



Aurore Mabilat <aurore.mabilat@gmail.com>

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## **Auroville Bulletin 97 : Interim Stay on Residence Criteria, New RA working groups selected**

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**Evolving Galaxy** <bulletin@evolvingauroville.com>  
To: aurore.mabilat@gmail.com

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# **Auroville Bulletin 97**

**Interim Stay on Residence Criteria, New RA working groups selected**

A Summary of Events Happening in Auroville Today

Monday, 23d February 2026

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

# How can you help?

- **Support for legal fees:** Please donate towards legal and delegation fees by emailing [evolvinggalaxy@gmail.com](mailto:evolvinggalaxy@gmail.com). Please see [here](#) for more information about why financial assistance is necessary.
- **Support for Maintenances:** Please support individuals cut off from their maintenances by the AVFO. For more information, please contact us by writing to [evolvinggalaxy@gmail.com](mailto:evolvinggalaxy@gmail.com).
- **Share information and resources with us:** Share information, pictures, videos and anything relevant with us at [evolvinggalaxy@gmail.com](mailto:evolvinggalaxy@gmail.com). This allows us to continue our independent, fact-based documentation of ongoing events. You can also send your pictures or videos to [documentation@auroville.services](mailto:documentation@auroville.services). Your anonymity will always be respected.

# What is happening now

## Interim Stay on Residence Criteria

As shared by RA WCom in their legal update dated 18th February 2026, an Interim Stay Order has been granted against the '[Auroville Residence Criteria](#)'. The court order dated 16th February is available [here](#). The order will remain in place until the next court hearing on 13th March and the Residence Criteria is "not applicable until there are different orders from the High Court"

The legal update also included information about the 2022 court case related to the functioning of the RA, the result of which was appealed by the AVF. The appeal hearing has been pending for some time but it now "may be discussed in the coming days".

## **New RA working groups selected**

The Light for Unity (L4U) group initiated a Residents' Assembly decision-making process in early January, inviting the community to elect a 9-member Committee tasked with selecting new members for the Residents' Assembly working groups. The community endorsed the proposal: of the 830 votes cast, 97% were in favour, and members of the Temporary Selection Committee (TSC) were elected accordingly. You can find the outcome and the names of those in the TSC [here](#).

The Committee then called for nominations and deliberated on who would best serve the community in each working group. The results of this process were announced at a General Meeting and circulated via [Massbulletin](#) on 3rd February 2026. The newly constituted RA working groups are as follows:

### **Working Committee of the Residents' Assembly**



*L-R: Jayavel, Elvira, Anita, Valli, Prashant, Raju and Matthieu*

### **Funds and Assets Management Committee of the Residents' Assembly**





*L-R: Ranjith, Jonas, Danny, Palani, Auradha (not present: Krishna and Stephan)*

### **Land Board of the Residents' Assembly**



*L-R: Anan, Ashok, Ancolie, Padmanaban (not present: Amrit, Lata and Sathyaseelan)*

### **Auroville Council**





*L-R: Muni, Dyuman, Martin, Sathiya, Mouttou, Ramesh, Divya, Giovanni, Isabelle*

On 5th February, L4U convened a community meeting. During this gathering, the TSC shared their experiences and outlined the selection process they had followed. Several TSC members highlighted that the timeline had been highly stressful and too compressed, expressing that they would have appreciated at least three additional days — particularly to meet potential Working Group members in person. The newly selected Working Group members were also introduced to the community at this meeting.

In the hours following the meeting, some L4U members received messages from the AVFO inviting them to meet with the Secretary the next day at Savitri Bhavan. Most members of the L4U Core Group attended. Based on two sets of informal [meeting notes](#), after hearing from the L4U team members, the Secretary refused to acknowledge the newly formed RA Working Groups and invited those present to join her own groups instead.

Later that same day, the AVFO Instagram page, “Auroville Official,” [posted images](#) from the meeting with L4U, describing it as one of the highlights of the ongoing “Auroville Festival”, while the meeting had nothing to do with the said festival.

## **National Security Guard in Auroville**

According to media reports, the [National Security Guard](#) (NSG) carried out a “[high-intensity, three-day counter-terrorism exercise in Auroville](#)” in the first week of February 2026.

The NSG is trained to respond to serious terrorist threats in India. The three-day counter terrorism exercise reportedly involved 120 commandos and included an operation called “Dark Night” which involved “a full-scale mock drill at the Auroville Foundation office”. Local [media reports](#) stated that “The commandos gave a briefing on the procedures for safely rescuing the staff and taking over the building with the help of technology in case of an intrusion by terrorists” ([see here](#) for English translation).

Residents expressed deep concern that such an operation had taken place inside Auroville, in direct contradiction to the Mother's explicit instruction that there should be no army and no police in Auroville, and at odds with the township's founding principles of peace and human unity. [Images](#) of men with guns directly under the portraits of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo were particularly shocking.

