
Auroville Tomorrow

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

Ushus: 1

Sri Aurobindo

Kiran: 12

24th March 2026

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

What We Seek What We Become



Ravana's mind thought it was hungering after universal sovereignty and victory over Rama; But the aim of his soul kept its vision fixed upon all the time was to get back to its heaven as soon as possible and be again God's menial. Therefore, as the shortest way, it hurled itself against God in a furious clasp of enmity. God's servant is something; God's slave is greater.

— Sri Aurobindo, CCWSA (Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo), Volume 12

Feminine, Truth, Freedom

*From lived experience to
a deeper balance of consciousness*

Twelve is a sacred number. More than a simple figure, it signifies a hidden order within the universe; a complete cycle of light and darkness, sun and moon, time and human experience. It is a bridge between nature and human consciousness, a reminder of wholeness, balance, and harmony. Cosmic cycles are interwoven with our daily lives and inner rhythms, and the sacred order of the world reveals itself in every turning of the sun and the moon.

And this is the twelfth issue of Auroville Tomorrow. I wish to bring this one-year cycle to a close with words that, without being contrary to my own will, seem as though they themselves have asked to be written and recorded. Throughout these twelve issues, a similar process unfolded. At the beginning of each month, I would look with heightened attention at signs, at the main current of life, and at everything unfolding around me, to understand what needed to be written.

I was raised by a mother who, from the moment she sensed that my character was taking shape within a traditional context such as Balochistan, consciously protected my personal freedom despite all challenges. She continuously reminded me that in Asian societies, even if no woman stands beside you, you must never cease to support women.

Alongside her, I witnessed a father who, with the utmost respect for my mother, supported her growth and flourishing, from continuing her education to advancing in professional and social positions, and engaging in activities related to women's independence in Balochistan.

Between them, a delicate and beautiful balance infused with deep respect and a quiet affection. I mention my father here to draw a clear line through any assumption that I was raised within a purely ideological or feminist framework.

In those years, Afghan students could relatively easily enter universities in Iran, yet graduating and obtaining a degree was, in practice, fraught with obstacles. I witnessed many times how my mother strove and fought for the graduation of these students, many of whom were women. At that time, she was the head of the Computer Science and Mathematics Department at the University of Sistan and Balochistan in Zahedan.

In those days, I did not yet have the language to name what I was witnessing. Terms such as "female agency," "structures of power," or "the redefinition of gender roles" entered my intellectual world later. Yet experience takes shape before language. What I lived was a form of possibility, one that I later understood has not yet been realized in many parts of the world.



In the years that followed, this possibility became a question for me: why is something that could be natural so rare?

Internal transformations within Iran's political infrastructure set the course toward a cry that rose from within society: Woman, Life, Freedom. Everything changed after that. A resistance emerged, intense and deeply demanding, breaking long-standing patterns of patriarchy, whose roots were intertwined with politics, and unraveling worn-out traditional bonds that had been embedded within families.

Yet the will that had grown from within the women of that society succeeded. We witnessed profound and structural changes. A different ground began to take shape, built upon a foundation formed through awareness and responsibility toward future generations. Gradually, these transformations extended beyond women; men, too, changed, and a balance between feminine and masculine energies, within each individual and within society, began to reveal itself.

After these transformations, I came to Auroville. I clearly remember my first days here, the attentiveness I placed on people's words, and the same sensitivity with which I had observed the space of Iran. It was as though I was following the same questions within a different context.

Along this path, my encounter with the thought of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo carried this question to a deeper level. In their view, a woman is not merely a social identity, but the manifestation of a force capable of carrying consciousness and transmitting it into the world. The Mother, at one point, refers to the feminine force as a force of "reception, transformation, and manifestation", a movement from within outward, from possibility into reality.

If we take this perspective seriously, then the distance between what a woman is and what she is allowed to be is not merely a social issue; it is a rupture within collective consciousness itself.

In many societies, women face not only external limitations, but also a kind of internalized order, one that, from childhood, teaches them how to define themselves as smaller, how to choose competition over synergy, and how to perceive the presence of another woman not as a possibility, but as a threat.

Competition among women is often interpreted as an individual or moral trait. Yet it must be understood within a broader context: when resources, opportunities, and positions available to women are limited, each new presence is perceived not as an expansion of space, but as its further compression.

Within such a structure, another woman becomes not a companion, but a rival, not because this is her nature, but because the structure places her in a position where survival is sometimes defined through the exclusion of others.

Yet the Mother says: "Where competition gives way to collaboration, a higher force can act." This statement, though simple in appearance, contains within it a shift of paradigm.

Perhaps one of the deepest forms of women's independence lies not in distancing oneself from others, but in freeing oneself from this internalized pattern of competition, the ability to see another woman not as a threat, but as an extension of a shared possibility.

We are all trees of the same forest.

This is precisely what I witnessed in my mother. She created space not only for herself, but for other women as well. It was as though she knew that true growth occurs when one moves beyond the boundaries of individuality and becomes part of a collective movement.

Here, the concept of "Mother" takes on meaning once again—not as a role, but as a quality: the capacity to create space for the growth of others without feeling threatened by it. This quality can be understood as a transformative force. Structures of power do not change solely through laws; they also transform through shifts in relational patterns. When women move from competition to collaboration, they not only alter their individual positions but also contribute to redefining the structure as a whole.

In this process, the role of men remains essential. My experience of my parents' relationship showed me that support can itself be a form of power, a power defined not by dominance, but by enabling the growth of another. Sri Aurobindo points out that human evolution can only take place through a balance of forces, not through the dominance of one over another.

If we extend this principle to the relationship between women and men, then women's independence can no longer be defined in opposition to men, but must be sought within a dynamic equilibrium.

Looking at the world today, this imbalance becomes clearly visible. The turbulence we observe across different levels, from politics to economics, and even in human relationships, largely reflects the dominance of a one-sided energy, one that, in its extreme form, is characterized by control, endless competition, accumulation of power, and the exclusion of others.

