The reminiscences were short.

21-2-68

I came to India to meet Sri Aurobindo. I remarried in India to live with Sri Aurobindo. When he left his body, I continued to live here in order to do his work which is, by raising the Truth and enlightening mankind, to hasten the rule of Divine Love upon earth.

(By courtesy of the All-India Radio, Pondicherry, to which these words were originally given)

24th April, 2020 marks the 100th Anniversary of The Mother’s Final Return to Pondicherry

“The anniversary of my return to Pondicherry... was the tangible sign of the sure Victory over the adverse forces.”

~ The Mother 24th April 1937
That becomes evident when the Gita proceeds to state the character, nature, source, deformations, powers of this sensible embodiment of our being. We see then that it is the whole working of the lower Prakriti that is meant by the kṣetra. That totality is the field of action of the embodied spirit here within us, the field of which it takes cognizance. For a varied and detailed knowledge of all this world of Nature in its essential action as seen from the spiritual view-point we are referred to the verses of the ancient seers, the seers of the Veda and Upanishads, in which we get the inspired and intuitive account of these creations of the Spirit, and to the Brahma Sutras which will give us the rational and philosophic analysis. The Gita contains itself with a brief practical statement of the lower nature of our being in the terms of the Sankhya thinkers. First there is the indiscriminate unmanifest Energy; out of that has come the objective evolution of the five elemental states of matter; as also the subjective evolution of the senses, intelligence and ego; there are too five objects of the senses, or rather five different ways of sense cognizance of the world, powers evolved by the universal energy in order to deal with all the forms of things she has created from the five elemental states assumed by her original objective substance, — organic relations by which the ego endowed with intelligence and sense acts on the formations of the cosmos: this is the constitution of the kṣetra. Then there is a general consciousness that first informs and then illumines the Energy in its works; there is a faculty of that consciousness by which the Energy holds together the relations of objects; there is too a continuity, a persistence of the subjective and objective relations of our consciousness with its objects. These are the necessary powers of the field; all these are common and universal powers at once of the mental, vital and physical Nature. Pleasure and pain, liking and disliking are the principal deformations of the kṣetra. From the Vedantic point of view we may say that pleasure and pain are the vital or sensational deformations given by the lower energy to the spontaneous Ananda or delight of the spirit when brought into contact with her workings. And we may say from the same view-point that liking and disliking are the corresponding mental deformations given by her to the reactive Will of the spirit that determines its response to her contacts. These dualities are the positive and negative terms in which the ego soul of the lower nature enjoys the universe. The negative terms, pain, dislike, sorrow, repulsion and the rest, are perversive or at the best ignorantly reverse responses: the positive terms, liking, pleasure, joy, attraction, are ill-guided responses or at the best insufficient and in character inferior to those of the true spiritual experience.

All these things taken together constitute the fundamental character of our first transactions with the world of Nature, but it is evidently not the whole description of our being; it is our actuality but not the limit of our possibilities. There is something beyond to be known, jñeyam, and it is when the knower of the field turns from the field itself to learn of himself within it and of all that is behind its appearances that real knowledge begins, jñānam, — the true knowledge of the field no less than of the knower. That turning inward alone delivers from ignorance. For the farther we go inward, the more we seize on greater and fuller realities of things and grasp the complete truth both of God and the soul and of the world and its movements. Therefore, says the divine Teacher, it is the knowledge at once of the field and its knower, kṣetra-kṣetrajñayor jñānam, a united and even unified self-knowledge and world-knowledge, which is the real illumination and the only wisdom. For both soul and nature are the Brahman, but the true truth of the world of Nature can only be discovered by the liberated sage who possesses also the truth of the spirit. One Brahman, one reality in Self and Nature is the object of all knowledge.

(to be continued next week)


P.S. There's a new HOMA page on the Auroville website: https://www.auroville.org/contents/1085

The Ponder Corner

14 March 1951

One thing that is now beginning to be recognised by everyone, even by the medical corps, is that hygienic measures, for example, are effective only to the extent that one has confidence in them. Take the case of an epidemic. Many years ago we had a cholera epidemic here—it was bad—but the chief medical officer of the hospital was an energetic man: he decided to vaccinate everybody. When he discharged the vaccinated men, he would tell them, “Now you are vaccinated and nothing will happen to you, but if you were not vaccinated you would be sure to die!” He told them this with great authority. Generally such an epidemic lasts a long time and it is difficult to check it, but in some fifteen days, I think, this doctor succeeded in checking it; in any case, it was done miraculously fast. But he knew very well that the best effect of his vaccination was the confidence it gave to people.

Now, quite recently, they have found something else and I consider it wonderful. They have discovered that for every disease there is a microbe that cures it (call it a microbe if you like, anyway, some sort of germ). But what is so extraordinary is that this “microbe” is extremely contagious, even more contagious than the microbe of the disease. And it generally develops under two conditions: in those who have a sort of natural good humour and energy and in those who have a strong will to get well! Suddenly they catch the “microbe” and are cured. And what is wonderful is that if there is one who is cured in an epidemic, three more recover immediately. And this “microbe” is found in all who are cured.

But I am going to tell you something: what people take to be a microbe is simply the materialisation of a vibration or a will from another world. When I learned of these medical discoveries, I said to myself, “Truly, science is making progress.” One might almost say with greater reason, “Matter is progressing,” it is becoming more and more receptive to a higher will. And what is translated in their science as “microbes” will be perceived, if one goes to the root of things, as simply a vibratory mode; and this vibratory mode is the material translation of a higher will. If you can bring this force or this will, this power, this vibration (call it what you will) into certain given circumstances, not only will it act in you, but also through contagion around you.