## **IIT Madras lease agreement for Annapurna Farm**



*Spotted Deer at Annapurna Farm*

On 9th January 2026, the RA WCom published a [massbulletin](#) informing the community that a [lease deed](#) had been signed between IIT Madras and the Auroville Foundation for land at Annapurna Farm.

An MoU was signed between IIT Madras and the Secretary on behalf of the Auroville Foundation in July 2025, without any consultation with the community. On 23rd December 2025, the RA WCom learned that a Lease Deed had been signed and submitted to the registration office in Vanur that day. The lease agreement reportedly grants IIT Madras full use of 100 acres out of 135 acres of land for 33 years on a rent-free basis. Although the Secretary's tenure had officially lapsed at the moment of signing, a later [Office Order](#) from the MoE dated 8th January 2026 backdated the start of her next one-year tenure to 20th December.

The RA WCom stated that the leased area includes all areas of active farming of grains and fruits, rain water reservoirs, dairy and grazing grounds, granary and food processing, workshops, residences and all infrastructure. It further stated that the lease deed was "created and signed in secrecy" and that the decision "was not put before the Residents' Assembly or discussed with the residents and caretakers of the farm". The RA WCom indicated they have been reaching out to officials to address procedural and possible legal concerns, and that legal actions are being explored.

None of the ongoing concerns highlighted by Annapurna Farm regarding their 'relocation' to inside the Master Plan area (please see [Bulletin 96](#) for more information) have been addressed by anyone in the AVFO or their 'working groups'. The RA WCom encouraged community members with contacts in IIT Madras or officials with influence in the matter to reach out to raise concerns about the agreement.



*The Annapurna herd enjoying a drink of water*

## **Zonal Development Plans**

[Zonal Development Plans](#) (ZDP) for Auroville were recently [announced](#) by AVFO 'ATDC'. A short summary of the ZDP, written by an Aurovillian planner after examining the document, found some worrying aspects to the plans. In particular it was noted that:

- There are no safeguards for existing homes. People who've built with proper NOCs from previous planning and development authorities can be displaced, their homes demolished.
- There is no clear relocation/resettlement policy for those displaced.
- No consultative mechanism is proposed. Everything is top-down with the ATDC at the apex.
- There are no maps indicating which areas will be affected due to densification, removal or redevelopment.
- No redressal mechanism (a formalized way to accept, assess, and resolve community feedback or complaints) is proposed.

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

## Other Updates and Information

**'The Week' article & RA WCom rebuttal**

*The Week* magazine published [an article](#) in December 2025, titled "Is Auroville's utopian dream under threat from its own development plan?" alongside [an interview](#) with the Secretary of the Auroville Foundation, Dr Jayanti Ravi, titled "We shall implement master plan designed by the Mother". Following the publication, the RA WCom issued a [detailed rebuttal](#) which *The Week* eventually published in January 2026.

*The Week's* article and interview with the Secretary contained several significant errors and misrepresentations regarding Auroville's governance and history. The Secretary claimed that "The act is all about the master plan" and that the Mother designed "every little thing," when in fact the Master Plan was created by Aurovilians in 2000, 27 years after the Mother's passing. The Secretary also repeatedly quoted words from the Mother's 1968 Auroville Charter as if they were their own, emphasizing that "to live in Auroville, one must be a willing servitor". Crucially, the omission of "of the Divine Consciousness" fundamentally altered the Charter's meaning. The interview also included the false claim that the Secretary heads the Auroville Foundation (the Foundation actually consists of three statutory bodies, with the Secretary working under the authority of the Governing Board's chairperson). Additional errors such as the inclusion of names of people who had spoken to the journalist on the promise of anonymity, and the use of "afforestation" instead of "deforestation", were corrected after the RA WCom communicated to the editor.

The interview also featured unsubstantiated allegations that "drugs, trafficking and idol theft complaints and even paedophilia was happening" in Auroville, and claims of "attacks, killings and bloodshed" before the Auroville Foundation Act. The RA WCom's [rebuttal](#) characterized these as "inflammatory accusations made without any substantiation, documentation or named sources" that "amount to defaming an entire community." The rebuttal emphasized Auroville's positive impact through educational and skilling projects in surrounding villages and its "excellent reputation in the bioregion and beyond," concluding that residents of "a unique experiment in human unity...endorsed by UNESCO five times" deserve to have "their voices heard accurately and their concerns reported faithfully and fairly."

## **GB 'Appellate Committee' Upholds Termination Decision**

The GB 'Appellate Committee' issued [an order](#) upholding the termination of Arun Ambathy's 'Newcomer status'. The decision, issued on 26th December 2025, followed an appeal filed by Arun in November against his termination order dated 13th October. The GB concluded its term on 1st October, meaning that the validity of orders issued under their name after that date is highly questionable.

