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# Auroville Bulletin 42

## **Legal update, BCC blocked from accessing Financial Services, GM of the RA Working Groups**

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A Summary of Events Happening in Auroville Today

October 16th, 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](#).**

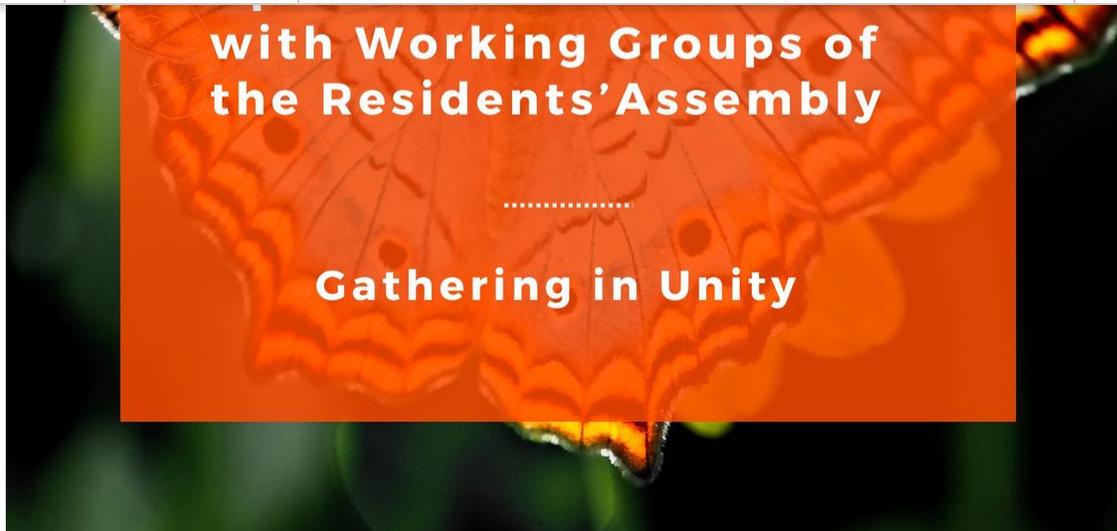
## Hot topics

### General Meeting of the RA-appointed Working Groups

**Please join this meeting with the Working Groups of the Residents Assembly. The event will take place coming Monday 17th October, at Unity Pavillion from 4.30-7.00 pm.**

The meeting will provide updates on various topics of concern such as ongoing legal actions, RoR and the take-over of services by the Foundation Office, visas, land matters etc. There will also be a space for answering questions from the community. The RA-appointed Working Groups request units & services to encourage and support Aurovilians and Newcomers to attend. Light refreshments will be served after the meeting.



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## Legal update

### Upcoming 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 challenge to the Standing Order no 01/2022, describing ATDC nomination and constitution

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

**Madras High Court, ATDC Standing Order** - The first hearing on the petition challenging [Standing Order No. 01/2022](#) was heard before a bench of several judges before the Madras High Court, led by the Acting Chief Justice (the most senior justice in the court). The judges directed the Auroville Foundation to file a counter statement to the petition. They have also issued an Interim Order, directing the Auroville Foundation to provide alternative accommodation for anybody they are displacing as the result of development work. This order is limited to people in the Register of Residents.

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known as Vikram Ram, creator of the Auroville Files, also appeared in court mentioning a petition filed by him that he claims challenges the Master Plan. You can find [the order of the court here](#). As of today, no date for the next hearing has been announced.

For some context on this case, please see [a short background document here](#).

**Madras High Court, ATDC Office Order** - The petition challenging the Office Order appointing members to the ATDC was heard in court on Thursday 13th October. Following this hearing, several interpretations and hearsay have been floating around. However, the court order (the official document detailing the outcome) has not been posted online yet, and all interpretations that are circulating may be inaccurate. The case will be explained in more detail in the next Bulletin.

## RA BCC Update

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that they “no longer have any control or oversight over Auroville’s City Services budget” as their access to the Financial Services has been removed. This means that they are “are no longer able to access Auroville Service accounts or execute transfers for both services or individuals (for visa and passport refunds, for example).” This could have very concerning consequences for the financial stability of the Auroville community, as full control of the budgetary system is now in the hands of a small group of inexperienced people. These individuals have little knowledge and understanding of Auroville budgetary operations, and recognise the AVFO as the final authority, effectively denying the voice of the Residents’ Assembly.

**Members of the RA BCC will be available to answer questions & concerns in the AV Council meeting room on Tuesdays: 10:30AM - 12:00PM and 2:30PM - 3:30PM**

On the morning of 11th October, members of the RA BCC had arrived at their offices in Town Hall to discover that all of their computer equipment and some of their office furniture had been removed. All of these items had been purchased with City Services funds, and the approximate value of the appropriated assets amounts to around 3 lakhs.

The RA BCC wrote to Balu, Lieve & Venkatesh (AVFO’s ‘ACUR management team’) to ask them what had happened to the missing assets. As of yet they have not received a reply but it was reported by Town Hall staff that the items were delivered to the offices of the AVFO’s ‘BCC’, located in the Archives building that had been taken over a few months back.

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This week, the RA BCC also [published a call](#) in the News & Notes for the community to financially support the Aurovilians who have been placed on bridging maintenances by the AVFO's 'FAMC'. To date, 20 people have been placed on a 3-month bridging maintenance despite the fact that they are all still working for Auroville. After December, they will no longer receive any support from the City Services Fund. Most of the affected people are actively engaged working full time for the RA-endorsed Working Groups. However a smaller number also had their maintenances cut, likely because they have not obliged the AVFO in one way or another.