CWM 04 Questions and Answers 1950-1951, P209-210
“All Things Covid-19” UPDATE

A Public Auronet page with updated information on Covid 19 for anyone in Auroville - For those in Auroville without access to an Auronet account and who are outside our normal channels of communication, (like volunteers, pre-newcomers, guests stranded in guesthouses), there is now a public web page which will report announcements and communications of public utility in these difficult times. Please share this: https://www.auroville.org/contents/4953

In order to help Aurovilians with the pandemic, Aurinoco compiled all related information, GOI advisories, Safety & Security aspects, Auroville Emergency Numbers, and Hospitals & Help Lines related to COVID-19: https://sites.google.com/view/covidinformation/. Aurinoco will update the various aspects as the situation changes (hopefully for the better, and soon!) ~ Aurinoco team

For the up-to-the-minute global stats junkie: https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/

From Dr. Karan Singh:
My thoughts have been with you during this anxious period. I hope this has given you all the opportunity to go deeper into your inner selves. Here is a quotation from the Mother:

"Only one thing is absolutely indispensabel: the will to discover and to realize. This discovery and realization should be the primary preoccupation of each being, the pearl of great price which we must acquire at any cost. Whatever you do, whatever your occupation and activities, the will to find the truth of your being and to unite with it must be always living and present behind all that you do, all that you feel and all that you think."

From the WC/CTF: As per the 20th April press release from the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, the lockdown in Tamil Nadu will continue until May 3rd, with no relaxations and no exemptions beyond what had already been defined in the March 23rd notice. Pondicherry has also stated that interstate travel will remain restricted so individuals should not be going to Pondy unless it is for an essential activity that has been cleared by the police through the Working Committee. This means that at least until the 3rd of May, we must continue as we have been functioning since the lockdown started, with no additional activities or works being restarted, and maintaining restricted movement, going out only for essential needs. This is in spite of having no confirmed cases in Auroville or its neighboring villages. Continuing patience, goodwill and surrender seem to be the need and learning of the moment.

WC/CTF: re Self - Declaration Forms for Children - Questions have been asked about whether or not Self-Declaration Forms need to be filled out for children. We request you to please fill out a form for each child over the age of 5 in your household. For children under the age of 5 and under the age of 1, the numbers should be filled in on the form of a parent. We apologize for the unclarity around this point. Here’s the link once again: https://forms.gle/RKBvkcqiFunB5yU19. It can be filled out on a desktop, a laptop or a mobile phone and will only take you about 3 minutes.

We have also had several people asking if their forms have been received. If at the end of filling it out, after clicking on the SUBMIT button, you see this final screen (see image on right), then it is submitted. If you need help, please don’t hesitate to contact the Task Force: covid19taskforce@auroville.org.in. Someone can either help you over the phone or come to you with a mobile device on which to fill out the form. Once again, we thank you all for your patience and support!

Re: questions of privacy related to Self-Declaration Form -
We have received several questions regarding privacy in divulging health conditions on the Self-Declaration Form. We do understand the concerns that have been expressed, and before circulating the form had asked the Block Medical Officer and someone in Delhi who is part of the National Disaster Management Authority about this. We are satisfied with the responses we have received from both the local officials and the person in the National Disaster Management Authority in Delhi. Below are a few points to address the questions we have received:

1) This information is being asked by the health officials, with the support of the police, from everyone in the area, Auroville as well as the surrounding villages and towns. They have volunteers going door to door to collect the information on similar forms. They are allowing us to collect the same information through a Self-Declaration Form rather than having the police and health officials doing it within Auroville.

2) Most of the information being requested is already in the Master List. The health information requested (symptoms of Coronavirus and pre-existing conditions) is very general, with no details being asked. The conditions mentioned are only those that could directly affect a person’s vulnerability to the virus and would need to be known if treatment was required. For argument sake, let’s say there is a positive Covid-19 case in a community of Auroville, then from our collected data, it will be easy to quickly identify vulnerable people in the close proximity of that community and take care of them as a priority… and that is what this information will be used for to identify the more vulnerable people. Also, as mentioned in the massbulletin itself, the authorities don’t want the information for each individual unless a case comes up and it is required to address that specific situation around that location. In that case, the authorities would have to act fast to locate the individual and to know whether there are any pre-existing conditions that may need special care and treatment for him/her as well as those in the immediate vicinity. At the moment they only want numbers of people in different categories, such as numbers in certain high-risk age brackets, number of people with contact with a positive individual (which in Auroville will be zero, fortunately), number of people with asthma or other lung conditions, etc.

3) The Indian government, some weeks ago, put into effect two Acts that can supersede existing laws for the purpose of addressing the pandemic to ensure the safety of the population: the Epidemic Diseases Act and the National Disaster Management Act.

4) The information of each individual is currently being held in a database to which only 3 Aurovillans have access.

5) We are urging everyone to please fill out and submit the form but we are not and cannot force you to do so. We are asking for voluntary cooperation, with the assurance, again, that the information given will only be shared if absolutely necessary in the event that a case comes up in Auroville. The medical and health information will be deleted after the crisis is over.

We hope this helps to address your concerns. ~The Working Committee and Covid-19 Task Force
FAMC: Managing Emergency Responses in Auroville - To respond effectively to the Covid 19 Emergency, the FAMC and the BCC have opened an account under City Services called Management of Emergency Responses in Auroville (MERA). All donations and contributions will be channeled to this account, including donations received by the Unity Fund and specified for the Covid 19 emergency. To access the funds, the FAMC and the BCC have agreed upon the structure and processes described here.

