

Auroville Bulletin 100

Violence at Town Hall, public exhibitions in Pondy and Chennai, and other updates

A Summary of Events Happening in Auroville Today

Tuesday, 19 August 2025

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 other legal delegation fees by emailing evolvinggalaxy@gmail.com. Please see here for more information about and financial support for Maitreyan.
- **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.
- **Share information and resources with us:** Share information, pictures, videos and anything relevant with us at 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. Your anonymity will always be respected.

Editorial

In Brief

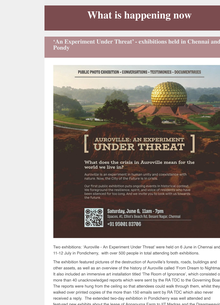
The Evolving Galaxy Bulletin team has returned from summer break, so the next two issues will cover events of the last months as well as recent news.

This **100th issue** features:

- 'An Experiment Under Threat' - exhibitions held in Chennai and Pondicherry
- Violence at Town Hall
- AVFO launches Auroville TV channel
- Leaflets and books removed from Visitors Center
- Petition results
- Annapurna Farm update
- Eternity update

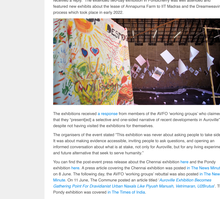
What is happening now

'An Experiment Under Threat' - exhibitions held in Chennai and Pondy



Two exhibitions: Auroville - An Experiment Under Threat' were held on 8 June in Chennai and 11-12 July in Pondicherry, with over 500 people in total attending both exhibitions.

The exhibition featured pictures of the destruction of Auroville's forests, roads, buildings and other assets, as well as an overview of the history of Auroville called 'From Ocean to Nightmare'. It also included an immersive art installation titled 'The Room of Ignorance', which consisted of more than 40 unacknowledged reports which were sent by the FDC to the Governing Board. The reports were hung from the ceiling so that attendees could walk through them, whilst they listened to audio recordings of the reports being read out loud. The FDC reports were received a reply. The extended two-day edition in Pondicherry was well attended and featured new exhibits about the lease of Annapurna Farm to IIT Madras and the Dreamweaving process which took place in early 2022.



The exhibitions received a response from members of the AVFO 'working groups' who claimed that they had been 'misled' by the 'misrepresentation of recent developments in Auroville', despite not having visited the exhibitions to find out.

The organisers of the event stated "This exhibition was never about asking people to take sides. It was about making evidence accessible, inviting people to ask questions, and opening an informed conversation about what is at stake, not only for Auroville, but for any living experiment and if future alternatives that seek to serve humanity."

You can find the post-event press release about the Chennai exhibition here and the Pondy exhibition here. A press article covering the Chennai exhibition was posted in The News Minute on 8 June. The following day, the AVFO 'working groups' rebuttal was also posted in The News Minute. On 11 June, The Commune posted an article titled 'Auroville Exhibition Becomes Gathering Point For Disinterested Urban Neoob Like Piyush Manush, Mehmaan, Ullbhuhat'. The Pondy exhibition was covered in The Times of India.

Violence at Town Hall

On 13 May, a violent incident occurred in Town Hall in an altercation over the use of the Auroville Council Room. The room, which has been a site of contestation since 2022, has been shared relatively peaceably by the AVFO groups and the Light and the Light Auroville Unity team (LALU since January 2026, when a vote for using the room was established. On the day in question, LALU had booked the space between 10-13am, however at 9.45am, both Sindhuja, Anim, Murali, and Sohini entered the room claiming that a meeting was scheduled for the AVFO 'FAMC'.

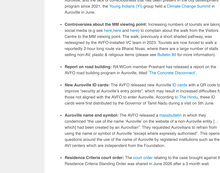
A report written by Aravinda, who was present, details that when Ashok explained that LALU had booked the room, Anirim became aggressive. As Murali was already recording the events, Arun Arkotialy decided to do the same, and shared with Anirim took Arun's phone. A group of AVFO allies arrived at the scene, and Arun went up to Sindhuja and attempted to take her phone. According to Arun, Sindhuja "then pushed me and scratched me in the face, and then pushed me again and scratched me in the process. A clip of the Council Room CCTV footage that was released by the AVFO 'working groups' shows the chaos that ensued. It is possible to see Arun snatching at Sindhuja's phone, a subsequent scuffle in the doorway, and Joel Hilby Arun over the head with a phone. For those interested in audio of the incident, Arun's phone captures the moment when it is taken by Anirim and continues to record the audio for about 10 minutes. This recording, too, can be found here.