In such a context, the need to return to balance is felt more than ever, not as the replacement of one force by another, but as the restoration of equilibrium between them. What may be called "feminine energy", with qualities such as nurturing, connection, intuition, and the capacity to hold and transform, plays a vital role in this process.

This balance must be restored not only at the collective level, but within each individual, both in men and in women. The issue is not duality; it is imbalance.

If we turn toward the future, an important question emerges: what image of women will the next generation inherit?

If girls continue to grow within environments where success is defined through exhausting competition with other women, this cycle will continue. But if they are able to grow within a context where collaboration, support, and synergy are valued, the possibility of a different culture will emerge.

The role of women in the future is not limited to greater presence within existing structures, but lies in their capacity to redefine those very structures, to bring into the world qualities that have long remained underexpressed.

Perhaps the future needs not only women who succeed within existing frameworks, but women who are capable of transforming the frameworks themselves.

And this transformation begins from a place very close to us: in the way we look at one another. Whether we can see another woman's success not as a threat, but as a sign of expanding possibilities.

Ultimately, what is referred to as "the question of women" is, in fact, a reflection of a deeper issue: the way consciousness, power, and possibility are distributed within a society.

A society in which women can exist without fear, without exhausting competition, and without the need to diminish themselves is a society that has moved closer to a higher state of balance.

And perhaps this is the very cycle we spoke of at the beginning, a cycle that becomes complete only when all its elements stand together, not in opposition, but in harmony.

If this cycle is to reach balance, we must, somewhere within ourselves, accept this question: have we still kept women in the shadow, or are we ready to see her in the light, and more importantly, to stand together in that same light?

— Anita Kamali, Writer and Editor of Auroville Tomorrow Newsletter



Offering Ourselves to the Divine, Many Paths, One Consciousness

Reflections from the Global Spirituality Mahotsav

Each time I enter the serene precincts of the Matrimandir, I find myself drawn to a quiet, sacred space beneath a grand Nagalingam tree, also called the Prosperity tree. There, the earth holds a silent story of years of devotion. A simple yet profound act has unfolded for decades—flowers brought from the Ashram and the Samadhi are arranged into a delicate mandala, layer by layer, until they transform into a new earth.

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



When I touch that soil, I do not merely feel its texture—I sense a living presence. As I let it rest upon my fingers and softly place it upon my eyelids, forehead, and cheeks, there arises an unmistakable experience of a new consciousness. It is as though something within begins to shift, to awaken. In that intimate moment, one realises that we are all, in our own ways, engaged in a slow yet certain metamorphosis—of every cell, every thought, every breath—moving closer and closer toward a state of Ananda, of divine delight.

It was in this deeply receptive inner state that the Global Spirituality Mahotsav unfolded at Auroville earlier this month. The Mahotsav began on a grand and symbolic note, with the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi addressing a special gathering in Puducherry. In his address, he invoked the timeless contributions of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother—visionaries whose work transcends geography and continues to guide humanity's evolutionary journey. Anchored in Sri Aurobindo's "Five Dreams," the Mahotsav set the tone for a collective exploration of unity, consciousness, and the future of human evolution.

Even before the formal commencement, on the eve of Auroville's Foundation Day, February 28, the spirit of the gathering was beautifully invoked through a soul-stirring musical offering. The renowned maestros, percussionist Shivamani and Mandolin Rajesh, created a symphony of strings and drums. What emerged was a deeply melodic and meditative experience—rhythms that seemed to arise from silence and return to it. A profound gentleness pervaded the soundscape, without harshness or jarring intensity, echoing the inner stillness that the Mahotsav sought to awaken.

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Art, work, and worship, too, became powerful vehicles for offering. The Divine Mother was worshipped with beautiful flowers soaked in collective devotion and aspiration through the Srividya Pooja at Bharat Kalari. The evocative renditions of Maithili Thakur and Charulata Mani brought devotion into living expression. Through music, one could feel the heart's surrender, the soul's aspiration—reminding us that the Divine can be approached not only through silence and knowledge, but also through beauty and emotion.

What was most striking was the spirit of consecration and depth of deliberation that pervaded the entire gathering. Each participant—whether a practitioner, artist, thinker, or seeker—brought with them the distilled essence of their journey. These were not merely ideas or techniques; they were lived experiences, inner realisations, offerings of a lifetime. And as they were shared in this collective space, something remarkable occurred: they did not remain separate. Like the mandala beneath the tree, each offering merged into a greater whole, dissolving into a shared aspiration. In a world marked by turmoil, fragmentation, conflict, and uncertainty, the Mahotsav stood as a quiet yet powerful affirmation of unity—not as an abstract ideal, but as a lived reality rooted in consciousness. It reminded us that diversity need not divide; it can enrich, deepen, and expand our collective journey when held in the light of a higher purpose. As the Mother said, “The right attitude not only has the power to turn every circumstance to advantage, but can change the very circumstance itself.”

A particularly moving moment was the installation of the Mother's relics at Savitri Bhavan. There was a concrete establishment of The Mother's Presence. It was a very significant event in the history of Auroville, and words cannot describe its significance.

At its core, the Mahotsav revealed a simple yet profound truth: there are countless ways of offering oneself to the Divine. Through meditation or music, through knowledge or service, through devotion or action—each path becomes sacred when pursued with sincerity.



As Sri Aurobindo wrote, “All life is yoga.” This insight lies at the heart of the transformation of consciousness. It is not merely what we do, but the consciousness with which we do it that shapes our reality. The right attitude—of faith, sincerity, humility, and surrender—becomes the alchemical force that transforms both the inner and outer worlds.

In this light, the Mahotsav was not just a gathering; it was a catalyst. It accelerated the process of inner evolution, nurturing the seeds of a new earth with a new consciousness. It echoed Sri Aurobindo’s assurance: “All can be done if the God-touch is there.” And perhaps that is the enduring message we carry forward: to recognise the Divine in all—within ourselves, in others, and in every circumstance. To live with an unwavering aspiration, to offer each moment as an act of consecration, and to trust in the gradual yet certain unfolding of a higher consciousness.

