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# Auroville Tomorrow

*We do not belong to the past dawns, but to the noons of the future.*

Ushus: 1

*Frédéric*

Kiran: 11

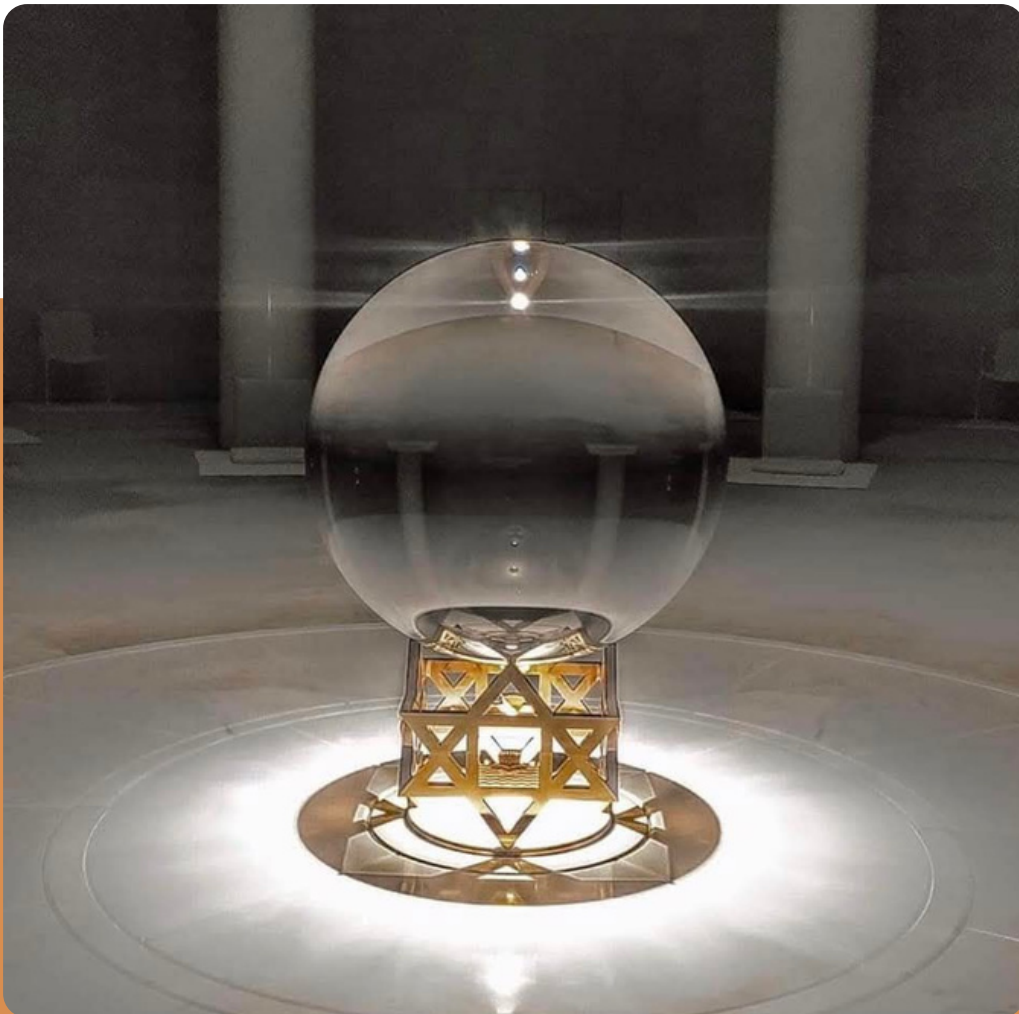
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24th February 2026

Auroville's newsletter, rooted in the present,  
focused on the future

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## A Reflection on the Beginning of a Collective Consciousness



**"Make of us the hero warriors we aspire to become. May we fight successfully the great battle of the future that is to be born, against the past that seeks to endure, so that the new things may manifest and the world may take its spring towards the splendour of the future."**

— CWM Volume 15, p. 183–184 (*Words of the Mother – III, Darshan Messages*)

# Beyond “Isms”, Auroville and the Post-Ideological Horizon

Returning to particular moments in time is always an invitation to re-examine. To look again at the path that has been walked, at the pauses we have taken, at the words we have spoken, and even at the silences we have chosen. When undertaken consciously, such reconsideration is not merely a review of the past; it is a recalibration of our relationship to the present.

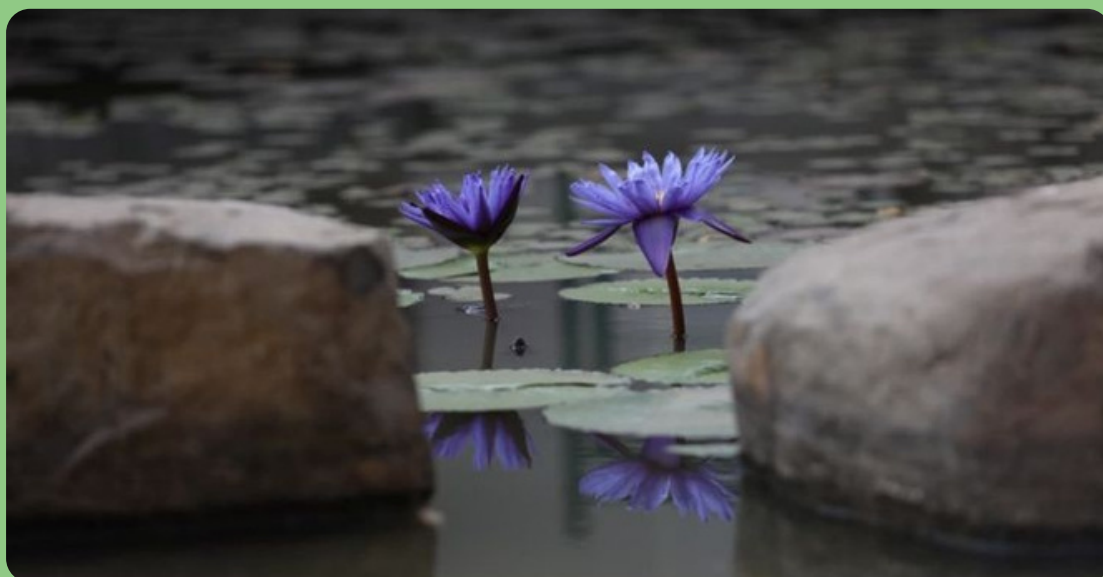
As someone entering my fourth year of living in Auroville, I have spent months immersed in precisely this kind of reflection. A deliberate silence I chose led me to reconsider not only personal achievements and errors, but also my position within a collective context. My lived experience, particularly shaped by being a Baloch-Irani, has deepened this introspection and sharpened my sensitivity toward questions of politics, ideology, and identity.

To write, if done consciously, carries a significant responsibility. Words are not merely instruments of expression; they carry force. Writing resembles inscribing words onto the very body of the earth. A sentence can redirect a gaze or erect a boundary. This text, therefore, is not an impulsive reaction but the outcome of sustained contemplation.

