
Auroville Tomorrow

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

Ushus: 1

Sri Aurobindo

Kiran: 5

15th August 2025

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

Five Dreams of Freedom, One Destiny of Unity

But brotherhood exists only in the soul and by the soul; it can exist by nothing else. For this brotherhood is not a matter either of physical kinship or of vital association or of intellectual agreement. When the soul claims freedom, it is the freedom of its self-development, the self-development of the divine in man in all his being. When it claims equality, what it is claiming is that freedom equally for all and the recognition of the same soul, the same godhead in all human beings. When it strives for brotherhood, it is founding that equal freedom of self-development on a common aim, a common life, a unity of mind and feeling founded upon the recognition of this inner spiritual unity. These three things are in fact the nature of the soul; for freedom, equality, unity are the eternal attributes of the Spirit.

It is the practical recognition of this truth, it is the awakening of the soul in man and the attempt to get him to live from his soul and not from his ego which is the inner meaning of religion, and it is that to which the religion of humanity also must arrive before it can fulfil itself in the life of the race.

— Sri Aurobindo, *The Ideal of Human Unity*, Chapter XXXIV: "The Religion of Humanity"



Sri Aurobindo presiding over a meeting of the Nationalists | Surat, December 1907

Savitri, From the Darkness Towards the Light

On the Occasion of Sri Aurobindo's Birthday

In the silent darkness of **Auroville**, in a time outside of time, a lone woman steps onto the red earth. As if she has come from beyond time, with a cloak of silence and a gaze that searches into the depths of existence. The night sky, brimming with stars, bends over her, and from afar, the golden and faint light of the Inner Chamber pulses like a hidden heart in the breast of the earth. A gentle breeze winds through the leaves, and shadows, quiet and light-footed, follow her movement.

This woman is Savitri. Not merely a mythical figure, but a living mirror of the human soul that beats towards the light in its encounter with fate. In the heart of darkness, she seeks love, a love so deep it brings even Death to its knees. Yet what takes place on this night is not merely the story of a woman confronting death, but a revelation of existence and consciousness. Savitri does not see, she beholds. A penetrating gaze that passes through the veil of reality and touches the depths of the soul.

In the nocturnal silence, as if a curtain of existence has been drawn aside, the words of a great poem come alive before her eyes. Words not to describe the world as it is, but to reveal it as it could become. In Savitri's being, poetry is not merely language; it is a force for transformation. She has arisen from the land of man, yet she seems to carry the promise of something beyond man, a force that can rewrite destiny itself, if love is as pure as truth.

In the heart of this boundless night, it is as though time has collapsed, and space is but a symbolic presence. Savitri advances step by step, not upon the soil, but through the depths of the layers of being. Her consciousness is drawn to the innermost levels, to where darkness claims its ancient right and its unquestioned power. She plunges into Night to know its dreadful heart.

**"In Night he plunged to know her dreadful heart,
In Hell he sought the root and cause of Hell."**

Whatever is black, whatever is hidden, awakens within her. The burning fissures of hell open not outside, but in her breast. Accumulated pains, the echo of cries rising from the depths of being.

**"He listened to clamours of its crowded pain,
The heartbeats of its fatal loneliness."**

But beyond this pain, there is a silence filled with deafness and cold, a timeless, unanswering eternity, like a cold and sightless roof bending over her head. On this solitary path, she meets the red wolf lying in wait, the black eagles of death, and the lurking serpent. Each enemy is a shadow within. Each battle, a combat in a field without eyes or sound.

**"In footless battlefields of the Abyss
Fought shadowy combats in mute eyeless depths."**



Savitri, this woman, this consciousness in the garment of a human, is wounded by a magical force; sunk in the mire of doubt and sorrow. Yet even in the deepest loss, she holds in her hands a spark of truth's radiance: **"He treasured between his hands his flickering soul."**

She descends into the depths of matter to discover, in the darkest corners of the unconscious, the secret of Nature's change. To the place where "existence, in a sleepless sleep, unaware of its thoughts, shapes a world without knowing what it shapes."

There, where the vanished stars have hidden within themselves the memory of a future, in cosmic silence.

"There is the record of the vanished stars.

There in the slumber of the cosmic Will

He saw the secret key of Nature's change."

And in a nameless moment, an invisible hand lays an unseen light upon the wound and the error, until pain turns into ecstasy.

"A light was with him, an invisible hand

Was laid upon the error and the pain

Till it became a quivering ecstasy..."

And in this uncharted journey, where mind fails and sense disappears, Savitri goes on, not by the force of will, but by the force of a hidden truth that makes its way through the deepest layers of the unconscious.