1. Proposal Approval Process -
   A. Only registered units and activities, including activities under City Services may submit proposals to use these funds. The format for the proposal is a basic concept paper and budget. Templates will be provided upon request and can be found on the Auronet > Resources > FAMC page. Please write to mera@auroville.org.in for proposal templates.
   
   B. We have set up a two-step process for approving proposals.
      i. Covid Project Approval Group: This group will be composed of Covid Task Force members, one Working Committee member, and one BCC member. They will vet proposals for endorsement or rejection and submit them to a Management of Emergency Responses in Auroville (MERA), see below.
      ii. Management of Emergency Responses in Auroville is a unit that is being set up under the Health and Healing Trust (H&HT). This unit will give final approval to endorsed projects where funds are available.
   
   C. Monitoring: The monitoring of finances and implementation is to be handled by the BCC and reported to the Trustees of the H&HT and the FAMC and the Working Committee on a monthly basis.
      i. Financial Monitoring
         1. The City Services office will execute the allocation of funds from the MERA account to project holders.
         2. Receipts and vouchers will be submitted to City Services. BCC is responsible for ensuring that these are properly accounted for.
      ii. Activities Monitoring
         1. Narrative reports on use of funds must be submitted to the BCC in a timely manner.
         2. Everyone getting a budget will be informed about narrative report requirements at the time of receiving funds (timing will depend on the nature of the activity/proposal). Reporting requirements will be simple to implement for project holders. Nilen Jha will be asked to take up this responsibility.

2. BCC will turn over accounts to MERA so that they can be consolidated into the Auroville Foundation Balance Sheet.
3. The Health & Healing Foundation number may be used to facilitate the procurement of supplies.

If you have any questions about this, please write to mera@auroville.org.in.

Preventing thefts - A number of thefts in the residential zone were recently reported to AVSST. The thief/ves is/are comfortable entering homes even when inhabitants are inside but inattentive or busy in another part of their house (sleeping, taking a shower, gardening,...). While the thefts happened in the residential zone we expect other zones / communities to be targeted. AVSST recommends the following:

- Lock doors and windows at night or whenever away from a room
- Keep out of reach and view valuable items (wallets, money, bags, laptop, cellphone,...) 
- Make sure doors and windows are not openable after a cut in the mesh
- Report any suspicious activity / theft / attempt of theft to AVSST’s 24/7 emergency line: 944 30 90 107

AVSST is patrolling regularly most areas of Auroville and has increased the number of patrollers. Stay safe!

P.S: We really appreciate the numerous feedbacks received over the last few weeks! Thank you for the support!

FAMC: re payment of wages to workers - During the Covid lockdown, the FAMC wishes to convey our hope that we, as a community, will exercise fairness and generosity where possible. This should especially be evident in the payment of wages to employees working in our homes and gardens, that is in the informal sector where they have less protection. It is not their fault that they are not allowed to come to work. Most of you understand your employees’ situations and know what the impact of lost wages can mean to them and their families. Each of our actions reflects on Auroville as a community. Please give the due wages.
- The FAMC and the Working Committee

SEWA: ‘No work no pay’ principle cannot be invoked here: We have been receiving a lot of queries in relation to wages distribution to workers. We have been doing our research on this issue to come out with a document that clarifies all the questions you have raised. We have written to the Regional Provident Commissioner - II / OIC in this regard and are waiting for a circular to be received from their office in this regard to be circulated within the community.

We wish to inform you that on the 24th of March, 2020 we were summoned by the Office of Regional Provident Office in Puducherry and were requested to issue an advisory to all the Employers to send their Workers on paid holiday from 24th of March, 2020 to 31st of March, 2020, this information was shared through Mass Bulletin on 24th of March, 2020. Apart from this, we have not received any Communication or Circular from the Department to share the details with you at this point in time.

We have attached an advisory issued by the Ministry of Labour & Employment - Government of India as an attachment file for reference. For any further information, clarifications and updates, please visit labour.gov.in. The website has region wise helpline telephone numbers and e-mail ids for the assistance of the Employers.

We were able to gather the following information from The Hindu (Business Line) dated 13th of April, 2020: “No work no pay” principle cannot be invoked here. A March 29 GOI order makes it clear that deduction of wages during the lockdown will be construed as a legal offense. On March 20, the Labour Ministry issued advisories to the employers’ associations not to terminate their employees (especially precarious workers) and reduce wages for their absences, among others. Curiously, the advisory assumes a legal dimension when it says: if the workers take leave during the lockdown period they should be “deemed to be on duty without any consequential deduction in wages...Further, if the place of employment is to be made non-operational due to COVID-19, the employees of such unit (sic) will be deemed to be on duty.”

On March 24, the Home Ministry invoked the National Disaster Management Act, 2005 (NDMA) and the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 (EDA) and clamped a national lockdown for 21 days from March 25. It ordered closures of commercial and private establishments, industrial establishments, all transport services, educational institutions exempting essential services. However, migrant workers,
provoked by the absence of work and income and possibly ejections from their residential spaces, began a panic exodus, violating the national lockdown order.

On March 29, the Government of India, to effectively implement the lockdown order and to mitigate the economic hardship of the migrant workers issued an order under Section 10(2)(1) of the NDMA. It directed the State governments and the Union Territories (SGs/UTs) to issue orders, compulsorily requiring all the employers in the industrial sector and shops and commercial establishments to pay wages to their workers at their workplaces on the due date without any deduction during their closure due to lockdown. Further, the SGs/UTs were directed to take necessary action against those violating these orders. According to Section 51(b) of the NDMA, non-compliance with the directives issued under it will be punishable with a fine and/or imprisonment. Further, the “no work no pay” judicial principle cannot be invoked in the present circumstances, as neither the employers offer work nor the workers are able, even if willing, to report for work. COVID-affected workers are rendered ineligible to work. So the employers cannot deduct wages for absences due to national lockdown.