This contemplation unfolded simultaneously with the turbulence of the world beyond Auroville, a world increasingly marked by polarization, identity tensions, and a renewed return to ideological camps. Even within communities that claim to transcend politics, subtle tendencies toward familiar alignments can sometimes be observed. This raises a fundamental question: Where exactly do we stand in this world? Are we trapped in repetitive cycles of opposition, or are we consciously seeking a way out of them?

In the twentieth century, the “isms” promised the salvation of humanity. Communism, liberalism, nationalism, socialism, and religious fundamentalism each claimed that by offering a comprehensive framework, they could end historical suffering and establish a durable order. Yet in 2026, the world appears more fragmented than ever, characterized by crises of trust, deepening social divides, and the erosion of shared meaning. Has the very logic of ideology, with its internal coherence and certainty, become part of the problem?

From the perspective of political anthropology, ideologies are mechanisms for organizing meaning and power. They generate grand narratives that situate the individual within stabilized identity structures. An “ism” is not merely a theory; it is a relatively closed system of assumptions about the human being, history, and the future. The difficulty emerges when such systems sacrifice the fluidity and complexity of human experience for the sake of theoretical consistency.



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Perhaps the issue lies not in the original intentions of these movements, but in their structural logic. Ideologies typically form around a central, relatively unquestionable truth. This centrality produces coherence, yet simultaneously restricts internal transformation. In a world shaped by digital networks, technological acceleration, and unprecedented cultural mobility, rigid and binary frameworks can no longer adequately respond to the complexity of contemporary human life.

The human being of 2026 is not merely an economic agent, nor solely a national citizen, nor simply a member of a religious community. One inhabits multiple, entangled layers of identity: digital and physical, local and global, individual and collective. Any ideology that elevates one dimension to primacy inevitably marginalizes others and, in doing so, reduces the human condition.

Within this context, a project such as Auroville acquires particular significance. It was not conceived as a classical utopia, but as a laboratory for the possibility of living beyond “isms.” The Mother and Sri Aurobindo emphasized from the outset that this community should not be anchored in any political or religious ideology.

In the thought of Sri Aurobindo, modern political and economic systems represented stages in the mental evolution of humanity, but not its final destination. Every social structure reflects a particular level of collective consciousness. If consciousness remains confined to the rational mind, society will likewise be organized into rational yet limited forms. The transition to a further stage, what he described as a transformation of consciousness, is a prerequisite for the emergence of a new order: one grounded not in ideological compulsion, but in inner harmony.

The Mother likewise stressed that even ideals such as equality or shared resources, if implemented merely as political systems, would reproduce the same patterns of power unless accompanied by inner transformation. From this perspective, the issue is not a specific “ism,” but the assumption that a living, dynamic society can be engineered through a predefined mental blueprint.

On this basis, Auroville was conceived as a space of experimentation, where ownership, work, education, and governance are shaped not by loyalty to doctrine, but by an ongoing, conscious search for evolving solutions. Such flexibility is neither simple nor without tension. Yet it is precisely this quality that distinguishes it from an ideological project.

In a world marked by acute political polarization, remaining committed to a post-ideological orientation demands courage. The temptation to return to simple certainties is always present: to choose a camp, define an enemy, stabilize a narrative. Yet the experience of the past century has shown that such certainties often reproduce the very structural violence they claimed to resolve.

From the standpoint of cultural anthropology, Auroville may be understood as an attempt to move from a society organized around identity to one organized around consciousness. In identity-based societies, belonging to a class, nation, religion, or ideology forms the primary basis of social organization. In a consciousness-based society, the central criterion becomes inner growth and the capacity for conscious collaboration. This transition is neither complete nor free of challenges; it is an ongoing, experimental process.

The principal challenge ahead may not be external pressure, but the internalization of the very ideological logics that the community seeks to transcend. Every society risks gradually generating stabilized structures that drift away from its founding spirit. To remain faithful to the founders’ legacy requires not the repetition of their words, but a continual re-engagement with the foundational principle of going beyond.

Ultimately, the question is not which “ism” prevails over another. The deeper question is whether humanity is prepared to move beyond its reliance on closed frameworks. If ideologies were products of a particular stage in mental evolution, perhaps the present moment calls for a shift, one in which flexibility, dialogue, and inner transformation replace rigid certainties.

Auroville can, and perhaps must, stand as an example of this possibility: not as a perfected model, but as a living space demonstrating that collective life without allegiance to a dominant “ism” is possible. **In a world weary of exhausted grand narratives, such an experiment is not a romantic ideal; it is a historical necessity.**

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**— Anita Kamali, Writer and Editor of Auroville Tomorrow Newsletter**

## The Eloquence of Silence: Birthdays, Auroville, and the Renewal of Consciousness

**I did not grow up in a family where birthdays were ceremonially observed. There were no annual rituals of cake-cutting or candle-blowing that marked the passage of time. As a child, when I attended the birthdays of others, I enjoyed the sweets and laughter, but somewhere within, a quiet question would arise: What is the meaning of this day? Why do we celebrate birth?**

**The question lingered long after the crumbs of cake had disappeared.**

**Years later, that childhood curiosity found an unexpected answer — not in festivity, but in silence.**

**— Dr. Jayanti Ravi, Secretary Auroville Foundation, IAS**



When I first visited Auroville in 2012, I encountered something that would quietly alter my understanding of what a birthday could mean. At the heart of Auroville stands the Matrimandir — the soul of the city. Entering its inner chamber for the first time, I experienced what can only be described as the eloquence of silence.

It almost felt as if one could hear the silence — loudly. Not as emptiness, but as presence. Not as absence of sound, but as fullness of being. Something in that space seemed to knock very gently, yet unmistakably, at something deep within — perhaps what the yoga calls the psychic being, the inner soul.

That encounter changed the question. Birth was no longer merely biological. It became spiritual.

Over the years — especially during the last five years of being closely associated with Auroville — I began to understand why The Mother attached such profound importance to birthdays. She once said, “The birthday is the day when the soul took birth in this body.” It is a day when one is closer to one’s inner truth, more open to grace, more receptive to the Divine influence. In that light, a birthday is not an anniversary of age — it is an anniversary of intention.

**It is an opportunity for alignment.**

**A moment for renewal.**

**A conscious pause in the journey of evolution.**

This reflection becomes even more significant in this sacred week when we celebrate not only the birthday of The Mother (21 February) but also the birthday of Auroville (28 February). One marks the birth of a being who carried a vision of human unity; the other marks the birth of that vision in matter.

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Auroville was not conceived merely as a township. It was envisioned as a living laboratory of consciousness — a place where humanity could attempt to move beyond division and experiment with a higher way of being. The Mother described it as a city “that the earth needs.” She even suggested that Auroville was already there in the subtle plane — waiting to manifest — and that we only needed to allow it to land.