She steps into realms where "existence" is itself unaware of itself. Here, the boundary between man and world, between inner and outer, dissolves. For what Savitri encounters is not something external, not an outward enemy, but the very structure of human consciousness, still trapped in the darkness of agreements it does not understand. And it is here that the text slowly shifts from story to revelation. A fundamental question resounds in the silence of these lines: **Who are we, that we are driven so deep into darkness? And how is it that in the heart of darkness, the first spark of awakening begins?**

Savitri is a woman on a journey, but at the same time, she is an allegory of consciousness itself. A consciousness that, to reach the light, must pass through everything, through error, suffering, death, forgetfulness, doubt.

She passes through the "Incensement's hollow dusk"; through wolf and serpent and spell and shadow; and in that lowest point, where existence has forgotten who it is, she sees the secret of transformation. **"He saw the secret key of Nature's change."**

This change does not happen easily. The world, like an old machine, moves forward with rigid, unfeeling, unyielding codes in a fixed direction.

"Nature expunged her stiff mechanical code

And the articles of the bound soul's contract."

At this point, the poem becomes an anthropological design. For what Savitri does is not merely sacrifice or courage; it is the rewriting of the very foundation of being human.

She, like the first awakened human, tears apart an unwritten contract: the contract of limitation, suffering, and mortality. And she replaces it with something else: love, awareness, and the power of transformation. She stands in the place where man, before becoming "himself," wandered in the darkness of his being. And from there, she draws out consciousness, not as a ready-made light, but as a light that must be forged. A light that must rise from within darkness, not in denial of it, but by passing through it. Savitri, in her passage through darkness, reminds us that man is not a finished being, but a movement in the making; an open, unfinished design. With each step through the worlds of "Falsehood," "Doubt," and "Despair," she does not merely undergo a mythical experience, but passes through layers of herself sedimented in the human unconscious. And here, we face a fundamental question: **Is man what history and nature have made of him? Or is he what he is yet to become?**

In the text, a fundamental fissure opens: **Man, in his present state, is a product of "error," "determinism," and "unawareness." But within him, there is a light that, though "flickering," does not go out.**

Savitri “treasured between her hands” that light. And this is the philosophical–anthropological fissure that the poem opens in the language of metaphor: man is an unfinished project. **“He saw the secret key of Nature’s change.”** And this “change” is not merely a cosmic transition, but the possibility of rewriting the self.

In this vision, man is not a static essence, but a current, a movement from ignorance to awareness, from death to meaning, from determinism to love.

Savitri, as the emblem of this possibility, is the embodiment of walking in darkness without forgetting the light. In her eyes, we see an image of what we have not yet become. And precisely in the space between what we are and what we can become, the truth of man lies. Not in form, race, history, or language. But in this capacity for becoming.

Thus, from an anthropological point of view, the message of the poem Savitri is also the message of “man’s dangerousness.” Man, because he is unfinished, can be destructive, but he can also rise as the transformer of existence.

Sri Aurobindo, Philosopher of the Future

What Sri Aurobindo offers in Savitri is not merely a sublime poem, but a project for the future human. Unlike many modern philosophers who remain stuck in the dead ends of reason and analysis, he dares to speak of the possibility of light, like a flame in the darkness.

The birth of Sri Aurobindo is the dawn of a “new vision” of man, a man who must read himself anew, rewrite himself, and, like Savitri, walk in darkness with a light in his heart.

In the heart of Savitri, language is not merely a means of expression; it is itself a world-builder. This poem proceeds not through description, but through creation. Each metaphor is not merely a beautiful image, but a gateway to another layer of reality. When it says: **“A Power arose out of my slumber’s cell.”**

We are not merely faced with a metaphorical image; here, language is bringing an ontological possibility into birth. In this poem, language does exactly what Savitri herself seeks to do in the narrative: to pass through darkness towards transformation. Words here are not tools, they are forces. This kind of language confronts us with what might be called the mystical prose of the future: a language that is not retrospective and descriptive, but forward-looking and transformative.

Savitri, beyond being merely a long mythical poem, is an attempt to write the “Book of Man.” A book that not only passes through the heart of a love story, but rewrites the very fabric of human existence, the history of consciousness, destiny, and the possibility of surpassing it.

The structure of the poem, like existence itself, is multi-layered: the mythic layer, the psychic layer, the social layer, the supraphysical layer. Within these layers, every movement of Savitri is both a narrative of a journey and a metaphor for man’s possibility of passing beyond his historical limits.

She stands not merely against death, but against repetition, against the reproduction of ignorance and determinism. Here, poetry becomes philosophy, and philosophy becomes poetry. Aurobindo writes, but what remains is not merely writing: it is a proposal for transforming man from a half-conscious state into a being of full stature.

And in this path, Savitri is not the end of a poem, but the beginning of a great question:

If the world is still unfinished, what is our role in completing it?