We will keep the community updated on any developments on this issue.

At your Service, SEWA team

Dear Parents of Auroville Children studying in Auroville Schools

You may be aware that the BCC was paying Solar Kitchen for children to eat at Auroville schools. As schools are closed and Solar Kitchen is not giving tiffins for children. **ON REQUEST** - This budget can be made available to parents who are in financial constraints and really need this extra support. If you feel this is an urgent need for you, please send a request to bcc@aurville.org.in with

- the name of the parent
- account number for the transfer (it will be transferred to the KIND account)
- name of your child/children
- name of the school

For children in Pre-Creche, Nandanam and Kindergarten the amount is Rs 1,000 per month.

For children in Auroville elementary-middle schools or high schools (including NESS), the amount is Rs 1,500 per month.

For Parents of Newcomer Children: the lunch amount of Rs 1,730 is part of the monthly contributions to the School Participation fee. If you are in a difficult financial situation and need to reduce it, please send your request with the above details to the following email address: bcc.checkpoint@aurville.org.in

No need to inform us again if you have already applied.

This is a temporary measure for the time of the COVID crisis. When Solar Kitchen and/or schools reopen, this will end.

Sincerely, BCC team

Reminding all community members, their families and guests that **Dehashakti premises is closed for everyone!** Thanks for understanding. - Dehashakti Team: dehashaktisports@aurville.org.in

The following are the timings for the food outlets:

- **PTDC** 8 am to 1 pm, with 8-9 AM preference given to our 60+ elders
- **PTPS** 9 am to 1 pm, with preference given to our 60+ elders from 9 to 10 AM
- **HERS** 8 am to 1 pm - no preference for elders but assistance is available if needed.

**Please be aware that the doors will close at 12:30 so all shoppers can be out by 1 pm.**

Thank you for your patience and understanding.

**Food takeaways and shopping outlets timings** - Read important instructions about restaurants and eateries [https://auroville.org.in/article/78548](https://auroville.org.in/article/78548)

**Auroville Bakery & Cafe** - takeaway service, 9 AM - 12 noon. Detailed menu @ [https://auroville.org.in/article/79050](https://auroville.org.in/article/79050)

Order via WhatsApp 96002 25409, mentioning your name, item and FS account no.

**Ganesh Bakery** open for takeaway from 7.30am to 1pm. Please bring your own bags if possible to reduce packing material, and for orders contact us at 9443476387. [https://auroville.org.in/article/78636](https://auroville.org.in/article/78636)

**Foodlink** home deliveries etc. [https://auroville.org.in/article/78629](https://auroville.org.in/article/78629)

**Naturellement** takeaway (also on Mondays). For food deliveries, please place the order before 4.30pm [https://auroville.org.in/article/78517](https://auroville.org.in/article/78517)

**Neem Tree eatery** takeaway lunch time 11 am till 2 pm, dinner time 5:00 pm till 8:00 pm [https://auroville.org.in/article/78604](https://auroville.org.in/article/78604) and [https://auroville.org.in/article/78649](https://auroville.org.in/article/78649)

**Solar Kitchen:** tiffin on order only. **NOTE tiffin must be brought before 9:30 or they will not be filled**

Solar Kitchen can include new tiffin requests on the basis of monthly booking only, from May onwards! Please contact [solkitchen@aurville.org.in](mailto:solkitchen@aurville.org.in) if you are interested in a monthly booking before 25th of April.

**Visitors Centre cafeteria** Lunch pick up time 12.15 to 1.30 Evening pick up time. 6.30 to 8.30 [https://auroville.org.in/article/78600](https://auroville.org.in/article/78600) (for full menu scroll down to comment)

**EcoService storage is FULL** - Please do your utmost to REDUCE your waste stream, as until further notice you are required to store it (segregated) in your home and/or communities!

**Financial Service in Aspiration is open, 9AM - 12:30 PM.**

**AVHC Pharmacy:** Opening hours are 9AM to 2:00 PM

**Covid-19 Task Force** - **Call for volunteers!** If you would like to volunteer and help please contact us. Thanks in advance for your collaboration and willingness to help. covid19taskforce@aurville.org.in or WhatsApp us at +91-9047778755 (Arul).
Earth Day 2020: Fifty Years On, World Comes Together Virtually to Put Spotlight on Climate Action

Eastern Hemisphere of Earth (Reto Stöckli/NASA)

Every year April 22 is celebrated as the global Earth Day. The year 2020 marks the historic 50 years since the start of this modern environmental movement in 1970. With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic—as most parts of the world are under lockdown, the Earth Day has gone digital to keep up the momentum. The theme for this year is Climate Action.

“The impact of the coronavirus is both immediate and dreadful. But there is another, deep emergency—the planet’s unfolding environmental crisis. Climate disruption is approaching a point of no return. We must act decisively to protect our planet from both the coronavirus and the existential threat of climate disruption. The current crisis is an unprecedented wake-up call. We need to turn the recovery into a real opportunity to do things right for the future,” said António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, in his message for the day.

This 50th anniversary of Earth Day is being celebrated by different types of digital events—global conferences, calls to action, performances, and video teach-ins to name a few. Moreover, many online activities will be focused on different environmental issues across the globe.