As I return, once again, to that quiet space beneath the Prosperity tree at the Matrimandir, and gently touch that living earth, I am reminded that transformation need not be dramatic to be real. It can be gentle, patient, almost imperceptible—yet profoundly powerful. Like the soil formed from countless offerings, we too are being reshaped, refined, and renewed. In that sacred process, we move—slowly but surely—toward the realisation of The Mother’s vision: a new earth, a new humanity, and a life divine manifest upon earth.



Sri Aurobindo and The resurgence of India



Sri Aurobindo gave the road map to the growth of mankind. He discussed the resurgence of India. For Sri Aurobindo, resurgent India means spiritually awakened civilization.

An Awakened civilization can only guide the world towards higher consciousness. His vision of resurgent India includes the regaining of freedom and the revival of culture.

— Prof. R.S.Sarraj, Governing Board Member

The vision of Sri Aurobindo is deeply spiritual, cultural, and civilizational. He did not see Indian resurgence as merely political freedom from the British. He was thinking about the profound awakening of India's soul and its role in future humanity.

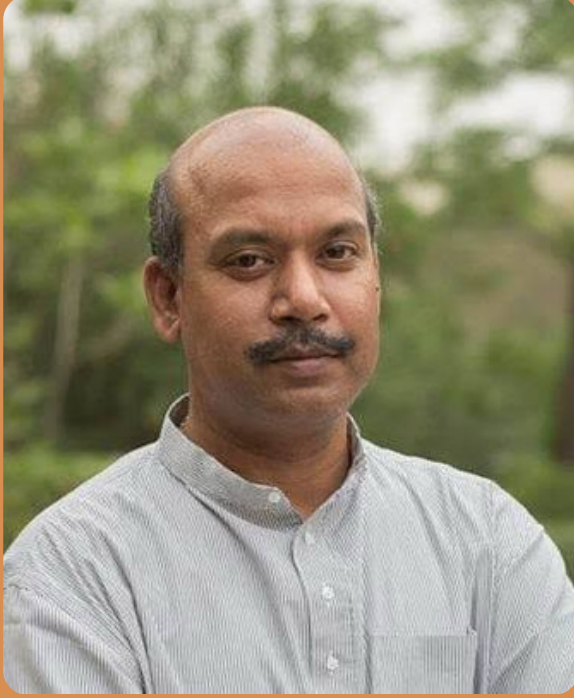
Let us discuss the core ideas of Sri Aurobindo on resurgent India. His first and foremost idea of resurgent India is spiritual nationalism. Sri Aurobindo did not visualize a geographical nation. He was visualizing a 'Shakti', which is a living spiritual force in India. He believed that Indian's true identity lies in 'Sanatana Dharma'. As such, nationalism is sacred for him. He was trying to develop divine character. He was also thinking that political freedom was necessary to express the soul of the nation.

Sri Aurobindo wrote an essay entitled 'The Renaissance in India' In his monthly journal Arya between August and November 1918. He argued that India must revive its classical knowledge systems and philosophical traditions along with Arts, Literature, and education. He was synthesizing east and west.

He was emphasizing the preservation of Indian spiritual foundations. He was telling embrace the future of India in harmony with Indian spiritual wisdom. His central philosophical idea was that humanity is evolving spiritually. India has a role to guide this evolution through yogic knowledge and inner transformation. Resurgent India would illuminate spiritually.

Sri Aurobindo says that India's resurgence is for the welfare of the world. India must raise humanity, the unity of mankind, and divine life on the earth. India possessed an ancient, sophisticated civilization. Sri Aurobindo says that true civilization develops spiritual knowledge, ethical culture, and inner development. From the point of view of Sri Aurobindo, India is not a piece of earth; she is a power, and she is the mother. She is a living spiritual force. India is a source of wisdom, culture, and spiritual nourishment for humanity. His integral yoga is a method of transforming the whole human nature, mind, life, and body so that the divine consciousness can manifest in everyday life. This yoga is not about the renunciation from the world but the yoga of divine life.

My Journey with Auroville Sanskrit, Spirit, and Service



Auroville, the City of Dawn, has been an attraction for my inner self ever since I visited there for the first time thirty years ago. Since then, I have been associated with Auroville in various roles for furthering the vision of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother through the education of Indian Knowledge Systems and Sanskrit. My role has been that of an instrument, bringing the wisdom of the Bharatiya Jnana Parampara to a global community.

**—Dr. Sampadananda Mishra, Director,
Centre of Human Science, Rishihood
University**

The Early Years: 1995–2004

My formal connection with Auroville began in 1995 when I moved to Pondicherry to settle there. I was introduced to the Auroville community by my senior, Dr. Himanshu Shekhar Acharya, who was teaching Sanskrit at Bharat Nivas. He traveled from Kanchipuram every weekend to conduct these classes. I often joined him, meeting the residents who were eager to learn the language of the spirit.

In 1997, Dr. Acharya handed the classes over to me. I continued this work every week, travelling from Pondicherry to Auroville until 2004. During this time, I saw how Sanskrit acted as a unifying force for people from different cultures. Sanskrit is a language of immense potential, capable of giving precise expression to every human emotion and aspiration. It plays a vital role in unifying human beings by adding both strength and beauty to our collective life. By integrating Sanskrit into the fabric of Auroville, it was envisioned that the language could refine and harmonize life as a whole. This experiment is particularly fruitful in Auroville, where people from many different countries live together and share their diverse experiences. In this multicultural setting, Sanskrit serves as a common ground for the soul. As Sri Aurobindo stated:

"The great mass of Sanskrit literature is a literature of human life..."

Learning that the Mother had included Sanskrit as an official language of Auroville—alongside Tamil, French, and English—was a moment of great joy for me. It confirmed that the Devabhasha is not a relic of the past, but a living instrument for the "unending education" and "constant progress" that Auroville represents.