—Anita Kamali, Writer and Editor of Auroville Tomorrow Newsletter

The Noon of a New Bharat and a New World

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

—Sri Aurobindo

This day holds a rare convergence — the 79th Independence Day of Bharat and the 153rd birth anniversary of Sri Aurobindo. One marks the moment a nation broke its outer chains; the other, the birth of a being whose vision extended beyond the sweep of centuries, toward the awakening of the whole earth.

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



In the cool quiet of the morning, I sat on my terrace, watching a few pigeons. They would lift as one in sudden spirals, then settle again on the ledge, their soft cooing carrying a comforting rhythm. There was no border to their flight, no chain to their movement — only an unspoken belonging to the vastness above. And I wondered : What is freedom to us, the children of this ancient land? Is it only the independence we celebrate with flags and speeches, or is there a deeper, more complete freedom that still waits to be claimed?

“Our call must be to live on a new height in all our being”. Sri Aurobindo,

For Sri Aurobindo, the freedom of Bharat was only the first step in a far greater journey — the journey toward integral freedom. This was not a liberty granted by law, but a liberation woven into every fibre of our being. It meant the body released from its habits and inertia, the heart from fear and desire, the mind from prejudice and narrowness — and above all, the soul set free to unite with the Divine. Without this inner mastery, he warned, political independence could remain a hollow shell; with it, life itself could be remade into an instrument of truth, harmony, and beauty.

He dreamt of a free and united Bharat as the torchbearer of a transformed humanity.

His Five Dreams — the unity of our motherland, the union of mankind, the resurgence of Asia, the upliftment of the human spirit, and the transformation of earthly life — were seeds for the future, not relics of the past. They pointed to a moment he called the Hour of God, when the old order would crumble and a higher Light would press to manifest — the advent of a new consciousness, heralding the birth of a new species upon the earth.

As the pigeons dipped and turned, their fluttering wings shone in the rising sun. I thought of how this image — simple, unassuming — holds something of that vision. For in the chaos of the world today,

with its noise of division and strife, there is also a stirring of another possibility. Just as the flock lifts in sudden unison into the open air, humanity too may rise, called upward by a force greater than itself.

The transition will not come by chance; it will require each of us to collaborate consciously — to master ourselves, to open to the descending Light, to become living centres of the new consciousness.

In this lies the deeper independence we are yet to win — an integral freedom that radiates from the individual to the family, to the nation, and to the whole earth. This is the freedom that can make Bharat the luminous heart of a new world.

As I lingered on the terrace, the pigeons flew away in the boundless, golden blue above. For a moment, the world seemed to hold its breath, as though waiting for some vast, unseen turning. Perhaps this is how the Hour of God will come — not with fanfare, but as a quiet point of inflection, when grace descends to bedazzle the earth towards Life Divine.

**Only the Eternal's strength in us can dare
To attempt the immense adventure of that climb
And the sacrifice of all we cherish here.
Sri Aurobindo,**



Zonal Development Plans: Stepping into the next chapter of Auroville's city-building journey