Over the years, I have had the privilege of witnessing that gradual landing.

When one sees the Crown area slowly taking shape, the architectural lines emerging with clarity, one senses that something long imagined is now pressing into form. When one walks through the gardens of the Matrimandir and encounters the abundance of flowers — each petal carrying a significance given by The Mother — one experiences beauty as consciousness, not ornament.

There is also the quiet inspiration of places that nourish both body and spirit: the warmth of community spaces, the simplicity of shared meals, the creativity expressed in cafés and gathering places, the serenity of the Auroville Botanical Gardens, and the intellectual and spiritual exploration at Savitri Bhavan dedicated to the epic Savitri of Sri Aurobindo.

Each of these is not merely infrastructure. Each is a gesture of aspiration taking form.

What strikes me repeatedly is the harmony between vision and detail — between the vastness of the ideal and the concreteness of daily life. Auroville is not perfect; it is a work in progress. But perhaps that is precisely its beauty. It is not a finished monument; it is an evolving consciousness. In witnessing its milestones — the expansion of green belts, the shaping of collective spaces, the coming together of diverse cultures — one senses that something deeper is unfolding. It is not merely urban development; it is an experiment in human evolution.

And in that unfolding, we who are associated with it in any capacity have been given a rare privilege.

To serve such a dream is not an ordinary opportunity. It is not merely administrative, architectural, or social engagement. It is participation in a spiritual endeavour — an offering of one’s time, thought, energy, and will toward something that transcends individual ambition.

Birthdays, then — whether of a person or a city — become moments of collective introspection.

Have we grown in consciousness?

Have we become more generous, more transparent, more integral?

Have we aligned our outer action with our inner aspiration?



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If, as The Mother said, on one's birthday the Divine Consciousness is nearer, then perhaps these days are invitations. Invitations to renew our commitment. To deepen gratitude. To offer ourselves more wholly.

In my own journey, the initial wonder of childhood has transformed into a quiet reverence. I no longer see birthdays as social rituals. I see them as thresholds. Thresholds where the cakes and candles are metaphors for cherishing all that has been completed, and candles for showing the way ahead.

Each year presents a choice: to drift mechanically with time, or to consciously re-dedicate oneself to growth.

As Auroville celebrates another year of existence, and as we honour The Mother whose vision made it possible, the question returns to each of us: How do we respond to this gift?

Gratitude is the first movement. We have been given space — literal and symbolic. Space to experiment, to fail, to learn, to aspire. We have been given support — seen and unseen. And we have been entrusted with a vision that belongs not to one generation but to humanity.

The second movement is renewal. Not repetition, but deepening. Not complacency, but recommitment.

And the third is offering. A more complete offering — of thought, of skill, of action, of heart. Every dimension of our being is placed in service of the dream.

For the dream is not abstract. It is concrete. It is in the quiet radiance of the Matrimandir's inner chamber. It is in the shaping of the Crown. It is in the gardens that bloom season after season. It is in the dialogues, the disagreements, the collaborations, the shared silences.

It is in us.

Perhaps that is the ultimate significance of a birthday: it reminds us that something has been born — and continues to be born. In the individual. In the collective. In consciousness itself.

The child who once wondered about candles and cake could not have imagined that one day she would stand in a chamber of luminous silence and understand that birth is sacred.

And that to participate — even in a small way — in the manifestation of a higher possibility for humanity is itself a profound privilege.

**As this birthday week unfolds, may we pause. May we listen to the eloquence of silence.  
May we allow something deeper to knock again at our inner being.  
And may we respond — not merely with celebration — but with consecration.**



## The Metaphor of Death in Prayers and Meditations



The metaphor of death is also the metaphor of love, a half-developed allegory in Oscar Wilde's three stories, "The Selfish Giant", "The Nightingale and the Rose", and "The Happy Prince".

Mirra Alfassa, later known as the Mother, had started recording her diary prayers about two years before meeting Sri Aurobindo, unfolding the veiled trope in Wilde's stories and anticipating the major theme of integral death as illustrated in the three chapters on sacrifice in *The Synthesis of Yoga*.

— *Prof. Goutam Ghosal,*  
*Governing Board Member*

The passion for total self-giving intensifies after meeting Sri Aurobindo on 29 March 1914. In the prayer of April 7, 1914, the Mother hears a voice:

**"Never hast thou known how to die integrally...Surrender completely, learn how to disappear, break the last barrier that separates thee from me".**

The Giant Ego must leave under the pressure of love, the only Love. The entry of love means the exit of ego- the one-pointed unadulterous love for one person only, the Supreme. In the words of Shakeel Badayuni, "naino mein koi aye na duja, aye na duja". I see only the One, and I have chosen the One, leaving behind my many thousands of desires.

Sri Aurobindo calls this "a reversal of consciousness" (*Life Divine*, 724). The Mother uses the same phrase in *Questions and Answers* 1950-51, 19, meaning a liberation from the ego by a total identification with the inmost being, resulting in a widening of consciousness, which is synonymous with love.

The Mother's yoga runs simultaneously with Sri Aurobindo's, the path that leads to Love through purified action and knowledge, and he has another way of illustrating it in the *Synthesis of Yoga*: It is the inner offering of the heart's adoration, the soul of it in the symbol, the spirit of it in the act, that is the very life of the sacrifice. If this offering is to be complete and universal, then a turning of all our emotions to the Divine is imperative. This is the most intense way of purification for the human heart, more powerful than any ethical or aesthetic catharsis could ever be by its half-power and superficial pressure (165).

The integral death means a complete surrender of all parts of the being. The result is a growth into a new being, new life, new nature, an existence full of love.

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The Mother wishes this love in her to be reflected in the entire planet—"my arms are stretched towards Thee imploring Thee to set all this being on fire with Thy sublime love that it may radiate from there on the world." (27 December 1916).

The ultimate result of this interplay of love and death, this yoga of purification, is a threefold transformation of nature: psychic, spiritual, and finally, an ascent into a new species.

In the prayer of August 29, 1914, the Mother unites her voice with Sri Aurobindo's by calling Man as an intermediary and an agent of a new creation, **"the footbridge thrown across the abyss"**.

Both the avatars believe that the new species will be made by using Man's body:

**"... his conscious ascent, his consecrated will and participation are needed that into his body may descend the glory that will replace him." (CWA 12 160)**

Prayers and Meditations is high poetry by any standard. It is a climactic point in the history of love poetry, love lyric, which had begun with Petrarch. Again, it is another statement of Sri Aurobindo's yoga of triple transformation. It is a conclusive statement through its prayer and prescription, along with a new version of the Epilogue of Savitri, which is a promise of a return to earth to change the earth-consciousness.

The one-pointed love is also two-dimensional: the love of "That" and His earth. The Supramental victory won through sacrifice is not the cessation of action. She has another work "entrusted" to her by the Lord, that is, to lift the earth, which is her "sick child". The prayer of August 27, 1914, was translated by Sri Aurobindo into English.