The Mother also emphasized the importance of the language for the future, for India, and stated that it must be made a living and vibrant language:

"It would be better to learn Sanskrit and try to make it a truly living language."

Expanding the Scope of Education and Culture

After 2004, I moved away from a weekly schedule to conduct more specialized workshops. These sessions focused on Integral Education, the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Gita, and Mantra Yoga. My goal was to provide a deeper understanding of these subjects at Savitri Bhavan, Unity Pavilion, and Bharat Nivas.

By teaching the Devabhasha, I aimed to present the multidimensional aspects of Sanskrit, as Sri Aurobindo mentions in many places in his writings.

Recent Initiatives and Research

My engagement with Auroville has recently involved more strategic collaborations. In 2023, I led a team from the Centre for Human Sciences at Rishihood University to Auroville. We conducted a field study on community living and education. This research contributed to our report on the Integral Humanism Initiative, which seeks to apply Indian philosophical principles to modern society.

Additionally, I worked with the Auroville Foundation (AVF) to organize one-day Youth Camps in 11 locations across India. These camps introduced higher-education students to the ideals of Auroville. A significant milestone in this journey was convening the first-ever Sanskrit Literature Festival at the Auroville Literature Festival in 2024. This initiative allowed us to celebrate the beauty and depth of the language in a creative, contemporary setting. Whether as a speaker, a workshop facilitator, or a participant in various community programs, I have always sought to be a helper in the growth of collective consciousness.

The Vision for India and the World

I am grateful to Dr. Jayanti Ravi ji, Secretary of the AVF, for the opportunity to serve as an Honorary Aurovilian for the years 2023 to 2025. This role allowed me to continue supporting the initiatives that align Auroville's growth with India's spiritual mission. Auroville is a site where the spiritual knowledge is put into practice. My journey has been about providing the educational foundation for this work. As we look toward the future, we remember the words of Sri Aurobindo:

"India of the ages is not dead nor has she spoken her last creative word; she lives and has still something to do for herself and the human peoples."

I remain dedicated to being an instrument in this work, ensuring that the light of Indian Knowledge Systems continues to guide the "City of Dawn" and the world beyond.



The Challenge of Being Auroville

Keeping the Living Experiment Alive

Auroville has been in the news recently for a variety of reasons, many of them connected with issues surrounding the divergence between its ideals and its lived reality, flooding the marketplace of opinions. And when events in a sacred experiment like Auroville begin to become material for common gossip, it shows there is something in its approach that needs correction. Thus, a more holistic reflection on these issues is warranted.

Before going further, I should acknowledge something important. I am someone who has visited Auroville and admired it from afar, but has not lived through its many phases or contributed to its growth through years of labour and aspiration. Those who have built this place carry insights that cannot be replaced by just outside study and observation. What follows, therefore, is only offered as a humble attempt to look at certain patterns in Auroville's unfoldment through the lens of history and the ideals that inspired its founding.

If we step back, many of these tensions visible today are not unique to Auroville. Spiritual and utopian communities across history have encountered similar turning points. When a higher spiritual force first descends into collective life, it meets resistance through the established forces. If that resistance fails, the same forces often attempt a subtler approach: they gradually reshape the original inspiration itself, turning it into something more familiar to human nature but also more distant from the original inspiration. Sri Aurobindo observed this dynamic repeatedly in the evolution of religions and spiritual movements.

Seen in this broader perspective, the issues that appear today in Auroville can be understood through three fundamental relationships that a spiritual community must aim to perfect: its relationship with the **Transcendent**, with the **Universal**, and with the **Individual**.

The Challenge of the Transcendent

Every spiritual community begins with a living contact with the transcendent, whether it be through a single founder or a group of people who act as the guiding spiritual presence that gives the community its orientation and unity. While that living presence remains, questions of authority rarely become decisive. But once it withdraws, a new question inevitably arises: who now interprets the original vision?

Auroville faced this question soon after the passing of the Mother in 1973. The Sri Aurobindo Society attempted to assert control over the township, believing it had both the legal and spiritual responsibility to safeguard the Mother's work. Many residents felt differently: that Auroville had been conceived as belonging not to an institution but to humanity, and that its direction should arise from the community itself.



Auroville exists within India, within Tamil Nadu, and within a landscape that long preceded the township itself. Long before the first settlers arrived, this land was part of the lives and livelihoods of the surrounding Tamil villages. Over the decades, relationships between Auroville and its neighbouring communities have evolved in many ways; sometimes through cooperation and shared initiatives, sometimes through misunderstanding and tension. The Mother's guidance on how to treat the surrounding villages helped the early settlers create an amicable relationship between the groups; not all tensions have been easy to overcome.

Land acquisition efforts, for example, have been necessary for realizing the township vision, yet they have also raised legitimate concerns among neighbouring communities about equity and participation. These questions are not simply administrative; they touch on the deeper issue of how a universal experiment relates to the people among whom it lives.

Auroville also meets the universal through the realities of the modern nation-state. Government intervention in the early years preserved the Auroville experiment, but it also established a continuing relationship with political and legal structures. More recently, matters such as financial regulation, land transactions, and visa policies affecting international residents have highlighted the ongoing balance between Auroville's global aspiration and the legal framework within which it operates.

History again offers parallels. When Emperor Ashoka adopted Buddhism and extended royal patronage to the sangha, the religion flourished and gained institutional stability. Yet this close relationship with political authority also transformed the character of the Buddhist community. Many other intentional communities, whether it be the Christian community under Constantine, the Israeli kibbutzim, or the Tibetan exile settlements, have faced similar tensions between political patronage and their spiritual ideals.

Today, the increasing globalization and material technical innovations have also led to an intrusion of the outside world in Auroville that is impacting the experiment in unprecedented ways. The universal access to the internet and smartphones alone is leading to an accelerated communication between the outside world and Auroville, leading to a larger scope for education, but also propaganda.