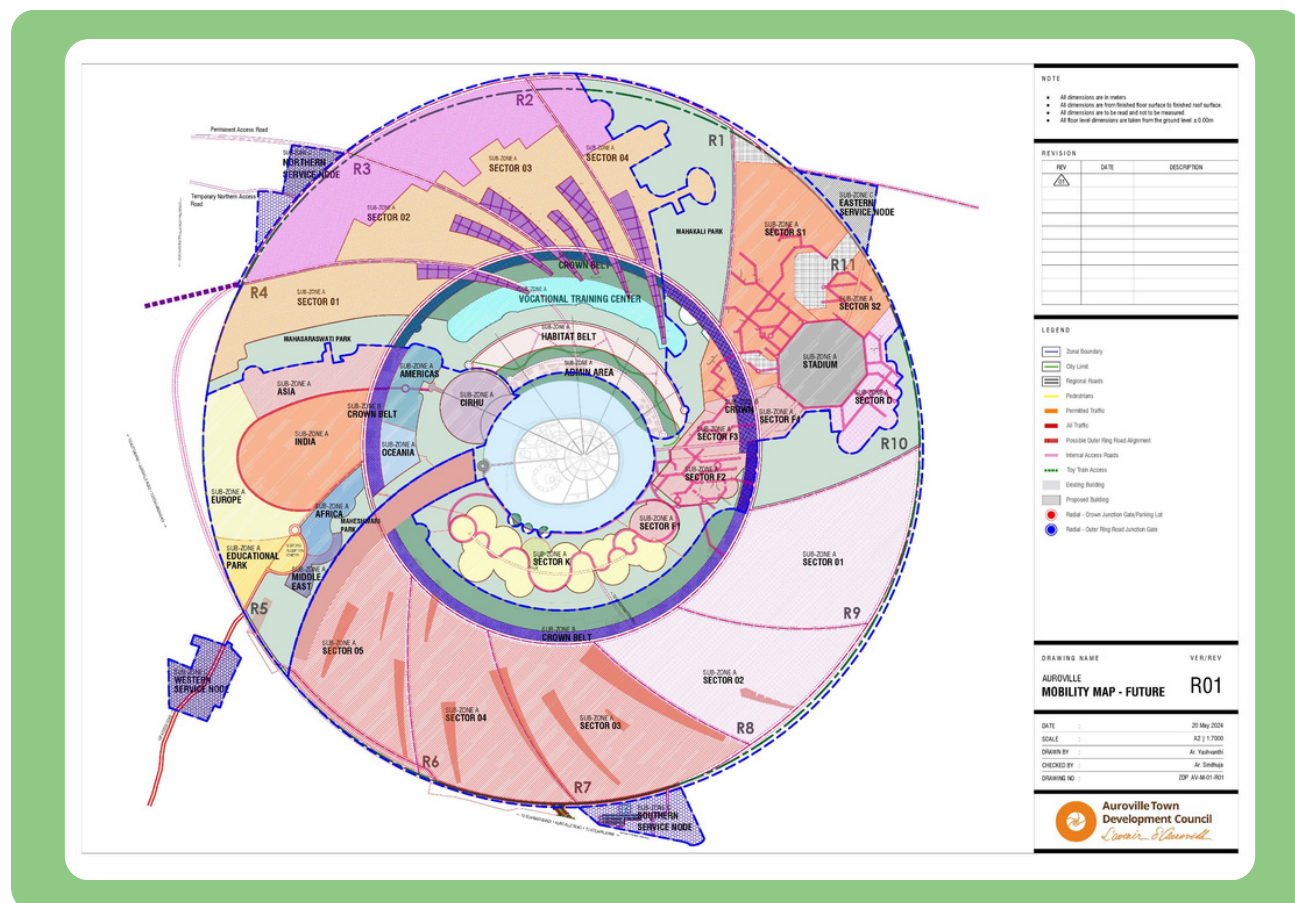
August 15th holds a special resonance for Auroville. It is the day we commemorate the birth anniversary of Sri Aurobindo, whose vision of a new consciousness and a new world is the very reason Auroville exists. It is also the day India celebrates its independence, a reminder of the nation's leap into self-determination and its ongoing journey towards realising its destiny.

In this year, 2025, as we mark Sri Aurobindo's 153rd birth anniversary and India's 78th Independence Day, Auroville finds itself at a turning point of its own. We are taking decisive steps in the implementation of the Auroville Master Plan, which has been extended to 2035 to allow for the complete realisation of the township as originally envisaged. The completion of the Zonal Development Plans (ZDPs) by L'avenir d'Auroville/ Auroville Town Development Council stands as a major milestone in this journey, setting the stage for the more detailed Sector Plans, now under preparation.

This is more than just planning on paper. It is the translation of the Galaxy Plan into the tangible blueprint for the city's growth over the next decade, a leap forward that echoes the bold spirit of both Sri Aurobindo's vision and India's tryst with destiny.

From vision to manifestation: Why ZDPs Matter

The Auroville Master Plan lays out the overall scheme of the city — the four zones (Residential, Cultural, Industrial, and International) surrounding the Matrimandir, the Crown, the Radial and Ring roads, the Green Belt, and the integration of nature and built space. While the Master Plan provides the vision and the structure, the Zonal Development Plans zoom into the next level of detail.



ZDPs are framework plans for each zone that:

- Define land use allocation in alignment with the Master Plan
- Identify detailed road networks and mobility infrastructure
- Reserve land for public amenities and community services
- Plan for infrastructure corridors for water, electricity, and communication
- Integrate green corridors, open spaces, and biodiversity areas
- Respect existing settlements while guiding future growth in a coherent way

With the ZDPs for all four zones now completed, we have for the first time in Auroville's history a clear, agreed-upon spatial framework for the township at the zonal scale. These plans bridge the gap between the broad strokes of the Master Plan and the fine-grained precision of building-level layouts.

Leaping Forward to 2035: The Extended Horizon

The Governing Board of the Auroville Foundation has recently extended the timeline for the implementation of the Master Plan to 2035. This decision recognises the scale and complexity of building a unique city like Auroville - one that is at once experimental, ecological, and aligned with Sri Aurobindo's spiritual vision.

This extended horizon gives us the space and time to:

- Phase development in a balanced and sustainable way
- Complete critical infrastructure like the Crown Road, Radial Roads, and Outer Ring Road
- Expand public spaces and amenities in each zone
- Integrate renewable energy systems and water management solutions
- Strengthen connections between the city area and the Green Belt
- Support the growth of Auroville's population towards its intended 50,000 residents by 2035

Sector Plans: The Next Layer of Precision

With ZDPs completed, the Sector Plans are now under preparation. If the Master Plan is the structure, and the ZDPs are the walls, the Sector Plans are the finishing details for implementation.

