

Legal representation:

The lawyer for Wcom of the RA: Suchins office, engaging senior lawyer Sriram Panchu.

The lawyer for ATDC and ORM: Hredai and Madhunika, from Swaroops office.

The lawyer appearing for the AVFoundation: Vaibhav, engaging senior lawyer Vijay Narayan

The lawyer appearing for Respondents 2-5 (R2-5: Anu, Arun, Partha and Srimoyi): Nityaesh (the son-in-Law of Dr Jayanti Ravi, the Secretary of the AV Foundation)

Just prior to the commencement of the hearing, the newly gazetted Standing Orders on the constitution of the FAMC and GB and the Office Order on appointing ATDC were served to the petitioners of the RA.

Court Proceedings:

WCom case:

Arguments began with the lawyer for the Working Committee (WCom) bringing up the issue of the Register of Residents (RoR) again, and showing that the Masterlist and the RoR are completely updated and that the Secretary of the AVF has had complete access to it for several years. He argued that the entire exercise of updating and maintaining the RoR is completely the job of the Secretary of the AVFoundation and that this whole topic was not a previous issue and has therefore been brought up by the current Secretary (Dr Jayanti Ravi) solely in order to attempt to overpower the

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The lawyer for the WCom of the RA reintroduced the Act, the purpose of the Act and brought up the various setups of the Foundation, highlighting the equal and different powers of the Residents' Assembly (RA) and the Governing Board (GB) in the Act. He pointed out the importance of the Residents' Assembly, and the need for the residents' autonomy, and that the Act was created solely for the autonomy of the residents and the Residents' Assembly in order for them to pursue the Mother's Charter.

The lawyer for the AVFoundation argued against the WCom petition, arguing that even though the AV Foundation is governed by three authorities, the three authorities are not equal and the GB has all the powers, and that the others are subsidiary authorities. He also stated that since the GB has powers to give directions as well as general supervision over the AV Foundation, the GB has given such orders to the RA through the recent office order. He stated therefore that the Secretary and Seetharaman were only doing the job required by the GB.

The lawyer representing the respondents for the WCom case (Anu, Arun, Partha and Srimoyi) argued that all the respondents had done was in sync with the RA's regulations. He brought up the [PWG](#) document to show how it allows the WCom to remove the rest of the members and tried to show that what respondents did was correct.

The lawyer for AVFoundation also argued that the project is created in line with the Mother's principles, and those who joined Auroville need to agree with the views of the Mother. He argued that the Mother wanted 50,000 Auroville residents and that currently 3000 acres of land are being hoarded by 2600 residents.

The lawyer for the WCom of the RA began his final arguments by comparing the 59th Minutes of Meetings of GB (MoM) with that of Seetharaman's letter to show that there is no similarity between the two and that the AV Foundation has misunderstood the GB and has arbitrarily acted. He argued that the proceedings of the RA are of its authority alone and that no disappointed members of the WCom that were thrown out (Anu, Arun, Partha, Srimoyi), nor the Secretary of the AVFoundation can overpower it, instead, they are bound by its authority, and that impugned order needs to be quashed and the WCom and the RA re-established.

Outreach Media case:

The lawyer representing the AV petitioners for the Outreach Media (ORM) case began his arguments showing that the standing order for Outreach Media was created by the GB in 2015 disallowing the the Secretary of the AV Foundation from issuing any more office orders appointing other executives or trustees in Auroville and that the recent Office Order removing executives is in absolute contravention to the law. He also argued that allegations of bias of the former ORM team are not founded

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The lawyer for the AVFoundation argued against the Outreachmedia (ORM) issue, stating that the petitioner had no right to file the case as the aggrieved persons (the previous executives of ORM) did not file any case. Therefore he assumed that the previous executives were obviously not aggrieved by the recent Office Order appointing new executives. He further argued that Standing Order 10 revised in 2015 was created for the purpose of the various units but not for ORM.

The lawyer representing the AV petitioners for the ORM case stated that ORM, an organisation created by the residents of Auroville, for the residents of Auroville cannot be taken away by the Secretary, especially in light of the fact that the GB has disallowed the Secretary from making any more appointments to executives or trustees. He argued that all residents are affected by this order, and that the AVFoundation is unnecessarily diverting the issue, knowing that they have not followed Standing Order 10 (revised).

ATDC case:

The lawyer representing the AV petitioners for the ATDC case began arguments by explaining the details of the Standing Order from 2011 and how the RA has a very clear and important role to make the appointments and nominations for the Working Groups including the ATDC. He showed how the recent office order is absolutely in contravention to the standing order of 2011. He argued that the duration is also in complete contravention to the RA and its Working Committee and asked that the Office Order 491 be quashed and that the AVFoundation await the directions and nominations filed by the RA. The lawyer for the ATDC also brought up the fact that Srinivasamurty, the 'undersecretary' has no authority to be signing office orders when the Secretary is present and that the undersecretary has passed his own jurisdiction by doing so.

The lawyer for the AVFoundation countered the two cases and argued that the ATDC case is infructuous, as there is a new Standing Order made in 2019 and another [new one](#) made in 2022, as well as a new Office Order based on the Standing Order. He also stated that when the undersecretary signs, it is with the authority and permission of the Secretary of the AVFoundation. He also argued that the ATDC is constituted by the GB and that the GB has been authorised to develop the city as planned by the RA, and that in order to do so, they constituted an ATDC, and that the RA, and the petitioners had no say in this.