How Earth Day started - The idea to initiate Earth Day came from the US Senator Gaylord Nelson from Wisconsin in 1969. Driven by a deep concern over the deteriorating environmental conditions due to oil spills and rising air pollution in the 1960s, he initiated environmental movements to educate people about its ill effects on both human and environmental health. The first Earth Day was organized on April 22, 1970. About 20 million people—nearly 10% of the US population—are said to have participated in this pioneering environmental movement to spread the message of protecting natural biodiversity and put forth their concern over environmental deterioration. In 1970, the participants took to the streets, college campuses, parks from different cities to protest against environmental ignorance and demanded better conservation measures for the only habitable planet in the solar system. The movement was a significant victory and led to the launch of several landmark environmental programmes and laws including, Clean Air, Clean Water, and Endangered Species Acts and created the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the US. The first Earth Day inspired several such environmental movements across the globe. Several countries eventually adopted laws to safeguard the environment. Moreover, in 2016, on this day, the United Nations opened the Paris Agreement on climate change for signing. In its 50 years of the journey, Earth Day continues to hold major international significance and is celebrated with full enthusiasm to inspire protection of the natural wealth.

2020 theme: Climate Action

The theme set for this year’s Earth Day is Climate Action. As glaciers continue to melt, droughts and floods increase, species go extinct, heat waves get intense, and weather patterns change, the call for climate action has grown louder than ever. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), has warned of severe impacts if the warming crosses 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. The change is majorly attributed to the increase in carbon emission over the past few decades due to human activities.

In this context, the main objective of the day will be to educate the masses—about greenhouse gases, an increase in carbon emissions and individual carbon footprints. The day will bring together experts and influencers from the diverse fields to engage in a dialogue and spread the message of climate action. From simple lifestyle changes to driving local or national climate policy, every one of us has the potential to contribute to mitigating climate change. As the world has come to a screeching halt, this Earth Day reminds us that the time is ripe to rethink about the future of planet Earth.

- The Weather Company Edit India Team  (The Weather Company’s primary journalistic mission is to report on breaking weather news, the environment and the importance of science to our lives.)
Despite today’s outer appearances, April is the Victory month for Sri Aurobindo and The Mother, with a series of encouraging events that have occurred over the decades: Sri Aurobindo’s arrival to a safe refuge in Pondicherry on April 4th 1910; The Mother’s final return to Pondicherry on April 24th 1920; and the disclosure of the Supramental Descent, announced on April 24th, 1956. It was 12 years later that The Mother inaugurated the City of Dawn to materialize the consequences of these events in the Earth’s consciousness, and to anchor this evolution in the land that India consecrated for Auroville.

The Peacock is traditionally known in India as the sign of success, and so it is fitting that in this special month of April 2020, a peacock came to stand before Sri Aurobindo’s statue … and just some days earlier, a pair of peacocks were sighted, perched on The Mother’s terrace!

With these signs of better things to come, hinting at the truth behind circumstances, we continue on with our work of consolidating Auroville’s designated material base. We invite all friends and well-wishers to join us in helping to secure the remaining missing plots. Together we can fulfil The Mother’s Dream of a physical space for Sri Aurobindo’s great Vision, and continue the positive evolution of decades of Aprils!

Join the “Acres for Auroville Land Gift” for the City of Dawn’s still-missing land!!

Lands for Auroville Unified
Auroville Centre for Urban Research
Auroville – 605 101, Tamil Nadu, India

24th April 1920 – 24th April 2020: the Century of the Mother’s final return to Pondicherry

“Gaining insight into how Auroville’s ideals were concretely articulated in its development as a society, and what sustained this process – one that I theorise as “prefigurative utopian practice” – would be relevant not only to Auroville, but also for other collective attempts at embodying and socially reproducing new paradigms of society, according to alternative and progressive ideals. Intentional communities are key sites of utopian practice, hence Auroville makes for an especially rich and relevant site…, given its exceptional combination of longevity, size, scope of activity, recognition, aims and experimental ethos.” - Suryamayi Aswini (in her recent doctoral dissertation on Auroville, Nov. 2019)

One of the strange and unconventional answers to what sustains the process for “concretely articulating Auroville’s ideals in development as a society” could be found in following words of the Mother:

“Auroville wasn’t preceded by any thought; as always, it was simply a Force acting, like a sort of absolute manifesting, and it was so strong that I could have told people, “Even if you don’t believe in it, even if all circumstances appear to be quite unfavourable, I KNOW THAT AUROVILLE WILL BE. It may be in a hundred years, it may be in a thousand years, I don’t know, but Auroville will be, because it has been decreed.” So it was decreed – and done quite simply, like that, in obedience to a Command, without any thought.” (Mother’s Agenda -, September 21, 1966)

The Force the Mother speaks of was not and is not an intellectual or idealistic or ethical or aesthetic force. Nor was it an economic or political or religious force. It was something more nuanced and deeper: it was the force of consciousness that creates the universe and impales the evolution. A few years ago, when India’s Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi concluded his speech at the Madison Square in USA with the words, “May force be with you”, he was also referring to this force of consciousness.

But the question then is how Aurovilians and, for that matter all workers for the “the new paradigms of society” have access to this Force? The answer lies in a quote that appears at the end of Suryamayi’s thesis:

“Take the psychic attitude; follow the straight sunlit path, with the Divine openly or secretly upbearing you – if secretly, he will yet show himself in good time, – do not insist on the hard, hampered, roundabout and difficult journey.(Sri Aurobindo).

The more this truth is understood and adhered to, the faster the process of articulating concretely Auroville’s ideals and her relevance for “reproducing new paradigms of society” will be possible.

“Acres for Auroville” seeks to provide the unified geographical area for those projects and people who understand this great insight into the truth of things.