It makes clear the labour of the World Mother:

Transmute me into that burning brazier so that all the atmosphere of earth may be purified with its flame.

Prayer and love poetry coalesce together creating the Rig Vedic fire, in which giving oneself is to return with a white fire of love, "a spirit of largest love and a stainless divine delight" born out of "the flame and smoke and frankincense" (Synthesis of Yoga 165) .



# The Long Siege: A Strategic Analysis of Bharat's Scientific History

Dr. Chaitanya Giri's *The Long Siege* offers a provocative and strategic reinterpretation of colonialism through the lens of science, technology, and civilizational autonomy. Moving beyond conventional political historiography, the book frames colonialism as a systematic weaponization of scientific advancement against Dharmic societies. In this conversation, Dr. Giri elaborates on the historical suppression of Bharat's scientific potential, the global dimensions of its techno-strategic struggle, and the ongoing imperative of civilizational self-recovery.



## Colonialism and Its Impact

**How does your book redefine the understanding of colonialism beyond the conventional political and economic lenses, especially in the context of India's scientific and technological history?**

*The Long Siege* moves beyond political history to interpret colonialism as a strategic "weaponization of science." It argues that Western powers leveraged rapid 17th-century innovation to subjugate Dharmic societies and impose a global monoculture. This is not merely a history book—it is a strategic analysis intended to correct the "glitch" in our popular narrative. Our scientific achievements were not peripheral; they were integral to our battle for freedom.

**You mention that the loss of access to seas and ports was a critical step in the colonization of Bharat. Could you elaborate on how this maritime decline affected India's scientific autonomy and capacity for innovation?**

Just as space determines superpower status today, maritime dominance did 500 years ago. The loss of our ports meant the loss of wealth, global supply chains, and the strategic impetus that fuels innovation. Many modern instruments—such as the chronometer—emerged from blue-water naval requirements. Therefore, our present focus on shipping and space is not merely a set of "government projects," but a necessary recovery of the strategic autonomy we forfeited at sea.

**In what ways did the weaponisation of science by European powers during the Renaissance and the Crusades contribute to the geopolitical and technological subjugation of India?**

Earlier invasions relied on brute force. The British, however, employed "precision technology"—telegraphs, semaphores, and theodolites—to systematically exploit. Indians were deliberately excluded from scientific R&D for nearly a century, out of fear that technological mastery would empower Bharat to overthrow the Raj. By denying access to the tools of innovation, colonial authorities ensured a safe and profitable exit for themselves.

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## The Struggle for Scientific Independence

**The book highlights that India's struggle for independence was also a fight for scientific and innovation independence. What are some key examples that illustrate this dual struggle?**

The book underscores three critical facts:

- The Tokyo-based "India House" played a vital role in Swadeshi industrial progress.
- Subhas Chandra Bose's presidency acted as a primary catalyst for the establishment of major national laboratories.
- Since 1942, Indian scientific institutions have been subjected to sophisticated foreign espionage and monitoring.

**How do you see the convergence of the Swadeshi and Revolutionary movements as pivotal in India's journey toward scientific independence?**

This convergence constituted a massive, multidisciplinary effort involving saints, jurists, physicians, and intellectuals. It began around the First War of Independence, grounded in the realization that political liberty and scientific self-reliance are two sides of the same coin.

**You mention that the struggle for scientific independence spanned continents. Can you share lesser-known examples from North America, Europe, or East Asia that influenced India's scientific trajectory?**

Bharat's scientific pursuit was global and proactive. Kings dispatched emissaries to Europe to study astronomy; spies traveled to Turkey and Russia; and deliberate scientific diplomatic channels were cultivated in Central Europe to bypass British control. We were never intellectually stagnant—rather, we were geoculturally blocked.

## Contemporary Relevance and Lessons

**In your view, how does the legacy of colonialism continue to shape India's approach to science, technology, and innovation today?**

Colonialism planted "landmines" within our institutions and mindsets. Even today, several premier scientific bodies take pride in their colonial origins rather than their Bharatiya evolution. Realizing our true potential requires shedding colonial symbols and lexicons, and practicing science with the mental freedom of an unshackled civilization.



**The book discusses the derision faced by India's scientific achievements, such as the Mars mission. How can India overcome lingering geopolitical bias and assert scientific autonomy globally?**

Autonomy arises from confidence, not from external validation. We must embrace our civilizational identity, just as the UAE launched its "Islamic Probe" or as the Vatican maintains observatories. True autonomy would mean Hindu temples operating world-class observatories and Bharat practicing science as a "true-blue Bharatiya janmanas," rooted in Dharma and Karma.

**What lessons from India's historical struggle for techno-independence can inform current global debates on technological decolonization and equitable access to scientific knowledge?**

Colonization begins when exploration ends. We must never cease probing the unknown—from deep-sea resources to outer space. At the same time, we must remain vigilant against "brainwashed natives" who perpetuate colonial legacies by suppressing indigenous potential. Decolonization is not a one-time act; it is an ongoing reclamation of our right to explore.

**Finally, what do you hope readers will take away from *The Long Siege* regarding the interconnectedness of colonialism, scientific progress, and national identity?**

Readers should recognize that the Swadeshi movement was fundamentally a spiritual endeavor—Gyan Yoga expressed through Karma Yoga. The book calls upon us to identify lingering vestiges of colonialism and to pursue science in our own "peculiar way," preserving our civilizational continuum rather than merely imitating the West.



**(Purchase link) - Click to Redirect**

# Re-Actioning the Residents' Assembly

## From Resistance to Responsibility, Restoring Function, Power, and Balance in Auroville

Auroville has lived through a cycle of thesis and antithesis. The Residents' Assembly was raised as a banner of collective voice. It was later exposed as a machinery of obstruction. Now, in reaction, some would prefer to sideline it altogether. Neither extreme will build the city.

Yes, the critique of how the Residents' Assembly functioned over the past years is valid. What was meant to be a space for collaboration became a theatre of perpetual consultation. Endless discussions replaced execution. Referendums multiplied. Emotional mobilisation and woke activism masqueraded as collective wisdom. A structure designed for participation in action hardened into a platform for resistance, with a banner of participatory decision-making. This distortion must be acknowledged without sentimentality. If we diagnose it correctly, the Residents' Assembly, as propagated by certain factions, became a stumbling block to progress. It cultivated echo chambers, which are seal-packed even now. It encouraged and even incentivised blind following. It confused volume with clarity. Numbers with authority. At times, it showcased a kind of collective stupidity that arises when ego hides behind the safety of numbers. Often.

But critique alone is not clarity. Right type of diagnosis is necessary to recognise the distortion. And, to dismantle the distortion does not mean dismantling the structure itself.

The Mother warned repeatedly against herd mentality, against surrendering to group opinion, against the formation of collective egos. She cautioned against substituting the Divine Will with the comfort of consensus. But she never rejected collective work. She rejected unconscious collectivity. She rejected the ego of the group — not the power of collaboration.