Following the incident, the police filed FIRs against 24 people in total, which included 17 members of the AVFO administration. Subsequently, both Anirim and Arun were arrested and were remanded in custody over the weekend by the magistrate.

Whilst Arun was in custody, the AVFO 'Housing Service' and AVFO 'Security Service' entered his house in Revelation, and this interaction was filmed by a resident. FIRs have now been filed against 10 AVFO 'working group' members for theft from Arun's house.

Since the incident, 'show cause' (SC) notices have been issued by AVFO 'ATSC' to all the LALU members present in the room, threatening their Auroville resident status. Despite FIRs being filed against Anirim, he has not been issued any SC notices. The 'working groups' composed of some of these modified it to 'Light and Unity' and subjected to FIRs. Have only been given to the LALU members. Note: The police have filed FIRs against Anirim & Joel for incident at the PG, please see Bulletin 99 for more information.

The Town Hall is now only accessible via a single door, which is guarded by a security guard.



Several responses from different groups have followed after the incident:

- 21 May: The Light for Unity Core Group went out their own report on the matter.
- 21 May: The Auroville Council sent out a maaslubdein in which they note that they have not used the room since March 2026, and that they condemn the violence.
- 23 May: Another maaslubdein where the Council said they were involved to release all footage of the incident for review. This call has not been heeded by the AVFO members.
- 23 May: The AVFO groups sent a maaslubdein claiming blame on the 'deeply harmful' role played by parallel, self-styled, and self-proclaimed 'working groups', wishing the community to refuse them.
- 24 May: The Town Hall has responded to this by maaslubdein, reminding the AVFO, among other things, that residents have the right to organise and participate.

AVFO launches Auroville TV channel

On 18 June 2022, the AVFO announced a partnership with JioTV, one of India's leading streaming television services, and the subsequent creation of an Auroville TV channel, but no new developments were announced until recently. Four years later, at the end of June 2026, a 'soft launch' of the channel was announced, although it is not yet clear how it can be accessed. Even if they would agree to give an interview. According to the mail, the channel would feature "programs on Auroville with interviews, workshops and documentaries". On 17 July, the AVFO held a public inauguration in Unity Pavilion for the launch of the Auroville TV channel, in presence of the Governor of Puducherry. The event was broadcasted live on Youtube, and covered in The Hindu the following day. In recent years, The Hindu has covered most events organized by the AVFO, consistently republishing its press releases. One recent example can be found here.

Leaflets and books removed from Visitors Center

On 16 July, Anitm and Sindhuja of the AVFO 'working groups' removed all issues of Auroville Today and La Revue d'Auroville, along with The Spirit of Auroville booklet from the Visitor's Center library. They also removed informational leaflets on Auroville produced by the previous teams. The reason provided is that these publications were considered as being part of the "old Auroville" rather than the "new Auroville" they are now building. Auroville Today will be replaced by the publication launched by the AVFO's media team, Auroville Tomorrow.

Other Updates and Information

Petition results

A petition demanding that Anitm, Sindhuja, Joel, Murali and Kalivarada resign from their posts received a total of 978 verified signatures (642 Auroville residents and 336 well-wishers).

Annapurna Farm update

Contract workers hired by IIT Madras (IITM) arrived at Annapurna Farm on 16 June 2026, to fence off the 150 acres of land that had been leased to them (although the fencing work began only recently, in August). The land was leased to them for a nominal 'fee' of Rs 1 by the AVFO. The following day, a puja was held by IIT-M members.

A subsequent communication from the Annapurna team revealed that they had been hoping to open a channel to dialogue with IITM with a view to collaborate with them in some way. However attempts by the team to communicate with the IITM team have been unsuccessful so far.

On 1 July, a group of residents and well-wishers of Auroville, including the activist Piyush Manush, visited the IITM campus in Chennai to hand out two information leaflets about the lease of Annapurna Farm. You can find these leaflets here and here.