Each zone is divided into sectors — smaller planning units that can be developed in phases. Sector Plans will detail:

- Block layouts for buildings, public spaces, and open areas
- Phasing strategies to guide what gets built when, ensuring services keep pace with growth
- Infrastructure detailing, including water supply networks, load center identification and electrical distribution, and waste management systems
- Pedestrian and cycling routes, ensuring Auroville remains a human-centred city
- Ecological integration, with tree planting and water bodies embedded in the design
- Service provision mapping — from education and health to culture, sports, and community facilities

This layered approach ensures that every road, park, building cluster, and service hub is part of an integrated whole.

What the ZDPs and Sector Plans Focus On

While each zone has its own unique function, the planning priorities share common threads that reflect Auroville's ethos:

1. Human-Scale Mobility

- ◆ Ensuring the Crown becomes the primary urban connector, supported by radial and ring roads
- ◆ Designing pedestrian- and cycle-friendly routes
- ◆ Integrating electric mobility infrastructure

2. Ecological Resilience

- ◆ Green Networks that connect the city to the Green Belt
- ◆ Identification of important green pockets and integrating them into the guidelines wherever feasible, without distorting the Galaxy Plan
- ◆ Incorporation of rainwater harvesting and stormwater management

3. Community Spaces and Amenities

- ◆ Schools, cultural venues, sports facilities, and gathering spaces embedded in every zone
- ◆ Allocations for services such as health care, waste management, and public administration

4. Energy and Infrastructure

- ◆ Decentralised renewable energy systems
- ◆ Integrated utility corridors to avoid repeated land disturbance
- ◆ Smart systems for water and waste management

5. Phased, Balanced Growth

- ◆ Avoiding over-concentration of development in one area
- ◆ Ensuring new residents have access to services from day one
- ◆ Protecting land for future needs and avoiding ad hoc sprawl

A Collective Leap, in the Spirit of August 15th

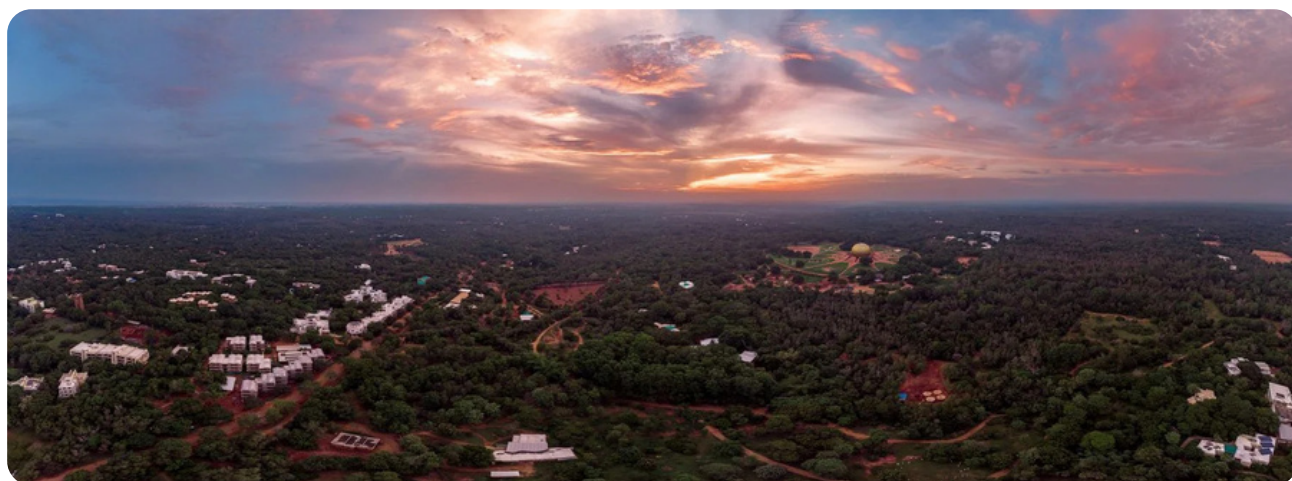
On August 15th, 1947, India awoke to freedom, with the responsibility to shape its own future. On August 15th, 1872, Sri Aurobindo was born, whose vision extended beyond political freedom to a deeper liberation — a new consciousness for humanity.

Today, in 2025, Auroville stands at a similar threshold. The completion of the Zonal Development Plans is not merely a technical achievement; it is a collective affirmation that we are ready to take the next great leap in manifesting the City of Dawn. The Master Plan's extension to 2035 is not a postponement, but an opportunity to build with care, depth, and integrity, ensuring that every step honours the original vision. As we move into the preparation of Sector Plans, we are committing to a level of precision and foresight that will ensure Auroville's growth is harmonious, sustainable, and vibrant. In doing so, we carry forward both the pioneering spirit of India's independence and the evolutionary aspiration of Sri Aurobindo.