This is a crucial difference to reckon with.

Surrender is to the Divine, not to the whims and anxieties of factions. Collective aspiration is not the same as collective pressure. The failure of the Residents' Assembly was not that it was collective; it was that it lost its centre. Rather, it never attempted to find it.

At the same time, the current reaction carries its own danger. Frustration with dysfunction can easily tilt toward over-centralisation. Concentration of power doesn't inspire collaboration either. If the Assembly was misused as a pseudo-parliament, the temptation now is to bypass it altogether — to streamline decisions through consultants, contractors, and a handful of compliant residents. That too is an imbalance.



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The Auroville Foundation Act of 1988 established the Residents' Assembly as a legal reality. It defines its functions. It also clearly establishes that the powers of governance rest with the Governing Board. This architecture was deliberate. Perhaps. The Assembly was not designed as a sovereign decision-making parliament. It was meant to function — to participate in the life of the township, to carry responsibility, to collaborate in implementation. The downward journey began when the Assembly imagined itself as the ultimate authority. But another peril emerges if governance begins to function as though collective participation is dispensable. A handful cannot organise a living City. Nor can a crowd govern one.

The Governing Board holds power. The Residents' Assembly carries function. Power without participation becomes distant. Participation without clarity of power becomes chaotic. The balance between the power of function and the function of power is not an administrative nuance — it is a structural necessity.

Auroville's challenges are unique. There is no precedent to quote. We are not here to replicate old political forms under new names. Voting, for example, was never meant to define Auroville's culture. It belongs to systems we consciously left behind. Yet in the absence of new methods, we defaulted to the old. Referendums multiplied. The majority and minority hardened into camps. But the majority can be tyrannical. Even the minority can be tyrannical. Numbers alone do not create anything. Harmony is not arithmetic acrobatics. It is alignment. Consciously.

The Mother's call was simple and relentless: stop talking, act. Not impulsively. Not aggressively. But decisively. Endless discussion drains force. Endless critique dissipates energy. Endless consultation creates the illusion of participation while paralysing movement. Reacting to the Residents' Assembly does not mean reviving the referendum culture. It means redefining its operational mode. Organise to Work. Collectively.

First, the Assembly must return to being a functioning organism, not a debating hall. Its primary orientation should be execution. Projects, services, prosperity, and collaboration — these are concrete domains where residents can serve. Participation must be tied to responsibility, not opinion. Refer to Mother's Dream again.

Second, service bodies and working groups should be restructured to reduce ego accumulation. One proposal worth serious consideration is randomised, rotational selection for certain working groups. A lottery-based system, combined with clear qualification criteria where necessary, would prevent faction capture. It would dilute entrenched networks. It would keep participation dynamic. Most importantly, it would remind us that service is not an entitlement. Or, a popularity contest.

Third, mandates must be time-bound and outcome-focused. Nobody should exist in perpetual consultation mode. Clear roadmaps. Defined deliverables. Fixed durations. Transparency in progress. Evaluation without humiliation. This shifts the culture from argument to achievement.



The deeper question is not structural but psychological. Why did the Residents' Assembly become an object of resistance? Why did governance become synonymous with suspicion? Which part of our collective attracted such trust erosion? Thinning of our aspiration? Because identity hardened around factions rather than around purpose?

No structural reform will hold if this inner work is neglected. The collective ego is subtle. It can hide in progressive language. It can hide in spiritual vocabulary. It can hide in administrative efficiency. It can hide in media narratives. The only safeguard is conscious surrender — not to personalities, not to blocs, but to the higher intention for which Auroville exists. And that mandates us to work collectively. Collaborate.

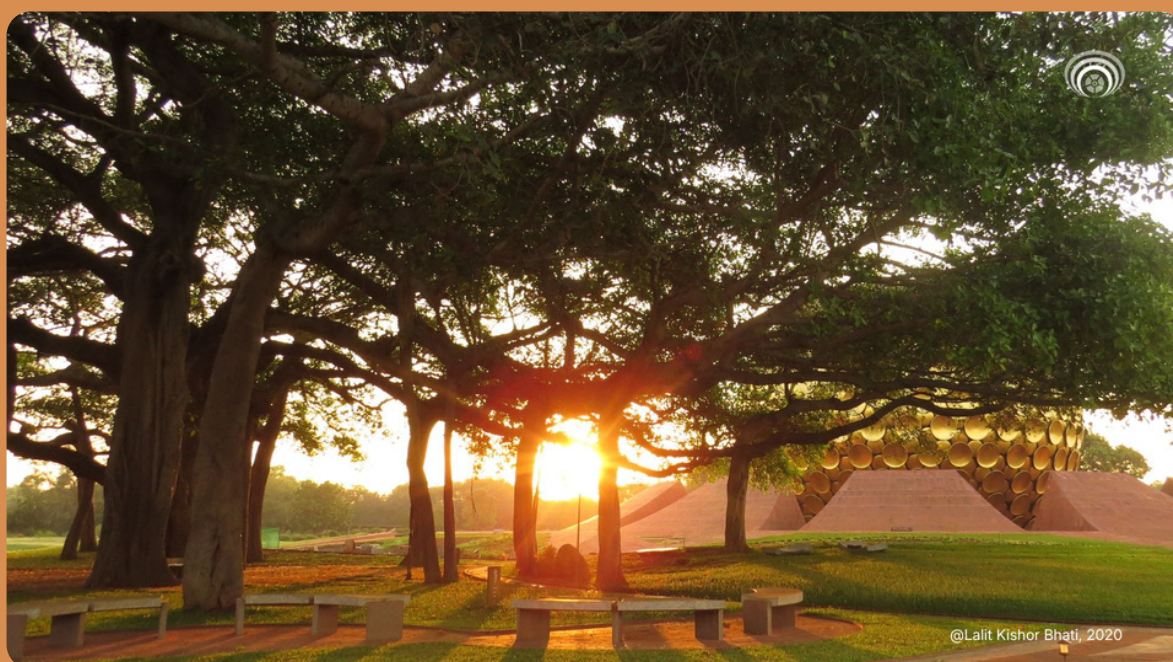
Re-actioning the Residents' Assembly means restoring dignity and pride in participation without inflating it into sovereignty. It means accepting legal reality without reducing spiritual aspiration to bureaucratic compliance. It means recognising that powers, functions, and advisories are not rivals but partners. In New Creation.

Auroville was never meant to be governed by majority vote or minority pressure, or individual impulses. Nor was it meant to be managed by detached colonial systems of authority alone. It was meant to be a field of conscious collaboration. We cannot return to the past model of perpetual resistance. Nor can we slide into a model of quiet exclusion. The synthesis is our collective responsibility. Much is required.

Residents must shift from opposing to building. Governance must shift from reacting to integrating. Structures must shift from debate-centric to action-centric. And all of it must be anchored in the humility to admit that we are inventing something unprecedented. This is not about defending the Residents' Assembly as it was. It is about transforming it into what it was meant to be: a disciplined, participatory, ego-aware, action-oriented body working in alignment with governance — not in competition with it.