With trust in Auroville’s bright future,

Aryadeep

Mandakini

Please specify “ACRES FOR AUROVILLE” (all Master Plan priority plots) for all donations via:
- Auroville Unity Fund (checks & bank transfers),
- Auroville Donation Gateway (credit & debit cards) https://donations.auroville.com/
- Auroville International www.auroville-international.org

Complete donation & tax deductibility information: https://land.auroville.org/a44donations

Phone: +91 413 2622 657 Fax: +91 413 2622055 E-mail: lfau@auroville.org.in website: https://land.auroville.org/
ANNOUNCEMENTS

24th April 2020
Collective Meditation
6-6:30 am IST
7.45 – 8.15 pm IST
From your own space.
(Timings coincide with the virtual programme of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram for this day.)

For more detail and a live link, see p 17
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Savitri around the World
A project of Auroville International and Savitri Bhavan celebrating the Centenary of the Mother’s final arrival in Pondicherry on April 24, 1920 and remembering the Mother’s words: “Savitri is a mantra for the transformation of the World”

This is the second edition of a project originally held in February 2018 to celebrate Auroville’s 50th Anniversary. Recorded readings by 495 individuals representing 28 Indian states and 69 countries around the globe have been assembled to create a continuous reading (Parayan) of Sri Aurobindo’s epic “Savitri – a Legend and a Symbol, which the Mother has called “The Supreme Revelation of Sri Aurobindo’s Vision”, starting at the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry, where the poem was composed from 1916 to 1950, moving around India and then travelling westward with the sun through Central and Western Asia, Africa, Europe, North, South and Central America, Oceania, East and South East Asia before returning to India and ending in Auroville, the City of the Dawn.

The corresponding Savitri text as well as information about each reader has been added in the form of subtitles. The final product, lasting 35 hours, will be permanently live-streamed on YouTube from 9am IST on Friday 24.04.2020 onwards so that it can be viewed all around the world.

To access the Parayan use the following link: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCp2CP9HLH1xeaKbBIAo1etaA
and please share this news with everyone you think will be interested.

Greetings from Aurosoya - We are very happy to announce that we are restarting the production of our products. We will be supplying to the stores in Auroville. Please call us at 0413 2623809 for more details. Thank you! - Team Aurosoya

From the Financial Service: All international cheque transactions are on hold at the moment; we take in your cheques and will give advance on the cheque whenever needed. The credit will only show on your account once the cheques have been processed by the bank. Thanking you all for your co-operation!

News and Notes # 815 – 25th April 2020
WELCOME

FROM THE ENTRY SERVICE - ES # 036 - 25-04-2020

Our team is happy to recommend the following individuals as Aurovilians, Newcomers and Friends of Auroville, joining Auroville. Prior to Newcomer, Aurovillian and Friend of Auroville status confirmation, for Newcomers, Associates and Friends of Auroville two weeks and for Aurovillians and Returning Aurovilians one-month window for community feedback. Kindly forward your support or grievances to entrieservice@auroville.org.in.

NEWCOMERS CONFIRMED:
- Iulia MAYORSKIH (aka Yulia) (Russian)
- Udhayalakshmi RAMACHANDHIRAN (aka Ramy) (Indian)
- Cristina GILI (Spanish)
- Giovanni PARRILLO (Italian)
- Pankaj Arunkumar JANI (Indian)

AUROVILNIANS CONFIRMED:
- Cyril BROUEILH (French)
- Marcella GALATA (Italian)
- Rohan SHARMA (Indian)
- Subashiney MURUGANANDAN (Indian)
- Gandharva KUMAR REDDY (Indian)
- Alessandra ARGENTI (Italian)
- Anwar AMINUDIN (Indonesian)
- Vivekkumar VISVANADHAN (Indian)

NOTE:
- The Newcomer probation year becomes effective only after the NC kit has been completed and returned. Be aware that the duration of the process cannot exceed 18 months from the date of confirmation.
- An Aurovillian is a resident of Auroville, aged 18 and above, whose name has been entered in the Register of Resident (RoR) as maintained by the Auroville Foundation (AVF) Office.
- The change of status from Newcomer to Aurovillian is official only once the individual has filled in and signed the B-Form. An Aurovillian’s name is entered into the RoR after he/she has met with the Secretary of the AVF with an appointment arranged by the Entry Secretariat. These appointments are fixed by the Entry Secretariat according to the availability of the Secretary, but not at any personal request of an individual.
- The Auroville Foundation processes issuing of ID cards only to the Aurovillians who are registered in the RoR.

Please note that the Entry Service office is closed until 4th May due to the nationwide lockdown.

APPEALS

COVID-19 Lockdown: An Appeal from AVAG

Appeal for Providing Urgent Relief to Affected Families following COVID-19 Lockdown in the Auroville bioregion

Any donation, big or small, is most welcome. We will keep you updated of the progress of our work. In our endeavour to provide relief, we have reached approximately 150 beneficiaries in our bio-region and are aiming to reach more families as soon as possible. Please make your donation to the AVAG F. S. account 0226, with a memo specifying “Covid-19 Relief Fund.”

To donate using a credit card:
https://donations.auroville.com/project=4AVAG&utm_source=AVAG-newsletter&utm_campaign=8f029a4d10-
EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_04_11_11_41_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_9854c5f3c0-8f029a4d10-56071535

We will keep you updated on the progress of our work. We sincerely thank you for your solidarity and generosity.