For Auroville, the question is not whether these challenges will exist. The question is how they can be navigated in a way that remains faithful to the township's deeper aspiration of human unity. Can it absorb and assimilate what the outside world brings, without deviating from its ideal, and in turn leave a transforming mark on that contact? That will determine the longevity of the experiment.

The conflict that followed eventually led to the intervention of the Government of India and, later, the creation of the Auroville Foundation through an Act of Parliament. For some, this institutional framework preserved the experiment from collapse. For others, it marked the beginning of a new tension between spiritual authority and administrative structure.

History shows similar moments elsewhere. After the Buddha's passing, early Buddhist communities convened councils to determine which teachings represented the authentic dharma. These efforts were meant to preserve the truth of the teaching, yet they also marked the gradual emergence of institutional authority within the sangha. Christian communities experienced a similar transition in the centuries following the disappearance of the apostles. Efforts to maintain unity gradually produced structures of orthodoxy and authority that transformed the character of the movement.

We should not always mistake such developments as failures, since the attempt here is to preserve the truth of the teaching, even if turned into partial formulations. However, it does raise an important question: how can a community remain faithful to the original spiritual inspiration once the visible embodiment of that inspiration is no longer present?

In Auroville, debates about the interpretation of the Mother's vision (whether regarding the Galaxy Plan, Matrimandir measurements, the Crown Road, or the broader purpose of the township) can be seen as contemporary expressions of this same question. Fidelity to the original inspiration and openness to evolving circumstances are both necessary. While harmonising them is not easy, it is the path to the experiment's sustainability.

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The Challenge of the Universal

For the establishment of any spiritual community, its relationship with the outside world also needs to be seen in alignment with its aim. For example, monastic communities with the aim of individual liberation would like to have minimal interaction with the outside world, and have internal administration as much as a smooth functioning of internal affairs requires. While communities with a more earthly aim would like to interact with and influence the outside world through various outreach efforts, and also learn from it and develop their own internal structures. Auroville has been conceived as a universal township, where the aim is to give shape to the ideal of human unity and collective progress towards the next stage of evolution. And thus, while guarding its spiritual core, it has to have some interaction with the outside world and deal with the challenges thrown by universal nature.



The Challenge of the Individual

Ultimately, no spiritual society can rise higher than the consciousness of the individuals who compose it. Structures can support aspiration, but they cannot replace it. And Auroville's alignment with the aim of individual transformation makes it much more imperative here to focus on the individual.

Auroville's experiment in collective decision-making reflects an aspiration toward a new form of social consciousness. Yet as the population has grown and diversified, consensus processes have sometimes struggled to keep pace with the practical needs of a complex community. Similar patterns have appeared in communities such as the Findhorn Foundation and the Israeli kibbutzim, where early ideals of collective decision-making gradually encountered the practical demands of larger and more complex societies. With Auroville's focus on a 'subjective-objectivity', i.e., allowing an increasing expression of the subjective individual self in the objective decision-making, in alignment with Sri Aurobindo's ideas on the subjective age, the problem becomes more complex.

Leadership dynamics also become more complicated as communities mature. Individuals who have long experience with Auroville's processes often carry a deep understanding of its ideals and practical workings. Their guidance can be invaluable in navigating complex decisions. At the same time, when influence operates informally rather than transparently, it can give rise to perceptions of opacity or exclusion. Many intentional communities have faced this same tension between natural leadership and the need for shared trust in collective processes. More recent debates about governance centralisation reflect the same tension between efficiency and participation.

Beyond governance structures lie the ordinary human challenges that accompany any collective life: interpersonal conflicts, social issues, and the gradual dilution of the intense aspiration that often characterizes the early pioneers of a movement. As a spiritual community grows, we should expect the original nucleus that carried the founding aspiration to expand. In the normal course, with this expansion comes dilution, against which a conservative instinct is natural to arise, aiming to protect the truth, but generally leading to more rigid forms. Leaning on any extreme leads to an eventual collapse of the community; finding the right balance, while difficult, prolongs its life and offers a chance of continuous revitalisation.

The Way Forward

All these challenges that arise before Auroville show, on the positive side, that the experiment is alive, and on the growth side, that there is much to improve upon and progress.

Auroville was never intended to be a finished model of a perfect society. It was conceived as an evolving experiment in human unity. Experiments inevitably pass through phases of uncertainty, conflict, and rediscovery. And so, along with an aspiration for the divine society, we also need a faith in the founding vision, which must eventually express itself through supple structures capable of sustaining that vision in the complexities of real life.

The intentional communities that came before Auroville often struggled with these same tensions, and not all of them survived. Some became museums of their own ideals. Others dissolved into ordinary social patterns; their founding aspiration was preserved in documents that no one reads anymore. Their success and failure depended on the same criteria: if they were able to remain faithful to their original inspiration while adapting to the complexities of evolution.

Now that Auroville is again going through a critical phase, it is an opportune time to reassess and renew our faith and aspiration, and overcome the challenges by courageously working towards our common aim. And the courage required is to follow the Great Adventure the Mother envisioned, with nothing sure on the path, but with the destination inevitable.

—Mohit Bansal, Associate Director, Axtia Technologies

The Second Global Spirituality Mahotsav at Auroville

A Reflection on Unity, Consciousness, and the Future of Humanity

The Second Global Spirituality Mahotsav, held at Auroville, was an experience that will remain etched in memory for a long time. The first Mahotsav had taken place at the Heartfulness Institute campus in Kanha near Hyderabad. The continuation of this initiative in Auroville carried a deep symbolic meaning: a gathering of diverse spiritual traditions and seekers in a place dedicated to the future evolution of humanity.

Representatives from many spiritual traditions and organizations came together not merely to present their teachings but to share their experiences of the inner journey, to reflect on where humanity stands today, and to explore where it must move next.