The future of Auroville depends less on who holds authority and more on how consciously authority and participation interrelate and co-create. The time of thesis and antithesis has run its course. Resistance exposed an imbalance. Reaction corrected excess. Now comes integration. Re-actioning the Residents' Assembly would ideally be a right collective gesture. Even a structural necessity. Perhaps, our spiritual responsibility. And above all — become an embodiment of a Force in Action.

**—Lakshay Dharan, *Aware Auroville***



# Auroville Youth Camp 2026

## Invoking Shakti & Empowering Youth for a Life Divine



**“The future belongs to the young. It is a young and new world which is now under process of development, and it is the young who must create it. But it is also a world of truth, courage, justice, lofty aspiration, and straightforward fulfilment which we seek to create. For the coward, for the self-seeker, for the talker who goes forward at the beginning and afterwards leaves his fellows in the lurch, there is no place in the future of this movement. A brave, frank, clean-hearted, courageous, and aspiring youth is the only foundation on which the future nation can be built.**

**~ Sri Aurobindo**

At a time when much of the world tends to view youth through the lens of crisis, confusion, or restlessness, Auroville offers a radically different perspective. While many see problems in the younger generation, Auroville sees possibilities — courage, straightforwardness, hope, aspiration, and determination waiting to be awakened and channelled. Hence, Auroville Youth Camp – to introduce to the youth of India and the world, the works and teachings of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother, for them to consciously tread what Sri Aurobindo called the Sunlit Path. We believe that humanity stands today at a significant juncture — a transition from the rational age to the spiritual age. In this moment of global churn and inner seeking, Auroville seeks to offer its core principles of Human Unity, Karmayog, Shakti, and Surrender to all those who sincerely aspire for progress.

Auroville as a living experiment allows individuals to transcend rigid forms and structures and grow integrally across all dimensions of life — physical, mental, vital, and psychic. The Youth Camp reflects this philosophy in both spirit and structure. It is not designed as a passive listening experience. At Auroville Youth Camp, participants do not merely listen to brilliant minds, discuss ideas, or meditate in isolation. The emphasis is firmly on progress through work. We work on the farms, build roads, use sustainable technology, grow food, research better ways of living, we collaborate, cooperate, and also fall and then rise stronger than before because we chose progress over comfort.

Our aim is not an intellectual being who is incapable of collaborating nor an overly emotional being who cannot withstand challenges. The aspiration is to nurture an integrally developed individual — one who possesses strength and balance across all aspects of the personality and can stand steady in diverse circumstances.

Discipline therefore remains at the core of the program, based on the understanding that freedom without discipline leads to entitlement and chaos, not impact.

The 2026 edition of the Auroville Youth Camp conducted by Auroville Foundation, brought together a remarkably diverse and dynamic cohort. Participants included young entrepreneurs, environmental warriors, influencers, engineers, medical professionals, educators, and students searching for purpose beyond conventional career paths. What united them was not profession but aspiration — a shared hunger for knowledge, growth, and deeper meaning. The very composition of the cohort stands as a quiet but powerful indication that India is steadily rising toward its true potential.

A central theme that ran through this year's camp was the invocation of Shakti — the dynamic Divine Force emphasized strongly by The Mother. The organizers observed that across India and much of the world, the Shakti element has remained dormant for a long time. Spirituality has often been misunderstood either as withdrawal into asceticism or as the glorification of weakness in the name of goodness.

Victory over all the forces that have the capacity to rule us if we are weak while can be used for greater good, if we are strong in all our elements is what The Mother wants through Auroville and we want the Youth of the Nation and the world to acknowledge it. We would want to give them ways to strengthen themselves physically, intellectually, emotionally to be able to know their soul and its purpose in this world.

The vision presented at the camp challenges this misconception. Victory over the forces that can dominate human nature when one is weak — and the conscious use of those same forces for a higher good when one is strong — is at the heart of The Mother's work through Auroville. The Youth Camp seeks to help young participants recognize this truth within themselves. Its effort is to provide practical ways for youth to strengthen themselves physically, intellectually, and emotionally so that they may eventually discover their soul and its purpose in the world.



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To build this integral strength, the camp incorporated a strong physical development component. For the body, participants engaged in Mixed Martial Arts sessions at Dehashakti led by Giacomo, Kalaripayattu training with Bharat Kalari, cycling across Auroville's varied terrain, and hands-on farm work. A specially designed session titled Integral Warriors, conducted by Gaurav, focused on overall physical fitness through movement drills, endurance challenges, and attention to food and rest. These activities were intended not merely as fitness routines but as conscious tools for building stamina, alertness, courage, and bodily awareness.

Alongside the physical dimension, the camp placed strong emphasis on the development of the mind and vital being through a rich series of Charcha — interactive discussions rather than formal lectures. These sessions brought participants into close contact with experienced practitioners, scholars, and administrators connected with Auroville and the wider Sri Aurobindo movement.

**Dr. Jayanti Ravi**, Secretary of the Auroville Foundation, shared her reflections on Auroville and Sri Aurobindo, offering insight into how these teachings have shaped her own administrative journey. She extended a warm and open invitation to the youth to collaborate with Auroville in meaningful ways.

**Prof. Sampadananda Mishra** presented a comprehensive overview of Sri Aurobindo's life — from his years in England to his return to Bharat, his intense nationalist phase, the decisive moments leading to his spiritual realization, and the vast legacy he has left for humanity. He also highlighted the importance of Sanskrit as a natural and powerful instrument for accessing deeper knowledge and overcoming common linguistic biases.

**Sri Ashish Naredi** spoke on the Indian calendar system, urging participants to recognize and reclaim indigenous knowledge frameworks. He emphasized that India has always possessed sophisticated scientific systems and cautioned against uncritically accepting half-understood narratives inherited from colonial influence.

**Sri Ramachandra Roddam** focused specifically on the Shakti principle and how The Mother invoked it through Auroville for the emergence of a new world consciousness. His session explored the working of Divine Grace and how sincere surrender can open doors that mere intellectual effort often cannot.

**Raghava Krishna** delivered a strikingly relevant message for the present generation. Beginning with Sri Aurobindo's powerful assertion that despair is "un-Aryan," he addressed the modern trend of romanticizing hopelessness and depression, particularly through social media culture. He emphasized that the Bharatiya civilizational framework does not impose rigidity but offers a flexible and supportive structure that sustains individuals even through failure, acting like a crucible which doesn't let you hit the ground.

**Sri Sraddhalu Ranade**, Scientist and Sadhak at Sri Aurobindo Ashram, spoke on youth and spiritual dynamism, emphasizing that inner progress must remain the highest priority. Drawing from Sri Aurobindo's vision, he clarified that spirituality is not a rejection of life but a total mastery over it. He also addressed the very practical dilemma many young seekers face — balancing family expectations with an authentic inner call — and offered guidance rooted in the teachings of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother.