The Lockdown Blues

You got them lockdown blues
It’s making you paint in heightened hues
The muse is forcing your creativity open
Poems merge out of your pen
Painting inner vistas
Singing to new listeners
So film, write, paint, perform on your cues
And send them to AV Today’s Lockdown Blues

AV Today is calling for creative expressions from the lockdown from Aurovilians, Newcomers, friends, workers. A part of our June-July double issue will feature some of our homegrown responses to this time. So if you have found the muse calling during the quiet time, please let us know. Whether it’s poetry, painting, film making, music, photography, prose, dance, drama or any other inspirations, please connect with us.

Our word limit for prose and poetry is preferably 500 words. We might need to apply some red pen in the way of edits, and we can’t guarantee to print your contributions, but we’re keen to include a diverse spread of creative endeavours. If it’s a film or a large document, please email an outline first. Our final deadline is May 2, but the sooner you can send us your piece, the better.

In creative fraternity,
- Peter, Valentina, Mariana
pilloyd65@gmail.com; valentina.beatriz.s@gmail.com; mariana@auroville.org.in

I am in the process of writing a project proposal about tourism, to be presented to SAILER. One section will be dedicated to elaboration of data: in this moment, I would like to talk with someone who works in the statistics field, to get some suggestions and information, to be able to present a detailed budget request. In the future, I could need someone expert in this field, open to collaborate to the project, if accepted by SAILER. If you are a statistics expert, open to collaborate, please contact me! Your expertise will be truly appreciated.

Kyara - merianichiara@gmail.com

LOST AND FOUND

Please help us find our cat! She went missing from Horizon community (near Well Cafe). She responds to the name Inana, but she’s very shy so do not approach. She is also pregnant and an indoor cat, therefore might be looking for shelter and food. If sighted, please call us immediately. Thanks! Harsh, +91 9099601911

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Parents, have you noticed that if your kid is interested in a subject you have to study it in detail so as to appear moderately intelligent. When my two-year-old grandson got interested in construction vehicles, I couldn’t get by saying, “that is a bull dozer”; he would look at me and say, “No, that is a forklift!” and I would pretend to look at it again and say “Yes, you are right, that is a forklift.”
For those of you parents and grandparents who would like to appear reasonably knowledgeable about our local flora and fauna, this is the book for you. Montessori teachers have also found this to be a fun activity book. It can be read by youngsters who just want to identify a plant or animal or by someone who wants more details including the scientific name and description. The book is beautifully illustrated with photographs so that you and your family can have a rewarding time identifying and learning about the flora and fauna which you would normally encounter in a walk around your neighborhood, a park or a friend’s garden. Happy nature rambling! Special discount of Rs. 80 on the regular price of Rs. 200 for you and your friends if they use the following link: https://www.instamojo.com/mohan_chunkath/nature-rambles-ebook-by-mohan-v-chunkath/?discount=nr80off

DREAMERS CAFE AT VISITORS CENTER
We are open daily from 8 AM to 1 PM for takeaway items: croissant, bread, cakes, samosa and cutlet. We take orders at catami@auroville.org.in or 9843808762. PT acct or Aurocard only. Please wear a mask and keep 1.5 m distance. We also deliver to your community.
- DREAMERS TEAM

FROM THE TRAVEL SHOP/INSIDE INDIA - Our clients can contact us via our emergency cell phone number: Jearaj, 99944-74395 or by email: travelshop@auroville.org.in or on Whatsapp: Ganesh, insideindiaphone, 8524-953783

NEEDED
House-sitting opportunity - My name is Fani, French, 60s, volunteering here since January. I propose to sit your house from 28th April. I’ll stay in Auroville til 3rd November or even longer... Eco friendly, quiet, I can maintain your home, your garden and take care about your pets as well. Contact me Whatsapp +33651037251 or faniliza57@gmail.com. Thank you.

AVAILABLE
Reusuable Masks Infused with Herbs
In the current health crisis, there is a need for more high quality and affordable reusable masks. These masks can be used daily as a preventative measure along with frequent hand washing, sanitizing shared appliances and keeping social distance. All masks are not intended for medical purpose but for general protection only. It is important to reserve the medically approved masks for doctors and health care providers.

Upasana is working hard to provide reusable and affordable healing masks as a part of its Therapeutic Clothing line. The team is devoted to keeping a steady stream of masks flowing into the local community and beyond.
FM: WWW.HEALINGMASK.ORG

Nursing support for elders at home - Offering my experience with nursing to elder people at home for free. I've nursed professionally and as a volunteer during my journey. Please contact me on 9786624784. Love Zeevic

MATRMINDAR
Garden of the Unexpected
Report of Jan - mid-April 2020:

The 12 Gardens and the 800 Flowers
- Pavel Bogdanovich

Harmony garden:
“When all is in agreement with the One Truth or an expression of it that is harmony.” – Sri Aurobindo

Qualities, represented by flowers of this garden, exist in harmonious relations of two or more sides: “you and others”, “you and everything in general”, “you and the Divine”, etc. They seem simple and natural, however, it is not so easy to achieve them. In order to realise some of them, realisations represented by flowers of other gardens may need to be acquired preliminarily.