When I had the opportunity to address the gathering, I felt that the usual forms of address—ladies and gentlemen, friends, or even fellow seekers—were insufficient. Instead, I addressed the assembly as Sadhana Sanghis: companions on the path of spiritual effort. For those gathered here were not merely listeners or participants; they were friends in sadhana, individuals engaged in a conscious inner discipline within their own traditions, fields, and circumstances.

The Mahotsav unfolded through a series of talks, reflections, sacred music, mystic practices, and cultural expressions. What was striking was the depth of the dialogue. This depth emerged not only from the wisdom of contemporary thinkers and practitioners but also from the powerful presence of the teachings of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother, whose vision forms the spiritual foundation of Auroville.

Sri Aurobindo and the Deeper Meaning of Evolution

Many speakers reflected on Sri Aurobindo's multidimensional personality. He is widely known as a revolutionary nationalist, philosopher, poet, and Rajarishi. Yet several speakers reminded us that his significance lies much deeper.

Sri Aurobindo is not only a great historical figure; for many seekers, he represents an avatar of the new age. Together with the Mother, he brought into Earth's evolution a new consciousness—the supramental force—a transformative power meant to guide humanity toward a higher stage of existence.



The Mahotsav repeatedly returned to this profound idea: that the supramental consciousness has already descended into Earth's evolution. Yet its full manifestation requires a prepared humanity—individuals and collectives willing to transform themselves inwardly.

In this context, Auroville—born from the Sri Aurobindo Ashram—takes on a special significance. It is conceived as a living laboratory of human unity, where people from many nations attempt to transcend divisions and prepare the ground for a new consciousness to manifest in collective life.

The Vision of the Five Dreams

The Mahotsav also revisited the powerful message contained in Sri Aurobindo's Five Dreams, which remain a guiding vision for humanity. These dreams encompass:

- The freedom and unity of India
- The resurgence and unity of Asia
- The emergence of a world union
- The spiritual gift of India to humanity
- And finally, the evolution of humanity toward a higher consciousness

The fifth dream, in particular, formed a central theme of the Mahotsav. It points toward the emergence of a new being, a step beyond the mental human into a more conscious, luminous, and harmonious existence.

In many ways, this vision formed the philosophical backbone of the entire gathering.

The Body as the Foundation of Sadhana

Another important theme explored during the Mahotsav was the human body's role as the foundation of spiritual practice.

Several speakers emphasized the importance of the Panchamaya Koshas—the five sheaths of human existence described in the Upanishadic tradition:

- The physical sheath
- The vital or energy sheath
- The mental sheath
- The wisdom sheath
- And the bliss sheath

True spiritual evolution requires a harmonization of these different layers of our being. The transformation envisioned by Sri Aurobindo is not an escape from the world but a transformation of life itself, beginning with the body and extending to the collective dimension of human existence.

As Sri Aurobindo often reminded us, all problems of existence are essentially problems of harmony.

A Gathering of Diverse Traditions

The Mahotsav brought together participants from several spiritual movements and traditions, including representatives from the Isha Foundation and the Heartfulness movement, along with philosophers, scholars, artists, and practitioners from many different backgrounds.

Rather than attempting to create uniformity, the gathering celebrated diversity rooted in a deeper unity.

The cultural and experiential dimension of the Mahotsav was equally significant. Sacred music and artistic performances added a powerful emotional and spiritual atmosphere to the event.

Among the memorable moments were performances by Padma Shri Sivamani and mandolin virtuoso U. Rajesh, organized by Aurodhan at the amphitheatre near the Matrimandir. Their music created a vibrant space where rhythm, silence, and spiritual aspiration merged into a unique experience.

At the Bharatiya venue, the singer Arun offered soulful renditions that carried a devotional and uplifting energy. At Bharat Nivas and Kalagram, various mystic practices, sacred gatherings, and cultural expressions took place, adding layers of experiential depth to the Mahotsav.

Reflections from My Talk

In my own reflections during the Mahotsav, I emphasized three essential ideas.

The first was the importance of beginning from a point of agreement.

In gatherings of diverse spiritual traditions, differences are inevitable. Yet unity becomes possible when we consciously focus on what we share rather than what divides us. If we identify even one point on which everyone agrees and begin building from there, unity can gradually expand and deepen.

The second idea was the importance of practical inner practices.

Today we hear of many approaches—mindfulness, breathfulness, and heartfulness. These are valuable practices, yet they can be expanded further.

I suggested that alongside them, we must cultivate:

- Soulfulness — awareness of the deeper psychic being within
- Divinefulness — a conscious openness to the divine presence guiding evolution

When these dimensions become part of our practice, clarity naturally emerges, and we begin to perceive what is truly necessary for individual and collective progress.

The third idea was perhaps the most important.

Humanity today faces immense challenges—ecological, social, political, and psychological. Yet these challenges also represent an unprecedented opportunity.

If humanity can transcend its divisions and awaken to a deeper consciousness, it can move toward a new level of unity and harmony.

Auroville and the Call to Unity

In this context, Auroville carries a special responsibility.

Few places in the world were consciously created as an experiment in human unity. The Mother founded Auroville with precisely this purpose.

Those who participate in the work and vision of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo, therefore, carry a profound responsibility.

They must strive to surmount the many limitations that divide humanity—limitations of nationality, creed, ideology, ego, misunderstanding, or personal desire.

Only by overcoming these can Auroville truly become what it was meant to be: a living example of unity for the world.

Preparing for the Noons of the Future

Throughout the Mahotsav, one message resonated repeatedly.

Auroville is not meant to be imprisoned in the memories of past achievements, however great they may be. It is meant to prepare humanity for the noons of the future.

This vision carries a powerful implication: however magnificent the past has been, the future promises to be far greater.

The task before us is therefore clear—to prepare ourselves inwardly and collectively to march forward toward that luminous future.