The journey from vision to reality is long, but it is made of concrete milestones. The Zonal Development Plans mark one such milestone. They are the scaffolding upon which the next decade of Auroville will rise — a decade that, if we work together with clarity and dedication, will see the full flowering of the Galaxy Plan by 2035.

The map accompanying this article is not just a diagram. It is a picture of our shared future — a future we are already building, stride by stride, towards the living embodiment of a dream that began over a century ago in the heart of Sri Aurobindo, and fifty-seven years ago in the red soil of Auroville.

— Sindhuja, Member/ Planning & Project Development Coordinator - L'avenir d'Auroville/ Auroville Town Development Council



Iyengar's Biography of Sri Aurobindo: A Masterpiece of Critical Sublime



“Criticism we must, but on bended knees”

—Sri Aurobindo

The apophthegm has been ascribed to Goethe, but there is no certainty about who had first spoken this wonderful sage-sayer. It is relevant to K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar's final biography of Sri Aurobindo, finished in 1972 and revised in 1985, with the assistance of his daughter Dr. Prema Nandakumar. An earlier attempt had come out from Bombay in 1945, which was fact-checked by Sri Aurobindo himself. It took him 27 years to complete the final draft of 800 plus pages!

—By Prof. Goutam Ghosal, Governing Board

In 1938, Iyengar had got his D.Litt. for his work on Lytton Strachey, a notorious biographer cum debunker of great merit. But Sri Aurobindo, as Professor Iyengar himself confessed to me, was a different subject, not just another writer, whom he could criticize without knowing his inner life, which was “not on the surface for man to see”. Sheer objectivity is risky when one is dealing with a person of great spiritual enlightenment since his days in Baroda and who did a supreme research beyond Man since 1910.

Why was Iyengar the best person to write a detailed and integral biography of Sri Aurobindo when others with great knowledge of history have either failed or messed up with the supreme sublimity of the subject or shown one or two sides of his work? Sri Aurobindo disclaimed the title “philosopher” and introduced himself as primarily “a poet and a politician”, not once in his famous letter to Dilip Kumar Roy, but on multiple occasions in his letters and memoirs and Talks.

Professor Iyengar was from the literature background with an incredible command over the English language and expository technique. Aside from that, he was a historian by instinct. The mere intellectual critics without intuitive sense would not believe, but Iyengar must have prayed “on bended knees” to the Master to give him an extra pair of eyes to get into the innermost core of his writings and to criticize discreetly.

It is an absolute mistake to call him a hagiographer. There are places of veiled criticism, as much as one is permitted.

Because his subject was Sri Aurobindo. Unfortunately, these critical moments have been overlooked in the biography, moments when Iyengar is speaking about his impressionable childhood and youth, moments when he discovers echoes of the Romantic and Victorian poets and the Graeco-Roman poets in Young Aurobindo's lines, moments when he brings in Dante, Sophocles and Shakespeare as his key traditions.

Iyengar places Sri Aurobindo in the context of Renascent India, before moving on to his early adventures in poetry, prose, dramas of conflict and change, translations of ancient and medieval Indian verses and plays, epical narratives in heroic tradition. He draws our attention to the works in that mystical juncture of 1910, the time when Sri Aurobindo was preparing to write a revised history of English poetry and elaborate exegeses of Indian Knowledge System, his many-branching commentaries on the ancient Indian scriptures to give them a push towards a new meaning in the evolving future of humanity. Iyengar detects the poet-humanist in young Aurobindo, finds the pilgrim of Eternity in Chandernagore (1910) and links these early approaches to a god's labour in Pondicherry.

Finally, the literary biographer adequately sums up his yoga of transformation with reference to his great prose works and *Savitri* with revealing subtitles like "Man and Collective Man", "Lighthouse", "Global Comprehension" and "Poet of Yoga". It looks so easy now after Columbus has done that massive and integral work on the Rishi-poet! One wonders how he managed his material with so much of discipline and accuracy. The answer maybe found in Prema Didi's answer to my query: "How could he write more than 400 books along with this masterpiece?" She answered, "My father never hit back." Only such a sattwic writer can do justice to Sri Aurobindo's biography.



Bharat Nivas, Where Culture Remains Alive

Over these two years, Bharat Nivas has been more than a physical space for events; it has become a living stage for the meeting of cultures, ideas, and creativity. Its halls and passageways have witnessed artistic dialogues, inspiring learning, and collaborations that have moved beyond the borders of geography and language. Reviewing this period is a narrative of a place where culture flows not as an isolated event, but as an ongoing current in the life of the community.



