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# Auroville Bulletin 41

## **Bulldozing through Existence/Bliss, AVFO Survey continues, Dreamweaving letter of support**

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A Summary of Events Happening in Auroville Today

October 6th, 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

## Clearing of cycle paths through Existence and Bliss Forest

On 30th September and 1st October, a JCB accompanied by an engineer from the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) and a survey team started clearing a 2.5m wide path between the trees through Existence forest towards Bliss forest. This bulldozing of understory forest regeneration is the first step in creating cycle paths that have been proposed by Dr Anupama Kundoo and are being implemented by the CPWD on instructions from the Auroville Foundation Office (AVFO) Secretary. Neither the stewards nor the Forest Group had been informed.

Residents showed up on site, with RA TDC members questioning the clearing since the National Green Tribunal order clearly states that Environmental Clearance and Detailed Development Plans need to be ready before any development can take place, including right of ways. You can watch video documentation of these interactions [here](#) and [here](#), and find photos taken on the day [here](#).



The ATDC appointed by the Office of the Secretary responded to this intervention by announcing [on Auronet and massbulletin](#) that the work is in required compliance, and threatening that “It's a legal offence to obstruct this work in progress. Anyone obstructing this

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In a [later massbulletin](#), the RA TDC clearly outlines the legalities of the situation, whereby the Foundation is currently not in compliance with the NGT order. They also emphasize that their goal is not to prevent the creation of new cycle paths, nor that every tree can be kept while developing Auroville. As they note, “difficult choices will need to be made – but they will be made consciously, and together. The overriding concern is not the bulldozing, it is the violent and authoritarian approach [...] preventing a joyful and timely realisation of the ‘City the Earth Needs’.”

Long-term Aurovilian Peter Clarence-Smith has also responded to the events [on Auronet](#), noting that “this is to inform that none of the 20+ km of cycle paths created with the magic cycle path team over the last 35 years ever needed the intervention of a JCB, nor the cutting of a single tree.” Glenn, who is the steward of Gaia & Anusuya forests, also wrote [on Auronet](#), noting that the JCB came ‘with no intimation, no collaboration with the stewards who have worked and protected the land for over 25 years [...] just the force of a CPWD JCB ploughing its way through an area it has no connection to. Is there no end to the destructive path Auroville seems to be on?’ Satprem has also written a report on the events, which you can find [here](#).

**Please sign up for the Telegram SOS group by clicking the following link on your smartphone:** <https://t.me/+kkqHA8VFIKs1YTZI>

## AVFO Register of Residents verification and house survey

On September 28th, the AVFO’s ‘WCom’ [announced](#) via Auronet that a house-to-house survey of Auroville would take place over the course of the following 2 weeks. The announcement claimed that the survey was necessary for the update of the RoR and for updating the information held by the Bommayapalayam panchayat for House Tax purposes. The RA WCom [clarified](#) that a house-to-house survey was not necessary for this, because “The calculation of House Tax that Auroville pays is based on the type and general size of the buildings and not on who occupies them, since in Auroville the occupants are not the 'owners'.”

Since then, teams have visited a number of communities. There seems to be a lack of clarity about the focus of the survey. Some community members have reported that a complete survey of their community was not carried out and only particular individuals and assets were approached. In many cases, information about the house itself was not sought or given, but only personal identification (such as passport/aadhar card/place of work) was requested. The advice from the RA WCom is to verify information when asked in order to update the RoR. However, each resident should feel free to request not to be filmed in the process and should not feel pressured to allow these teams into their homes.

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## **Dreamweaving - Please sign the letter of support!**

The Dreamweaving initiative brought together a group of around 100 Auroville architects and community members who worked together over a period of 3 months to provide input for Vastu Shilpa, the consultancy of the award-winning architect Balkrishna Doshi, to develop the Auroville Crown project. Since then, negotiations between the Auroville Foundation Office (AVFO) and Vastu Shilpa have come to a standstill, despite Shri Doshi having a long-standing relationship with Auroville and a commitment to create the Detailed Development Plans for Auroville in a collaborative way.