**Dr. Alok Pandey**, Psychiatrist and Sadhak at Sri Aurobindo Ashram, talked on Sri Aurobindo's magnum opus - Savitri, which resonated deeply with participants. He described love as total self-giving arising from strength rather than weakness and addressed questions on navigating desires while maintaining inner growth and balance.

**Dr. Sanjeev Ranganathan**, techie and a teacher at Auroville, shared his journey into integral education and his work as a teacher in Auroville, describing the deep sense of fulfilment it brings. His interaction covered themes of technology and spirituality, education and employability, and the emerging importance of ethical entrepreneurship — topics that generated significant interest among the youth



One of the most memorable experiential sessions of the camp was conducted by Jyoti Khare, a long-term Aurovillian, former Ashram student, and kindergarten educator supported by Shaily, a young budding Aurovillian. Her facilitation of The Mother's Flower Game — originally planned for one hour — extended well beyond two hours at the enthusiastic request of participants.

Through this symbolic and reflective exercise, youth were guided to look inward, identify qualities already developed within them, and recognize areas that needed conscious cultivation, along with practical tools to support that growth.

Another highly appreciated session came from Gaurav Solanki, a sadhak at Sri Aurobindo Ashram and a former technology professional from Chicago. His workshop focused on discovering life purpose and taking total ownership of one's path. He also introduced participants to Lean Life and Kaizen principles, helping them think systematically about designing their lives efficiently in alignment with their deeper aspirations and desired outcomes.

A visit to Sri Aurobindo Ashram, the Ashram Playground, witnessing the map of Akanda Bharat, interaction with Ms. Lopamudra on how the Ashram school functions, a visit to Ashram's Hand-made paper factory and a surprise interaction with Swami Tyagarajananda from Bihar School of yoga who made us sing, dance and meditate effortlessly was a total reward for all of us.

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Adding to the richness of the experience, a group of active and enthusiastic Aurovillians — Lakshay, Jaya, Zech, Arun, and Toine — joined the youth for an open dialogue on the theme “Why Auroville?” Since the format remained conversational rather than instructional, the exchange was lively and sincere. Participants explored different viewpoints, raised practical questions, and witnessed firsthand the underlying unity that binds the Auroville community despite its diversity.

The purpose of the Auroville Youth Camp is clear: the youth are the future of the world, and we must provide them with the tools, environment, and inner orientation necessary for a conscious growth. At a time when the world is undergoing rapid and often unsettling transitions, initiatives like this become increasingly relevant.

Auroville stands ready to share everything it has learned through decades of experimentation in human unity and conscious living. Its message to the youth is open and collaborative: if you are willing, sincere, and ready to grow, Auroville is prepared to walk the path together — to collaborate, cooperate, and progress toward a more conscious future.

**~ Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya ~**

**--- Dr Mollika Ganguly**



**“All can be done if the God-touch is there.”**

# A Reality Beyond Imagination, A Solution for Humanity, The Path for an Evolution

We are extremely grateful to Sri Aurobindo and The Mother, the great spiritual collaborators, because of whom we are all here today. No words can ever define their contribution to the Future.

Since its inception on 28th February 1968, Auroville has gone through many ups and downs. Yet, it has always managed to move forward, guided by Sri Aurobindo and The Mother, towards the purpose of its existence.

Auroville successfully celebrated its 50th Birthday on 28th February 2018, marking its first half-century. A heartfelt thanks to the Government of India for supporting this futuristic city, protecting it, and providing the necessary means to realize its dream. Mother India has done her part—and continues to do so—for Auroville.

A big thanks also to the pioneers, who left everything behind and came to Auroville to lift her up and take her forward. The hard work of everyone became the true celebration of Auroville's 50th Birth Anniversary.

Today, our generation—the 4th Generation of Auroville—carries a great responsibility: to take Auroville forward toward 28th February 2068, when we will celebrate the 100th Birth Anniversary of Auroville, building on the foundations laid by our pioneers.

Currently, with a population of over 3,000 residents—including Aurovilians, Newcomers, Volunteers, and Auroville children—supported by the Indian Government, Units, Activities, and Working Groups, Auroville has evolved into a complex yet functional community.

To manage, simplify, and carry all these activities forward, we are now in dire need of a “TRANSITION.”

Due to the inevitable process of aging, it is the duty of the present generation to extend a helping hand to our senior Aurovilians, who have done their best to create for us a beautiful platform, complete with facilities that they themselves lacked in their time.

It is time for the young generation, step by step, to take up responsibilities alongside our senior Aurovilians in all areas of work.

A survey was recently completed among Auroville Youths between the ages of 18 and 35. I conducted one-on-one meetings with over 40 youths, who voluntarily came forward after my multiple announcement. During these meetings, I noted down both the challenges they face and the opportunities they see for improving our systems. Additionally, through the AIIS survey link, I gathered information about each youth's areas of interest.



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The youths who participated will be categorized into the following groups:

### **ENTREPRENEURS**

Youths interested in creating new businesses will be supported and guided, whether they are proposing startups or contributing to existing Auroville Units.

- For new startups, groups of experts in the field of business will be identified to mentor the young minds towards a successful unit, which will make a better contribution to Auroville's economy.
- For existing businesses, interested youths will be integrated as "Transition Members"—learning, building, and expanding the Auroville Units for a period of 3 years. After 3 years, when their involvement is assessed, they will be the priority to become the next executive of the specific Unit.

### **SKILL DEVELOPMENT**

Youths interested in developing specific skills that can help them grow personally and contribute meaningfully to Auroville will be supported through the networks of Auroville and the Auroville Foundation to develop that specific skill. Once they have completed the specific skill course, they should come back to work for the Development of Auroville.

### **SERVICE**

The most important sector that needs strengthening is the Service Sector in Auroville.

- Youths who take up responsibilities here will not merely continue with the old formulas but will innovate, collaborating with like-minded Units and Activities in and around Auroville.
- The goal will be to improve and expand the service sector and move towards reducing the financial burden on the Residents, volunteers, and Young Aurovilians. Being Under the Ministry of Education and an International Township working towards Human Unity, the youths in this field should expand their minds in linking with various likeminded organizations, people, and Government schemes to grow and expand the service to the Bioregion as well.

Starting with these three categories will already mark a strong beginning for the Transition and for youth participation in Auroville across all areas—including the Working Groups from the list of youths who have come forward to participate in the "Transition".

This being the first initiative for "Transition" with the great knowledge of the Governing Board members, Secretary mam, Working Groups, and the Auroville Residents. This can be made possible.

A dedicated group must be formed which will host and must be recognised to take things forward and to follow up. This group's name is open for suggestion.

Auroville must move as we are time bound, but she is infinite.