Key Learnings from the Mahotsav

Several important insights emerged from the gathering:

- Unity is the foundation for humanity's next evolutionary step.
- Spiritual traditions must move from dialogue to collaboration.
- Inner transformation must include the body, mind, and soul.
- Art, music, and culture are powerful vehicles of spiritual experience.
- The vision of Sri Aurobindo offers a framework for humanity's future evolution.

Action Points for the Future

The Mahotsav also suggested several practical directions:

- Strengthening dialogue among spiritual traditions
- Creating platforms for shared spiritual practice
- Encouraging youth participation in spiritual and cultural initiatives
- Integrating art, music, and philosophy into spiritual gatherings
- Developing Auroville further as a living model of human unity

Toward a Luminous Future

As the Mahotsav came to a close, one felt that this gathering was not merely an event but a step in an ongoing journey.

Humanity stands today at a crucial threshold. The challenges before us are immense, but so are the possibilities. If we can awaken to the deeper consciousness that Sri Aurobindo and the Mother spoke of, the future may indeed bring a new harmony, a new humanity, and a new world. And perhaps, in its quiet yet determined way, Auroville continues to remind us that such a future is not only possible—it is already beginning.

—Lalit Varma, President of Aurodhan Art Gallery



A Journey As A Fellow in Auroville

Auroville is known as the “City of Dawn.” It is not simply an experimental township, and to understand Auroville, one must look at it as a “living laboratory for the next step in human evolution. Life in Auroville is meant to be a form of Karma Yoga, where work is done as an offering to the Divine rather than for personal gain or monetary reward.

I am Asita Dutta, a fellow under the 150th Sri Aurobindo Birth Anniversary Fellowship Program under the Ministry of Education, Auroville Foundation. Over the past two years, Auroville has offered me a unique space to learn, reflect, and grow both professionally and personally. Living and working in this conscious environment has allowed me to explore service as a form of inner practice, deepen my understanding of human unity, and engage meaningfully with diverse communities and disciplines. Through this fellowship, I have encountered experiences that challenged me, nurtured my strengths, and guided me toward greater self-awareness and responsibility.

In this writing, I share my journey through Auroville. All my learnings, experiences, and reflections gained through work, service, and everyday life in this beautiful and evolving experiment in human consciousness.

Two years ago, I learned about the fellowship program almost as if called by an unseen force near the Sri Aurobindo Ashram corridor. I was told, “Asita, today is the last day to apply. If you are interested, please submit all documents by this evening.” I immediately tried submitting the application online, but the submission failed. I contacted the coordinator and emailed all required documents directly. During the interview, I was asked how I related to Auroville and the Ashram. I shared that my family has served the Divine for four generations and that I was deeply connected to Nirod Da. The interviewer paused, smiled, and said in Bengali, “Maa ki bhabe teney ney.” I felt immense positivity and joy, sensing that I was meant to work in Auroville.

In July, I met the EMS Ambulance team, where Srijita Di and Alok Da introduced me to their work. I formally joined the Ambulance team on August 2nd. Initially, my role was observational, but gradually I participated in meetings and discussions. After two months, I received another opportunity to work with Michtild in Auroville’s senior living home-visit services, which I thoroughly enjoyed.



Healthcare-related services—Sante, EMS, and senior citizen care—became the soul of my work. Although some units were hesitant to collaborate due to the “fellowship” tag, I continued with faith, resilience, and divine grace.

One evening, I received a call from the Teacher Center (SLS) of Sri Aurobindo International Institute of Educational Research (SAIIR). After meeting the team and sharing my experience, I was told, “Your work aligns perfectly with ours, and we would be happy to work with you.” Thus, new opportunities unfolded through divine grace.

I primarily focused on therapeutic support for students through comprehensive behavioral assessments and targeted occupational therapy interventions. My work emphasized enhancing daily living skills, socio-emotional development, gross and fine motor skills, sensory regulation, and consistent routines.

We followed individualized ICP–IIEP plans addressing goals, baselines, targets, teaching strategies, and progress tracking. I also supported students with school-related stress, behavioral challenges, social integration, visual difficulties, and motor coordination, while guiding parents and teachers. Incorporating Divine teachings into practice helped create a holistic, nurturing environment. As an Applied Behavior Analyst (ABA), trained under Centria Healthcare Institute, Michigan, USA, these experiences significantly strengthened my professional and personal growth.

Working in Auroville has been a unique blend of spiritual pursuit and practical labor. Work is not meant to be a means of “earning a living” in the conventional sense, but rather a service to the community and a path to self-discovery. Ideally, there is no hierarchy. A gardener and an architect are viewed with equal respect. However, in practice, experiences may vary across different units and projects. During my work, I experienced the shared roles and daily life activities in Auroville.

Women and men participate equally in diverse sectors such as sustainability and ecology, working in organic farming, gardening, reforestation projects, organic clothing, ceramic making, solar, creative cooking, and waste management (Eco-service). Education, Research, and the Arts play a vital role. Teaching in Auroville schools, engaging in creative school-based projects, physical education, outdoor sports, athletics, martial arts, music, dance, Kalaripayattu, filmmaking, and many other practical experiences are available to volunteers, newcomers, and residents. I got to be a part of and celebrate Auroville's festivities. Starting from the Youth camp to the annual Literature Festivals, everything has been a pure blessing and delight. Most recently, organizing and being a part of the Global Spirituality Mahotsav was incredibly fulfilling and inspiring. At the center of Auroville stands the Matrimandir, the massive golden sphere that the Mother called the “Soul of the City.”



It symbolically represents the birth of a new consciousness. With the Divine's grace, I am blessed with the opportunity to have served at the Matrimandir.

My mornings began beautifully with dew still on the grass and the quiet and calming surroundings under the beloved Banyan tree. A space of prayer for myself, my family, and the universe. The time I spent there gave me stability and quiet confidence in myself and in my work.

Challenges have always existed. While the dream of Auroville is harmony, the lived experience includes hurdles. It is a place that compels one to face oneself.