In a parallel action, a representation to the Integrated Grievance Redressal Committee in Chennai was made by Piyush Manush on 1 July. The representation alleges that the land survey numbers given in the documents, such as the 1 "fee" and whether the correct procedures had been followed and the correct duties paid. The representation also highlighted that the land survey numbers given in the MoU are materially different to those of Annapurna Farm. In fact the survey numbers in the MoU relate to land at Kundrathoor, which was the original land earmarked for IIT-M.

This is one of six police complaints relating to conspiracy to defraud the State and Central Government in Auroville land exchanges that have been submitted in recent months.

Eternity update

On 10 July, members from the Secretary's office and Housing Service members visited Eternity unannounced, with police and a carpenter, in an attempt to change the locks and to bully local residents. Residents of Eternity met them at the gate, and asked them to show official paperwork such as an eviction notice. Neither the present members of the Secretary's office nor members of the 'working groups' were able to produce such a document.

After much discussion at the gate, the police eventually asked the delegation representing the Secretary (about 25 people) to leave as they didn't have an official notice.

A video of some of the interactions between residents and the AVFO 'working group' members can be found here.

The residents of Eternity, who have been ordered to leave and relocate to Courage in an order signed by the Secretary, continue to demand due process and accountability.

In an effort to protect themselves and the forest which has been carefully nurtured for over 40 years, they have filed a petition in the Madras High Court requesting that the authorities refrain any attempts at eviction or interference outside the legal process". While this protection was granted, the Secretary's office responded with a statement noting that the protection "does not confer any right on the plaintiffs to continue occupying the Eternity premises beyond what is permissible in law." The statement made by the AVFO can be found here.

Miscellaneous news

- **New MoU between AVFO and NLC India Limited (NLCIL):** As covered in the press, a new MoU was signed with NLCIL, a public sector enterprise under the Union Ministry of Coal, "for Electric Vehicles to Promote Green Mobility". The terms of this MoU are not known to Auroville residents. According to The Hindu, NLCIL provided "₹21 lakh for Auroville to procure four electric vehicles".
- **Climate Change Summit:** Despite the ongoing destruction of the living environment of Auroville, and the lack of consciousness that has been present in the city development process, a Climate Change Summit is also taking place, titled a Climate Change Summit in Auroville in June.
- **Controversies about the MM viewing point:** Increasing numbers of tourists are taking to social media (e.g see here here and here) to complain about the walk from the Visitors Centre to the MM viewing point. The walk, previously a short shaded pathway, was redesigned by the AVFO-mandated IIT team in 2022. Tourists are now forced to walk a longer route, which is not shaded, and which has no benches. Many tourists are also left telling non-AV people & religious here (please see Bulletin 99 for more information).
- **Report on road building:** RA NGom member Prashant has released a report on the AVFO road building program in Auroville. Please see here.
- **New Auroville ID cards:** The AVFO released new Auroville ID cards with a QR code to improve "security and efficiency". Residents have also received a maaslubdein from the Foreign Registration Office, which states that "Auroville ID cards are not valid for travel purposes". According to The Hindu, these ID cards were first distributed by the Governor of Tamil Nadu during a visit on 5th June.
- **Auroville name and symbol:** The AVFO released a maaslubdein in which they condemned "the use of the name 'Auroville' on the website of a non-Auroville entity [... which] had been created by an Aurovilian". They requested Aurovilians to refrain from using the name or symbol of Auroville "except where expressly authorised". This raises questions around the use of the name for Auroville by registered institutions such as the Auroville Foundation and the Auroville Council.
- **Residence Criteria court order:** The court order relating to the case brought against the Residence Criteria Standing Order was shared in June 2026 after a 5 month wait.
- **Visits of Indian officials continue:** Auroville has increasingly become a place of visit for Indian officials. Among others, the Governor of Tamil Nadu, the Lieutenant-Governor of Pondicherry or State Forest Service trainees have visited Auroville. These visits are usually unknown to residents, who learn about them through The Hindu's coverage.
- **Change of Education Minister:** In July 2026, following national protest events among Indian youth, the Union Government's previous Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan resigned and was since replaced by Jitahi Prahlad. The Auroville Foundation is under the authority of the Ministry of Education, so the effects of this change on the situation in Auroville remain to be seen.

Media & Other Links

Media and other links will be included in edition 101 of the Bulletin.

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
- Transparency and openness in developing Auroville using integrated methods such as the Dreamweaving initiative
- Transparency and fairness in the organisation of Auroville
- Creating unity with our diverse values

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/ebgb/

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. 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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