In his appeal, Arun raised numerous objections to the termination process. He argued that principles of natural justice were violated, as he was not provided with copies of complaints, evidence, or witness identities, and was denied the opportunity to cross-examine his accusers. Ambathy also questioned the impartiality of the process, noting that all the complainants came from AVFO-appointed bodies including the OSD, CPWD and AVFO 'working groups'

The Appellate Committee rejected Arun's arguments, stating that the proceedings were administrative in nature, and did not require the same procedural standards as judicial proceedings. It stated that disclosure of internal complaints and witness identities was not required under the regulations and could compromise institutional functioning. This manner of operating seems to confirm suspicions that community members seeking to appeal the decisions made by the AVFO will not be given a fair hearing.

## **Mothers Flower Garden - report**

A [new report](#) about Mothers Flower Garden (MFG), shared by an Aurovilian, highlights "the systematic misallocation of government funds and arbitrary decision-making that has characterized Auroville's current administration".

The report contrasts the treatment of community projects such as Youth Centre and Revelation, both of which have been denied registration as a unit "on grounds that accommodation or any buildings are not permitted in areas designated as parks". Despite this, the MFG project (located inside Mahalakshmi Park) has been given permission to build a new guesthouse, offices, and multiple other buildings by the AVFO 'ATDC'.

The report also highlights the huge environmental destruction - thousands of trees were cut to make way for the project "replacing functional forest with ornamental flowering plants that require intensive irrigation." MFG was originally approved by the GB in August 2023 with a 12 crore budget for landscaping six acres. This amount would have sustained the entire Forest Group (managing 1,300 acres and who had their budget cut by AVFO 'FAMC' in July 2023) for around 8 years.

You can read the full report [here](#).

## **Voices of Auroville**

Voices of Auroville No. 10 (February 2026) is now available. This issue covers developments from October 2025 to January 2026, including the Parliamentary Standing Committee report on Auroville governance, the end of the Governing Board's four-year term, the closure of Auroville Today, the leasing of Annapurna Farm to an external institution, and community responses including the Light for Unity referendum. A condensed newsletter summary is available [here](#); the full issue can be read and downloaded [here](#).

## **Miscellaneous news**

- Krishnamurthy, who was [removed](#) from the AVFO's 'Land Service' on 27th December 2025, apparently after an intervention from the L4U group (see [Bulletin 96](#)), has now been [re-installed](#) as an Executive. There is no clarity as to why this decision has been made. Krishnamurthy has faced repeated criticism regarding the manner in which land exchanges have been handled during his time at the AVFO 'Land Service', [even from people](#) who are usually allied with the AVFO.
- A [tree planting event](#) along the Crown Road was organised by the AVFO 'ATDC' on 1st January 2026. As this was almost exactly 2 years to the day after the brutal [tree cutting event](#) carried out by the same personnel, in the same location and which destroyed 20-year old trees that had also been grown from saplings originating from the Samhadi, this [raised some eyebrows](#) in the community.
- The AVFO 'ATDC' [announced](#) that they were implementing a 20km/h speed limit in the City area, and a 'No Parking Zone' on the Crown Road from 13th January 2026. The 'implementation' of this has not resulted in any discernable changes in behaviour by road users.
- The Heartweaving Team [announced](#) that they were "setting up a '**Gratitude Table**' that will invite you to pause for a moment and express your gratitude to Auroville community members whose quiet dedication, service or presence has touched your life". The first session at PTDC and Solar Kitchen gathered 180 letters in just four hours, with a second session following.
- A bizarre [New Years message](#) was shared by the 'AVF Community Coordinator' Dr S. Bascarane. It is not clear what Dr Bascarane's role is meant to be within Auroville, what he is paid, or who funds his salary.
- The AVFO 'Auroville Consecration Programme', an 'orientation' programme set up by AVFO 'HR' with the stated intention of "renew[ing] the inner alignment required to serve the collective work of Auroville" was [abruptly cancelled with no reason given](#).

## Media & Other Links

- *Tragi-Comik Newsletter #17* [[English](#)] [[French](#)] by RA Forest Caretakers
- **17th January 2026, Fair Observer:** [Saving Auroville: A Call for Immediate Intervention](#) by Rahul Dev.
- **24th January 2026, Medium:** [“I Was Aspiring to Live Close To Nature...” A maverick called Krishna McKenzie: British singer, farmer, celebrity chef, motivational speaker](#) by Suma Narayan.
- **6th February 2026, Substack:** [Building Auroville, Refocusing the Reality by Rod Hemsell.](#)
- [Voices of Auroville No 10](#)
- Two new video have been published on the you tube Channel "Auroville uncensored":  
[The administration's attempt to turn Auroville into a dictatorship: Blocked by the Court](#)  
and [Special Forces in Auroville. A Training exercise, or a message?](#)

## 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

If you wish to know more, the website <https://auroville.media/> contains a great deal of information on the current situation.

Please note that our previous bulletins can be found at this link: <https://auroville.media/egb/>

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). Also feel free to share with us information, questions or suggestions.

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.

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