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Auroville Bulletin 40

UNESCO event cancelled, AVFO survey & RA Working Group members denied maintenances

A Summary of Events Happening in Auroville Today

October 1st, 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

UNESCO Event cancelled / postponed

The UNESCO event to celebrate the 150th birth anniversary of Sri Aurobindo, which was planned for 30th September, has been confirmed as cancelled /postponed in a [massbulletin](#) from the RA WCom. The reasons for the change of plans have not been shared with the community.

The [collective RA letter](#), which outlined a number of concerns with the presenters and format of the event, was signed by a total of 1408 people and sent to UNESCO, the GOI & other concerned authorities on the 27th September. Details regarding the letter were shared with the community via a [massbulletin](#) from the UNESCO event Appeal Team. Additionally, the AVI Board also sent [a letter](#) on 28th September to UNESCO & other concerned authorities.

Registration of Residents update/Housing Survey

The AVFO's 'WCom' [announced this week](#) that they will be verifying information in the Register of Residents (ROR). In a [second announcement](#) on 28th September, they shared that the survey will be carried out by members of the AVFO's 'Housing Team' & 'ATDC', to take notes of the building assets of Auroville, "for the assessment of house tax purposes." The announcement stated that "Bommayarpalayam Panchayat secretary addressed the Working Committee requesting the contact list of residents updated with their residencies/houses." They have set an ambitious target of completing the full survey within 2 weeks.

The RA WCom followed these announcements with a [massbulletin](#) stating that "there is no link between the updating of the RoR and the survey of assets for determination of House Tax. House inspections are not required for updating the Register of Residents or for calculating House Tax." However, they also advise residents to cooperate with the updating of the RoR to the extent of verifying information that has already been submitted to the Office of the Secretary. They added that "it is entirely up to each Aurovilian to decide whether to welcome visiting members from working groups not selected by the Residents' Assembly into their living spaces".

As of the 30th September, there have been initial reports from community members who have

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residents' homes. **Community members who feel uncomfortable with being recorded should calmly ask them to stop filming.**

All of those who have been approached have been asked to provide identification such as their passports and/or Aadhaar cards to prove their identity & to verify the information provided during the RoR update. Only a few houses have been visited so far so it is too early to tell if the survey will focus only on specific individuals or encompass the entire community.

RA-appointed Working Group members moved onto bridging maintenances

While the daily management of Auroville is left to the Residents' Assembly as per the Auroville Foundation Act, the AVFO continues its attempts to micromanage the affairs of the residents. On the 30th September, Sathyanarayan, the Auroville Foundation Accounts Officer, instructed the Financial Service to move RA-appointed Working Groups members onto a 3-month Bridging Maintenance. A bridging maintenance is usually provided by the BCC to ensure that Aurovilians have an intermediary period in order to find another place of work. This means that their currently allocated maintenances are discontinued and they need to find another source of income.

Names on the list include members from the RA WCom, the RA FAMC and the RA BCC. On September 21st, RA BCC members received a communication from AVFO's 'BCC' that they were being shifted to Bridging Maintenances. The 30th September list included an additional BCC Office member.

A number of the members of the RA Working Groups are working full time for the RA and are dependent on their maintenance to live. As such, in the absence of available funding, they may be faced with difficult choices as to whether they can continue with their work.

If you are able to provide financial support to members who are affected, please contact evolvingalaxy@gmail.com.

Legal update

Upcoming dates:

20.10.2022 — Supreme Court appeal regarding National Green Tribunal Ruling

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To be announced — Madras High Court hearing on the FAMC case

To be announced — Hearing of AVFO appeal of the Madras High Court judgment of 12th Aug

To be announced — Madras High Court hearing on the Office Order appointing the GB ATDC, in front of a new judge

To be announced — Hearing on quash petition for FIRs on 6 Aurovilians

Other Updates and Information

Dreamweaving documentary screening

On Saturday 1st October 4.30-7pm at the Sri Aurobindo Auditorium in Bharat Nivas there will be a screening of a documentary about the Dreamweaving process that took place earlier this year. This will be followed by a panel discussion and a Q&A session with some of the Dreamweaving team. For more information please see [this poster](#) and [short video](#) about the event.

AVFO's legal arguments in plain English - WCom, ORM, and ATDC cases

As the number of court cases increase, many have found it difficult to dive into the relevant legal documents and are therefore unable to appreciate the arguments made. However, it becomes extremely important to understand these documents, as they give a clear overview of what is now at stake: the permanent reinterpretation of the Foundation Act to appoint the Governing Board of Auroville as the Supreme Authority of Auroville, for Auroville to be claimed as a development project of the Government of India, and for residents of Auroville to be given the status of workers in a government project.

A concerned resident has compiled the relevant statements of the 12th August 2022 judgement of the Madras High Court. The excerpts are accompanied by a simple-English translation for

understand the arguments made by the lawyers of the AVFO.

You can find [the full document here](#).

Interview with the Road Service - competent, yet underutilized

In a recent interview published in Auroville Today, Jacques and Manickam of the Auroville Road Service spoke of their disappointment & frustration that the AVFO's 'ATDC' overlooked the Road Service when tendering for the works on the Crown Road. The controversial works have been contracted out by the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) at a cost of nearly 10 crore, but the implementation has been below par and chaotic and is currently at a standstill.

The works have been marred by a complete lack of communication with the community about planning & implementation, stretches of well-built road dug up for no apparent reason causing ongoing traffic and access difficulties, substandard replacement paver blocks and now, with monsoon approaching, the unfinished work appearing to have stopped without notice. Please see [here](#) for the full article as published in Auroville Today.

Action needed

- **Attend the Dreamweaving documentary screening:** Come today, 4.30pm to the Sri Aurobindo Auditorium to see the full-length documentary of the Dreamweaving process.
- **Call for financial support:** If you would like to donate towards legal and delegation fees please email evolvinggalaxy@gmail.com. Please see [here](#) for more information about why further financial assistance is necessary.

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- **Satprem report on JR:** Satprem of the Auroville Earth Institute has written a report detailing the events in Auroville since Dr. Jayanti Ravi has taken the role of Secretary. You can find [his full report here](#).
- **Satprem report on Evergreen - errata:** The report sent last week on events in Evergreen has been modified, as the link to the folder of pictures and videos is no longer online. You can find [the updated report here](#).
- **Moving Forward in Togetherness:** A community healing programme has been put together by members of the Resident's Assembly, please see [here](#) for more details.

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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together.

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