[A full-length documentary of this project](#) was shown publicly for the first time on Saturday 1st October at the Sri Aurobindo Auditorium. The viewing was followed by a Q&A panel session with the organisers and some of the architects. In conclusion, the Dreamweavers sent out a call to the community to sign a letter of support for the process. They continue to hope that this process can be used in further planning and implementation of the Crown in Auroville.

Please extend your support to this initiative by [signing the letter!](#) You can also watch the full-length documentary and panel discussion [here](#).

## **Other Updates and Information**

**Errata - Arguments of the AVFO in 12th August Judgment in plain English**

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lawyers representing the Office of the Secretary before the Madras High Court. The arguments used by the AVFO give insight into what is really at stake today: 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. This document is an important read for anyone who wants to understand the agenda of the force bearing down on Auroville.

The document in Bulletin 40 had some formatting errors. The updated document [can be found here](#).

## Visit of the Union Minister of Education

On 2nd October, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan visited Auroville. The visit was not announced to the community [until after the event](#). The Minister met only with the Secretary of the Auroville Foundation and the AVFO endorsed 'Working Groups'. In a later [Hindu article](#), it is reported that according to the Auroville Foundation, the honourable Minister has "assured the Auroville Foundation of the Government of India's support to expedite the development of pending works and completing the Auroville project as per the original vision of its founder, The Mother."

## Auronet blocking and unblocking

In May 2022 the Auronet forum, along with the auroville.org.in email domain, was taken over by the AVFO, who at the time [cited](#) "a complaint regarding the rise of anti-government activities in Auroville through all forms of electronic media and other means". The promised investigation was never again addressed by the AVFO, apart from a single [Auronet update](#) in June which attempted to change the focus of the 'investigation' to the actions of the Sysop administrators. Since the takeover, the RA Working Groups and several community members who have voiced opinions against the recent AVFO actions have found that their access to the Auronet forum has been limited or blocked entirely.

This week, a number of residents whose access had been blocked were reinstated without explanation. However, the censorship of the forum is still continuing. When Island (RA TDC member) posted an [update](#) from the RA TDC regarding the latest bulldozing through Bliss forest, his post was immediately removed and his access was again blocked. In the meantime, the community remains in the dark about the identities of the new Auronet Admins who control the online community platform.

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## Legal dates

20.10.2022 — Supreme Court appeal regarding National Green Tribunal Ruling

10.11.2022 — National Green Tribunal hearing with regard to the Joint Committee report

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

# Changing the narrative

## Building Auroville - A Personal Perspective

An Aurovilian has written a thoughtful personal perspective about the artificial targets of population and city size that are being used by the Secretary's followers to judge whether Auroville has been manifested 'successfully' up until now. The article shows that The Mother quoted time frames for building Auroville ranging between 10-1000 years. She also said that although she did not know how long it would take to build Auroville, "Auroville will be". The author concludes that "If there is a failure that has led to the current crisis it is that we have not, as whole, nurtured the spirit [of collaboration]. We must all invoke that spirit, and step forward together, when we are ready to do so, in the true spirit of Auroville."

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

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- **Please sign the letter of support for the Dreamweaving initiative!** : You can find a [link to the letter here](#)
- **Join the SOS Telegram Group** : If you would like to be updated on where silent presence is necessary please join the SOS telegram group via [this link](#)
- **Call for financial support:** If you would like to donate towards legal and delegation fees please email [evolvingalaxy@gmail.com](mailto:evolvingalaxy@gmail.com). Please see [here](#) for more information about why further financial assistance is necessary.

## Media & Other Links

- **Inde: la "cité idéale" d'Auroville reprise en main par les nationalistes hindous au pouvoir à New Delhi:** An article (In French) outlining a view on the situation in Auroville. You can read [the full article here](#).
- **Moving Forward in Togetherness:** Please find an updated [calendar of events](#) and a [poster](#) for the Moving Forward in Togetherness program.

## 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:

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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 [evolvingalaxy@gmail.com](mailto:evolvingalaxy@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/evolvingalaxy>

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