The lawyer for the AV petitioners for the ATDC case made his final arguments by efficiently pointing out that the [new Standing Order](#) 2022 that was referenced, was only gazetted on the 15th July 2022, which was literally only 3 days ago, meaning that the Office Order created on 1st July 2022 was created on a Standing Order that hadn't yet come into the force of the law.

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Written arguments for both sides will be submitted on Wednesday 20th July and final judgements can be expected in the following days. The interim stay order to halt demolition of property on the proposed Crown Road stays in effect until Judgment is passed.

Other Updates and Information

TDC of the RA replied to the allegations made by Dr. G Seetharaman

On 12th July an [announcement](#) from Dr G Seetharaman of the AVFO's 'ATDC' accused six Auroville residents of 'obstructing government works' and threatened legal action. As reported in Bulletin 27, the residents approached the workers and asked for a valid work order since the JCB arrived unannounced to work on the Youth Centre road. No work order was produced. The TDC of the RA [replied](#) the following day on 13th July to clarify the situation. The TDC of the RA also reiterated to Dr G. Seetharaman that the stretch of land in question is 'currently under litigation and it would ease the tension in the community if you would be patient enough for this to be first settled and plans can be drawn up by the right authority assigned to do this task' in order to 'accelerate the physical manifestation of the City.'

Censorship concerns caused by Auronet and auroville.org admins

On July 11th the AV Council shared a [joint letter](#) on Auronet sent by the AV Council, the WCom of the RA and the FAMC of the RA to the Land Board, requesting the Land Board to ignore the Office Order "issued by Mr. G. Seetharaman on June 28th removing from the Land Board Renu and Padmanabhan, and appointing Ms. C. Meenakshi and Mr. T.K. Ponambalam". The letter affirmed that the bona fide members had been selected by the RA approved processes. A few hours later the post was [deleted](#) by the still unknown Auronet administrators, demonstrating their continued attempt to control the flow of information to the community.

In a further censorship concern, since last week residents have noted that it is [no longer possible](#) to share any documents from an auroville.org.in google drive to personal google drives outside of that domain. Additionally, some users have noticed

The AVFO's "FAMC" also posted an [update](#) on Auronet. Since the admins of the auroville.org.in domain have blocked the auroville.services domain which is used by the working groups of the RA (Wcom, FAMC & TDC), a number of other working groups such as the Entry Group, Land Board and Housing Group, have set up their own auroville.services email addresses in order to be able to communicate freely. The AVFO's "FAMC" warned that there were 'legal ramifications' for these actions, although they did not clarify what they were.

JCBs present in Bliss, Darkali and Youth Center areas

Over the last week, "[work](#)" on the proposed Crown area including the destruction and removal of trees is being carried out by the AVFO's "ATDC". There is no transparency on their plans and no detailed development plans (DDPs) have been created or shared with the community so far. The TDC of the RA recently sent a [letter](#) regarding this fact.

Community Potluck



On 16th July at 6pm approximately 1000 Auroville residents gathered at the Certitude sportsground for a community potluck aimed at fostering a sense of togetherness

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Auroville symbol made of flowers. The community members gathered in the formation of the Auroville symbol for chanting and some moments of silence before creating a huge hand held circle filling the far edges of the sports field. There was an abundance of delicious food, a projection of inspiring film clips about Auroville and the Dreamweaving process and an overall spirit of collective joy. Despite the occasional rain, the community stayed and enjoyed the gathering until closing at 9pm. For some photos of the event see [here](#).

Continuous presence maintained in Town Hall for 18 days

Since 2nd July, Aurovilians have kept a continuous presence in the Auroville Council room in the Town Hall building, following an [email](#), sent on 1st July by Lieve Claes of AVFO's appointed ACUR (Town Hall) management, demanding that the AV Council vacate their meeting room and desks with less than 24 hours notice. There has been a 24 hour presence and despite police threats, no electricity for the first two days and lack of bathroom access, a small number of people have volunteered to ensure that AV Council room remains usable for RA approved working groups.

The presence in the AV Council meeting room has so far been held by a small number of committed Aurovilians. As the final judgement for the court cases will only come towards the end of the week at the earliest , the action to protect the AV Council room will be necessary for a longer period. More people are needed to step up and assist. If you can spare even one or two hours please email evolvinggalaxy@gmail.com or pass by the AVC room and give your name - please note, access is only available through the first floor balcony doors. The AVC meeting room is a vital resource for the continued functioning of the Working Groups of the RA, so please help protect it if you can.

Please note: Whist the judge for the current court cases has not agreed to issue any more interim stay orders, including for the Auroville Council work space, he did mention that if any coercive action is taken against the people holding the vigil, it should be reported to the court to be taken into account in his decision.

Action needed

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legal & delegation fees. Your assistance is absolutely invaluable and has enabled the continuation of legal support for the RA working groups.

- **Presence needed at Town Hall, AVC meeting room:** Please see above to find out how you can assist with your presence in the AVC meeting room in the coming days.
- **New petition to sign: [Jhatkaa.org](#) have launched a petition asking for the attacks on Auroville and its forests to stop. You can sign it [here](#).**
- **Call for financial support:** If you would like to donate towards legal and delegation fees please email evolvinggalaxy@gmail.com.

About us

We are a group of Aurovilians who are actively involved in understanding the current crisis situation in Auroville in order to find a way forward together.

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.

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

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closer together to the beautiful dream of human unity in Auroville. We can do it ... together.

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