Objectives and Vision

From 2023 to 2025, Bharat Nivas advanced its work along four main axes: improving educational quality, cultural enrichment, development of infrastructure and facilities, social participation, and advancing sustainable initiatives. This approach has made Bharat Nivas a successful model of combining tradition and innovation in the service of the community.



Strategic Steps Toward Self-Sufficiency

One of the most important priorities of this period was moving toward financial and operational self-sufficiency. Establishing the “Pathway” as the first major step on this path, repurposing underused buildings, such as converting the old post office into a Wildlife Art Gallery, and defining rental rates for underused spaces to offer them to Auroville units, researchers, and professionals were among the key actions. This gallery has not only become a place to showcase nature-themed artworks, but also an educational centre for visitors and students from across India and the Auroville bioregion.

Other innovative steps included launching a QR payment system for Bharat Nivas events and activities, and enabling visitor contributions for Kalakendra programmes. In addition, opening the Pathway Café and creating eleven diverse stalls, including art, handicrafts, tour services, and wellness, has turned the campus’s main pathway into a lively, multi-faceted environment.

Collaborations and Memoranda of Understanding

During this period, Bharat Nivas signed multiple MOUs with Auroville units and cultural institutions. Among them are collaboration with SVARAM for the Sound Journey programme; with Kalarigram to set up the dedicated “Bharat Kalari” space for teaching Kalaripayattu; and with Explore for guided tours of Auroville. Collaboration with the Government of Puducherry and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) has also been an important step in expanding cultural engagement at the national and international levels.

Between 2023 and 2025, the Bharat Nivas campus hosted 144 programmes at the Sri Aurobindo Auditorium, 22 exhibitions at Kalakendra, 110 events at SAWCHU, 122 programmes at Bhumika Hall, 102 programmes at Harmony Hall, 20 programmes at Progress Hall, and 20 events at Bharat Kalari. These figures demonstrate the breadth and diversity of activities.

Notable events during this period included the Margazhi Festival, the Auroville Festival, the first original production by Bharat Nivas titled “Panchadeva,” special artistic programmes on 15 August to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Sri Aurobindo, and hosting national and international groups and artists. The Shilpa Kendra space was transformed into a venue for showcasing artworks and crafts by Auroville units such as Deepam Candles, Rio, and Aurodeniz. In addition, the Bharat Nivas Souvenir Shop, La Boutique Auroville, and stalls such as Egai Crafts are examples of advancing a sustainable economy and supporting local and regional entrepreneurs.

Looking Ahead

What has taken shape over these two years is not merely a collection of activities and events, but evidence that Bharat Nivas can continue to serve as a bridge between India’s cultural roots and Auroville’s global horizons. The road ahead lies not in repeating the past, but in opening new doors to cultural, social, and educational collaborations, a path that remains alive only through creativity, commitment, and love of culture. **This fruitful path has taken shape through the sustained efforts of Janmejaya Mohanty, Chair of Bharat Nivas, and with the valuable guidance of Dr. Jayanti Ravi, Secretary of the Auroville Foundation.** This collaboration has played a crucial role in realizing this vision. This report is an expression of appreciation to all those who, through creative and persistent work, have kept this house of culture vibrant.



The Inner Awakening and the Outer Expression

A celebrating Sri Aurobindo's Birthday Through Art, At Unity Pavilion



The Inner Awakening and the Outer Expression is an exhibition inspired by Sri Aurobindo's Four Austerities (disciplines)—Love, Knowledge, Power, and Beauty—and the spiritual vision of his Fifth Dream. These are not merely practices but transformative inner disciplines, each paired with a corresponding liberation. Together, they guide both personal and collective evolution toward a higher consciousness. These tapasyas (spiritual practices) are concentrated inner efforts, refining the soul and opening the way to supramental transformation. When pursued together, they form a living matrix: Beauty lends Power to Knowledge, and all give birth to Love. They connect individuals beyond form, turning art and life into a shared movement toward truth and unity. **As The Mother said, "Each form of beauty is an answer from the Divine."**

Sri Aurobindo's Fifth Dream forms the spiritual foundation for this vision: the emergence of a spiritualised society and the unification of humanity—not through uniformity, religion, or politics, but through an inner transformation that transcends ego, nation, and creed. Auroville aspires to be that nucleus, where higher consciousness is lived daily through work, creativity, and collective aspiration.

About the Exhibition

This exhibition brings together textile works from the Sri Aurobindo Ashram's Embroidery Department, Auroville units To Be Two and Hibiscus Heroes, and artists including Adil Writer, Anna Morozova, Crystal Michielsen, Dilip Patel, Kratu, Lara Boriotti, Marie-Claire Barsotti, Marlenka Gray, Paulette Hadnagy, Pierre Legrand, Sunanda Patel, and Veronik Menanteau.

In the Hall of Peace, visitors can explore a narrative of continuity—linking the Ashram's heritage of hand embroidery and painting with the work of Auroville's textile units. Past and present meet in a serene space, offering quiet reflection in the presence of **the Peace Table**.