Life here goes beyond a conventional 9-to-5 job—it demands inner work, surrender, and transformation beyond ego and habitual thinking. Without complaint, one must walk the journey. I consider myself a living example of this process.

This fellowship journey introduced me to numerous experiences—organizing the Auroville Literature Festival, participating in teacher training and research programs, and adapting to varied circumstances with openness and gratitude.

These experiences helped me build meaningful connections with people from different backgrounds while opening me to multiple sources of energy that nourished my learning, resilience, and sense of purpose.

I am beyond thankful to the Auroville Foundation, the Aurovillians, all the units, and especially Jayanti Ravi ma'am, for making this journey even more fruitful. I am deeply blessed to have worked with the SLS team. The children I work with have become my soul, and the teachers and parents have constantly supported and motivated me. I am grateful to Mollika, Alok Da, Srijita, Michtild, Helen, Laura, Ana, and the entire SLS team.

For me, Auroville and the Sri Aurobindo Ashram are home—places where I work fearlessly, joyfully, and without concern for labels. This is a place where Divine Consciousness is the ultimate Truth.

“Will is conscious power and conscious act of force of being.”

Sri Aurobindo, The Life Divine - II: The Divine Life

—Asita Dutta, Applied Behaviour Analyst



Maa Savitri

“Agni of Rigveda”

Savitri is the Rigveda of “Kaliyuga”.

Seers realized, were inspired, and revealed the “pragyan” in the Vedas. Seer of seers in Kaliyuga, Sri Aurobindo realized “pragyan” inspiration and the “fire” of eternal “yajna” carried the words of consciousness to “mantra” in a foreign language, and Savitri descended in the terrestrial consciousness.

Aditi was ready to answer the ardent pure call of adoration.

Savitri is the fire of “yajna”, dispenser of delight brought down by the vehicle of “Tapas” by an eternal’s delegate.

The first ‘rik’ of the Rigveda “Hymn to Agni” in Gayatri metre in devbhasha is “Agnimile purohitam yajnasya devamritvijam, hotram ratna dhatamam”.

Agni, I adore, who stands before the Lord, the god, who seeth Truth, the warrior, strong dispenser of delight.

Yajna is the Master of the Universe, the universal living Intelligence, who possesses and controls his creation: Yajna is God. Sage King Aswapati’s Tapas, vehicle of Agni, travelled in the realms of Consciousness for divine descent and life divine on earth.

As in Rigveda, the ‘riks’ in Savitri are in a modern language, in blank verse. His Tapas took up the English language, and Sri Aurobindo has given humanity ‘riks’ in English.

**“All can be done if the god-touch is there.”
“A solitary mind, a worldwide heart
To the lone Immortal’s unshared work, she rose.”
“Her soul arose confronting Time and Fate.”
“This was the day Satyavan must die.”**

—Dr. Archana Choudhary



Dr. Choudhary is a retired Professor and Head of Medicine from Grant Medical College, Mumbai, and has been a devotee of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother since 1975.

From Life to Kindness, Real Stories from India

What He Chose to Do

In Tamil Nadu, one day, while going about his usual work, a sanitation worker noticed a small bag by the roadside. It looked out of place, so she picked it up.

Inside, she found gold ornaments.

She paused for a moment and looked around.

No one seemed to be looking for it. The street carried on as it always does, people passing, each on their way.

It would have been easy to keep walking and say nothing. But she didn't.

She closed the bag and made his way to the nearest police station. There, he handed it over, explained briefly, and returned to her work.

Nothing about the day appeared to change.

Yet something had quietly taken its place. Perhaps doing the right thing is not always a question of effort, but of what we choose to carry forward.



After the Day's Work

In Bengaluru, each day, he drives through the busy streets, carrying passengers from one place to another. It is steady work, familiar and necessary.

By evening, when most would return home, his day shifts in a different direction.

In a nearby settlement, a few children begin to gather. Some come out of curiosity, others out of habit. There is no classroom, no formal arrangement, just a small space and a willingness to sit together.

He begins with simple things. Letters. Numbers. Words spoken and repeated.

The children follow, slowly at first, then with growing ease.

He does not present himself as a teacher. He does not ask for anything in return. Yet, day after day, he returns.

Over time, something begins to take shape, not all at once, and not always visibly.

A sense of possibility.

Perhaps change does not always arrive at once. Sometimes, it is something we return to, again and again.

What the Seeds Remember

In Maharashtra, in a region where farming has steadily moved towards newer methods, one farmer chose to look in a different direction.

Over the years, he began collecting seeds, once common varieties, now slowly disappearing. Each one carried its own memory of the land it belonged to.

It was not a great effort in the beginning. Just a few seeds, saved and stored with care.

But the work continued.

He started sharing them with other farmers, offering them freely, without condition. Some accepted, some hesitated. Still, he kept going.

There was no urgency in his work, only a quiet consistency.

Season after season, the seeds returned to the soil.

And with them, something else returned as well, ways of growing that had not entirely been lost, only set aside.

What we preserve does not remain in the past; it finds its way forward, in time.



A Place to Sit and Learn

In Delhi, beneath a bridge where the sound of traffic rarely fades, a small group of children gathers each day.

There are no desks or walls to define the space. Only a board, a few shared materials, and someone willing to teach.

Many of the children come from nearby areas where school is not always within reach. Some arrive irregularly, others stay.

The lessons are simple. Reading. Writing. Basic numbers.

But more than that, there is a rhythm, a time set aside for learning, however modest the setting.

People pass by without stopping. To them, it may look like just another corner of the city.

Yet, within that space, something steady is unfolding.

Not all at once, and not with certainty, but enough to begin.

Sometimes, a place becomes a classroom

Simply because someone chooses to begin there.



**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 we
may be ready to receive them.**

— The Mother



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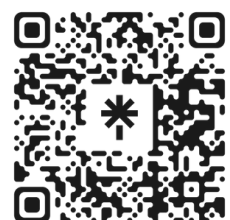


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*We shall work for a
better tomorrow*

Shriings

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