**Let us all take Auroville forward toward the aim of bringing in every possible development for the upcoming 28th February 2068. Through this collective effort, Auroville will continue to work towards its highest purpose: Human Unity.**

**— Arun, Member of the Working Committee**



# The Charter of Auroville: A Living Orientation for an Unfinished City

More than half a century after its proclamation, the Charter of Auroville continues to occupy a curious place in our collective life. It is sometimes cited, occasionally revered, rarely contested, and frequently misunderstood. Yet it has not become obsolete, nor has it settled comfortably into consensus. Instead, it remains quietly unsettling. This enduring discomfort may be the clearest sign of its vitality.

For Aurovilians, the Charter is not merely a founding document. It is a persistent presence, resurfacing at moments of crisis, reorientation, and fatigue. When governance falters, when conflicts harden, when questions of authority, ownership, or direction intensify, the Charter returns, not with answers, but with demands. It does not tell us what to do. It asks us who we are! becoming.

This article reflects on the positive power of the Charter, not as a legal framework or a moral code, but as a living orientation that has shaped Auroville's past and continues to condition its future possibilities.

### **A refusal to define the finished city**

The Charter emerged in a world marked by ideological certainty. Political systems claimed historical inevitability. Spiritual movements offered salvation through fixed paths. Social experiments often arrived with detailed blueprints and strict rules of belonging.

Against this backdrop, the Charter made a radical and deliberate choice. It refused to describe a finished society.

There is no prescribed governance model, no economic system, no cultural hierarchy embedded in its four points. Instead, it articulates directions of growth: human unity, unending education, conscious evolution, and the integration of matter and spirit. This absence of structural prescription is often perceived as a weakness. Historically, it has been experienced as ambiguity, even as impractical idealism.

Yet this very openness is one of the Charter's greatest strengths. By declining to define Auroville as a commune, a nation, a religion, or a utopia with a program, the Charter protected the project from premature closure. It ensured that Auroville would remain an experiment rather than an institution, a process rather than a product.



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This choice has demanded a great deal from those who live here. It has required maturity instead of compliance, inner work instead of ideological belonging. But it has also prevented Auroville from being captured by any single generation's certainties.

### **Auroville belongs to nobody in particular**

The first sentence of the Charter continues to challenge us more than any other. Its power lies not in what it asserts, but in what it dismantles.

Ownership, whether individual or collective. Authority rooted in personality, wealth, or institutional position. Even spiritual legitimacy as a source of control. By stating that Auroville belongs to nobody in particular, the Charter creates a deliberate vacuum where responsibility must arise without possession.

This is not a poetic flourish. It is a structural provocation.

In practice, this principle has been profoundly difficult to embody. Conflicts over land, resources, governance, and representation repeatedly expose how deeply conditioned we are to equate care with control and responsibility with power. Yet the Charter's insistence remains a safeguard. It resists both privatization and collectivist appropriation.

At a deeper level, this line invites a radical redefinition of participation. To live in Auroville is not to own a share of it, nor to speak on its behalf, but to serve something that does not belong to us at all. This orientation challenges the habitual frameworks of rights and entitlements and asks for a trusteeship rooted in consciousness rather than authority.

### **Unending education and the dignity of not knowing**

The Charter's second movement introduces education, but not as an institutional function. It speaks of unending education, suggesting a lifelong unfolding rather than a phase of preparation. This understanding has allowed Auroville to remain a place where people arrive not primarily to apply expertise, but to be transformed. Its many experiments, ecological, social, economic, and cultural, that are part of this education. So too are its failures, conflicts, and unfinished processes. The positive force here is subtle but significant. Auroville is not founded on mastery, but on learnability. This has prevented the consolidation of a permanent elite of knowers, even when informal hierarchies inevitably arise. The Charter keeps open the possibility that everyone, regardless of role or tenure, remains a student of life.

In a world increasingly dominated by efficiency, metrics, and professional specialization, this insistence on inner growth preserves a rare space where value is not reducible to performance.

### **Between past and future**

The Charter positions Auroville as a bridge between past and future. This image is neither nostalgic nor futuristic. It implies movement, transition, and discernment.

Auroville is not asked to reject tradition, nor to preserve it intact. Nor is it invited to chase novelty for its own sake. Its task is assimilation. To receive the past, extract its enduring wisdom, and release what no longer serves human evolution. To approach the future not as a technological fantasy, but as a qualitative transformation of consciousness.

This orientation has protected Auroville from two persistent dangers: regression into inherited forms, cultural, religious, or ideological; and fascination with the new as a substitute for depth. The Charter calls for continuity without repetition and innovation without rupture.

This work is slow and often invisible. It offers little immediate recognition. Yet it grants Auroville a relevance that deepens with time rather than fading with trends.

### **Matter and spirit, reunited**

Perhaps the most forward-looking dimension of the Charter is its refusal to divide inner and outer life. Auroville was not conceived as a retreat from the world, but as a site of research into life itself.

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How we build, grow food, organize work, relate to money, govern ourselves, and resolve conflict all belong to a single inquiry. The Charter quietly dissolves the boundary between spiritual aspiration and material practice.

In an era marked by ecological collapse and rapid technological acceleration, this integration appears less idealistic than urgent. Fragmented approaches have reached their limits. The Charter insists that consciousness must inform material action, or both will fail.

Auroville's experiments, in this sense, are not prototypes to be replicated. They are inspirations, signals, attempts to embody questions rather than to finalize answers.

### **The Charter in times of tension**

In moments of crisis, the Charter is often invoked. Sometimes as a source of authority, sometimes as a rhetorical weapon. Yet its true strength is not prescriptive.

The Charter does not tell us which structures to adopt or which decisions to make. It asks from where those decisions arise. Many of Auroville's recurring difficulties stem not from the Charter's vagueness, but from its depth. It demands that solutions emerge from a level of consciousness equal to the complexity of the problem.

This requirement cannot be rushed, imposed, or outsourced. It calls for patience, inner work, and a willingness to remain in uncertainty longer than is comfortable. In this sense, the Charter functions less as a judge than as a mirror, reflecting our readiness, our fears, and our ambitions.

### **Fidelity through evolution**

Perhaps the greatest positive aspect of the Charter is that it is not bound by time. While a deadline to complete the city was indicated by the Mother, the experiment embodied in the Charter, for the city, remains open ended. Completion would mean closure. Identity would replace inquiry. Administration would replace aspiration. The Charter keeps the city open to futures we cannot yet imagine and obliges each generation to reinterpret it anew, not by bending its words, but by deepening their meaning through lived experience.

Fidelity to the Charter does not lie in repetition. It lies in courage. The courage to resist shortcuts, to remain vulnerable to transformation, and to accept that Auroville, like human unity itself, is a work still in becoming.

In this sense, the Charter has not grown old. We are still growing into it.

**— Joseba Martinez, Member of the Working Committee**





**May the presence and protection of Sri Aurobindo and myself always be present in your consciousness and accompany you on the way to the goal to which we all aspire: TRANSFORMATION.**

*— The Mother*

*Aspiration*

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