In the Unity Hall, the exhibition expands into a multi-disciplinary experience. Each artist's inner tapasya takes form in works of textile, visual art, still image, and word—revealing how silence, discipline, and aspiration manifest outwardly as colour, form, and texture. This collective offering honours Sri Aurobindo's vision of truth, beauty, and consciousness, shaping a new world.



Celebrating Sri Aurobindo's Birthday Through Art

Sri Aurobindo's birthday is a moment of deep significance—a time when individuals and communities align with his vision for humanity's spiritual evolution. This exhibition is both a tribute and an active participation in that vision, presenting art not just for aesthetic delight, but as a channel for higher realities. Placing the exhibition during this occasion strengthens its purpose: to remind us that art—in all its forms, from painting and music to dance, poetry, and sculpture—can awaken the soul and uplift consciousness. When created consciously, art becomes a force of transformation, echoing the supramental aspiration that Sri Aurobindo and The Mother sought to bring into the world.

By opening in his birthday week, the exhibition becomes part of a larger collective invocation, linking the artists' inner journeys to the shared aspiration of a spiritualised society. It is both a celebration of his life and work, and an invitation to all to join in the movement toward a higher, more conscious future.

On view: 10 August - 7 September 2025 at Unity Pavilion, International Zone, Auroville

Note: Tapasya - Inner effort and transformation & Austerity - Outer simplicity and restraint



How I Discovered Sri Aurobindo

—Vladimir Yatsenko

I was born in Ukraine, then part of the Soviet Union. My parents were communists and atheists.

My father, a historian and philologist, wrote extensively on ancient Ukrainian history and religion. I remember him always seated at his desk, surrounded by papers, deeply absorbed in his work.

After finishing secondary school, I decided to take an unusual step. Instead of trying to avoid military recruitment—as many of my friends did by hiding during the twice-yearly call-ups—I went directly to the recruitment office and joined the army. In the Soviet Union, service was compulsory, and I served two years.

When I returned, the ordinary life of my friends felt empty, even fake, as if nothing around me was truly real. Then, one day, I met someone who simply said: “You know, the Divine exists.” That phrase struck me like lightning. I knew instantly it was true. All my disappointment in life vanished at once. I felt deep peace and joy; my mind became silent; I could suddenly see flowers and feel the breeze on my face as if for the first time. That feeling stayed with me for weeks.

From that moment, I began searching for answers. I met a small group of people who exchanged philosophical and religious books—illegally, of course, since such literature was banned in the Soviet Union. I explored Christianity, Buddhism, Taoism, and Yoga texts, read the Bhagavad Gita, and eventually discovered Vivekananda. A year later, I encountered Sri Aurobindo.

The first book I read was *Conversations with Pavitra*, the diary of Pavitra’s meetings with Sri Aurobindo in 1925–26, filled with his guidance on meditation. It was a revelation. I had found the answers I was seeking, and I knew they were real. This led to several profound inner experiences I could hardly believe were happening to me—in the Soviet Union of all places! I had no one to talk to; I was entirely on my own.

In one vision, I understood that I needed Sanskrit to go further. So, in 1986, I joined the Sanskrit Philology Department at Saint Petersburg University. After five years of study, I was sent to India for postgraduate work at the Sanskrit Department of Pune University and at the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (BORI), where I became a life member.

But in December 1991, the Soviet Union collapsed. The embassy informed us that we could either remain in India without a stipend or return home. I chose to stay. Soon after, I moved to Pondicherry and eventually to Auroville.

In Auroville, I taught Sanskrit to adults and school students, worked at Savitri Bhavan as a researcher, and organized study circles and the University of Human Unity. I was closely associated with Kireet Joshi, regularly attending his seminars and conferences.





Today, I serve as Director of Research at the Sri Aurobindo Institute of Applied Research at La Grace Center in the USA—a remarkable project funded by H.P. Rama, the President of Auro University. The La Grace Center is located on a beautiful land of more than 300 acres. At present, it is under construction. It will have a major building with several study and yoga rooms, meditation chambers, a library, a kitchen, and a dining hall for 200 people, a lodging capacity for 160 people, gardens, fountains, etc. It will become a hub for Sri Aurobindo and Mother's studies and application of their knowledge to everyday life.

My wish is that Auroville will one day become more open to and engaged with the deeper studies of Sri Aurobindo, The Mother, and the vast treasures of Vedic knowledge.





The push towards the future is to be ready to give up all gains, moral and material, in order to acquire what the future can give us. Very few are like that, there are many who would like to have what the Future is bringing, but they are not ready to give up what they have in order to acquire the new wealth.

The Mother, 5.8.1968



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Sri Aurobindo is always present.
Be sincere and faithful. This is
the first condition.

bliss