In their '[September Report](#)' the AVFO's 'FAMC' stated that they wished to address a perceived "systemic fault and ... imbalance towards [sic] the building of the City the Earth Needs" which, they claim, exists because forests and farms receive a higher number of maintenances than the ATDC. They stated that "The current imbalance is heavily loaded against development in general in the city center of the Master Plan". Aurovillian Youth Maël later posted a [comprehensive argument](#) against their position on Auronet. It is not clear how the number of maintenances received by the green sector adversely affects the physical manifestation of the City, particularly as the development of the Green Belt and the parks is an integral aspect of overall City planning.

**If you are able to assist with providing financial support for the affected Aurovilians, please contact [bccoffice@auroville.services](mailto:bccoffice@auroville.services) or [bccauroville@gmail.com](mailto:bccauroville@gmail.com)**

# Other Updates and Information

## Abri / Ami / Evergreen land grab update

Since the intervention of the Revenue Divisional Officer (RDO) on Saturday 24th September, there has been a pause in events at the contested Evergreen land. The RDO gave a verbal order to stop all work on the land until the court process came to a conclusion. Despite this order, on Saturday 8th October in the early morning, workers came again. They entered deep inside the Evergreen plot and attempted to install cement pillars, cutting down young trees and shrubs to establish a fence line. When confronted, they claimed that as no written order was given, they could continue the work.

Aurovilians went to the site to ask for the work to stop based on advice by lawyers in order to keep possession of the land. Taking possession of the plot would give those claiming ownership more of a standing in court. The RA WCom and its resource persons also came to the site and called upon the relevant authorities to intervene. After more than 10 hours of waiting at the RDO's office, a resource person of the RA WCom managed to secure a written order signed by the RDO, repeating that no party should carry out any activity in the disputed area until the courts have given their verdict. The case will come up in court on Thursday, 20th October.

In the afternoon of 8th October the AVFO's 'WCom' sent out [a massbulletin](#) requesting "all Aurovilians to stay away from Evergreen, however painful the situation may be, as this has only led to an escalation [...]" and asking "the 'shadow' groups not to issue unnecessary directives, which confuse people and are causing more problems." The RA WCom then sent out [a massbulletin](#) in response, noting that the AVFO's 'WCom' has not been on site for months, effectively leaving the stewards of Evergreen to fend for themselves. They also noted that the presence of residents on site is highly valuable, due to the above-mentioned issue of possession of the land. The AVFO's 'WCom' [responded](#) that they had in fact intervened without notifying the community, and that they had only been waiting for the order to come through.

## Arguments of the AVFO in the Appeal to the 12th August judgment - in plain English

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compiled relevant excerpts from the AVFO's Appeal on the 12th August judgment, and translated them into plain English. They are important to take note of, as they show what exactly it is that the AVFO is trying to achieve in court: the complete disempowerment of the Residents' Assembly as a body of the Auroville Foundation, as they seek to have the Governing Board appointed as the 'supreme authority' of Auroville, denying the need for mutuality between the bodies.

In Bulletin #40, [an extract of the August 12th judgment](#) of the Madras High Court was already shared. Another interesting read is an extract of the grounds that the AVFO has put forward in the document appealing this 12th August judgment.

You can find [this new document here](#).

## Crown Road work restarted

For over one month the Crown Road works, which are being carried out by the CPWD, have been halted. During the recent rains, long stretches of alternative pathways - particularly in the Bliss/Horizon area - have become increasingly hard to use due to mud, as the roads now used were originally cycle paths.

With monsoon about to begin, the work has restarted on the stretch of road passing by the Youth Centre, meaning that movement will only be possible via these hazardous temporary pathways. Although the trees that line the future road are not being cut, the work is [causing damage to the roots](#), which risks the chances of them surviving in the long term. At no point during any of the work commencing, stopping, and re-commencing has any information been shared with the community regarding the planning and implementation of the work.

## Errata from Bulletin #41

### Dreamweaving Statement of Support

When giving details about the Dreamweaving statement of support in the last bulletin, it

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instigated and carried out by the AV Community Gathering Team, who also organised the [documentary screening](#) event at Bharat Nivas. The Dreamweavers core team was not involved in the drafting and circulation of this letter of support. Apologies for any confusion that this statement may have caused.

## ‘Building Auroville’ Article

In the article ‘Building Auroville’ published last week it was mentioned; “Possibly the longest time scale given by her was on 21st September 1961. Then, she assured us: “...I KNOW THAT AUROVILLE WILL BE. It may be in a hundred years, it may be in a thousand years, I don’t know...”

The correct date for this quote was actually 21st September 1966. For another opportunity to read this article please see [here](#).

## Action needed

- **Auronet/Email Access:** The AV Council has sent a [notice to the community](#) asking for community members to send them information about whether their access to auroville.org.in email domain, or Auronet, has been restricted or blocked. If you have information to share with them please send it to [avcouncil@auroville.services](mailto:avcouncil@auroville.services)
- **Come to the meeting of the RA-appointed Working Groups:** This coming Monday at Unity Pavilion, 4.30-7.00 pm.
- **Join the Wednesdays for Auroville meetings:** There is a weekly community meeting held at the Tibetan Pavilion, every Wednesday 4.30-6pm. Poster is [here](#).
- **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

- **Radio France Internationale:** [‘Auroville, cité utopiste du sud de l’Inde, menacée par les bulldozers’](#) (audio and article in French)
- **Chroniques des Forums France Inde:** [‘Auroville: la cité utopiste menacée de récupération idéologique’](#) (article in French)

## 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](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

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