The main flower: Power of harmony “Simple, noble, dignified, powerful and charming”

Sub-gardens:
Harmony & Balance (18 flowers)

Harmony in the vital
Collective harmony
Psychic balance
Perfect balance

Harmony in the vital - “To harmonise the vital is a psychological masterpiece; happy is the one who accomplishes it.”
Collective harmony - “Collective harmony is the work undertaken by the Divine Consciousness; it alone has the power to realise it.”
Psychic balance - “Under the psychic influence all activity becomes balanced.”
Perfect balance - “One of the most important conditions of a growing peace”
Peace (15 flowers)

Peace “To want what You want always and in every circumstance is the only way to enjoy an unshakable peace”

Peace in the vital “The result of the abolition of the desires”

Radiating peace in the cells “A happy contagion”

Integral silence “The source of true force”

Correct movements (8 flowers)

Correct movements “All movements are under the right inspiration”

Movements in the Light “This is possible only with a great sincerity”

Turning of wrong movements into right movements “A supreme goodwill always ready to be transformed”

Exclusive turning of all movements towards the Divine - “The sure means of having security”

Simplicity (10 flowers)

Mental simplicity “Does not like complications”

Candid simplicity in the vital “One of the most difficult qualities for the vital to acquire”

Humility “Adorable in its simplicity”

Charity “Simple and sweet, attentive to the needs of all”

Remembrance (5 flowers)

Remembrance “Constant remembrance of the Divine is indispensable for transformation.”

Emotional remembrance “Only the circumstances that have helped us in our search for the Divine should be the object of this remembrance.”

Lasting remembrance “The remembrance of that which has helped the being to progress.”

Constant remembrance of the Divine “Spontaneous and joyful. The ideal condition.”

Attachment to the Divine (18 flowers, most of them orchids)

Attachment to the Divine “Wraps itself around the Divine and finds all its support in Him so as to be sure of never leaving Him”

Attachment in the emotional vital to the Divine “An artistic and graceful attachment, perhaps a little fanciful.”

Detachment from all that is not the Divine “A single occupation, a single aim, a single joy - the Divine.”

Radha's consciousness in the vital “Perfect attachment to the Divine replaces all vital attractions and passions.”

Presence of a big tree on the Harmony garden area, under which the orchids can be accommodated, is definitely a manifestation of Harmony)
Friendship with the Divine (11 flowers)

Progressive friendship with the Divine "As we progress and purify ourselves of our egoism, our friendship with the Divine becomes clearer and more conscious"

Intimacy with the Divine in the vital "Only a pure calm and desireless vital can hope to enter this marvelous state"

Intimacy with universal Nature "This intimacy is only possible for those who are vast and without preferences or repulsions"

Entire self-giving "Fully open, clear and pure"

Progressive friendship with the Divine

"It is you who open all the closed doors and allow the saving Grace to enter"

Mental gratitude "The gratefulness of the mind for what makes it progress"

Integral gratitude "The whole being offers itself to the Lord in absolute trust"

Detailed gratitude "The gratitude that awakens in us all the details of the Divine Grace"

Gratitude (4 flowers)

Gratitude

Integral gratitude

Mental gratitude

Detailed gratitude

Gratitude and Notes

Voices

Naked
Under the neem
Perfume
White rain
Nobody nothing
Now.

Desnuda
bajo el neem
perfume
lluvia blanca
nadie nada
Ahora.

Anandi-a
Hidden Paradise - MLH
16-4-20

They are still walking
On every grain they grew in landlord’s field
On every drop they brought in from the well
On each line of a priest’s Book of Law
They are still walking …

Behind the ambition of a mighty king
On each thread of the silk robe worn by the queen
On each bit of gold and diamond dug out from their bodies
They are still walking …

On each carving of the mighty God, and their abode - shining high ceilings
With a flag of pride,
They are still walking.

On every hammer wielded to build the mighty forts,
On every foundation of the bridely palaces
To fulfill each of the promises the kings made to the queens
They are still walking ...

On every wall of division, of which nations are made
On baked feet, in the cold sun,
With sweat streaming, and burned destination
They are still walking...

In the politics of today and the promises of tomorrow
with heavy bags of hope
and full stomachs of pity,
They are still walking…

* Author’s note: “they” refers to all the workers departing the cities to return to their homes.

-Vivek Singh, Needam- Certitude

GREEN MATTERS

Water Saving Tip of the Week!
Purchase a flow meter. Do not consider it as a tool to invade your privacy, but as a useful tool to develop your consciousness. With love from the Water Group, helping Auroville become a water-sensitive city. watergroup@auroville.org.in

Food for the Future
Towards Food Sovereignty for Auroville
In this time of Corona Lockdown more and more people are becoming aware that food security is our number one concern. Another lockdown is completely possible in the future, and if not that, we will surely face increasing challenges from climate change, reduction of water table, over-population, peak oil etc. All these very real and entirely predictable threats weaken the efficacy of the present industrialised agriculture and food distribution system, and show their flaws.

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If we are willing to look at these threats clearly, as responsible people, we will see that almost everything we rely on to feed us is actually very unstable and precarious.

As an international community, dedicated to a spiritual goal, there has never been a more poignant and urgent moment for us to come together and explore the question of food sovereignty. Might it be that we have previously looked to governments, institutions, experts and funding for solutions to our problems without understanding their root cause? Might it be time to now look at the root cause of this problem with our own eyes, and share collective responsibility for finding a solution?

If, as I believe, the cause is a tragic loss of relationship with where our food comes from and an over-dependence on industrialized agriculture with its huge ecological cost and carbon footprint, then the question of food sovereignty has an obvious solution. We have to work together to remember this relationship, to unhook ourselves from reliance on big agriculture and food commerce, and change the course of our own and our children’s nutritional futures collectively, with community involvement.

What foods do we eat? - Most of the foods we eat have a huge ecological cost and carbon footprint; prime examples are wheat (pasta, bread, chapattis, cakes, etc), corn, olive oil, soya and vegetables that come from far away (potatoes, broccoli, carrots, beetroot, cabbage, cauliflower) - not to mention the more industrialized products like Maggi noodles, Lays, Pepsi etc.

Local Food - Local foods grow easily, they use less water, they are tasty and have a higher nutritional and medicinal value than standardized, industrialized foods. They have little or no ecological cost and are the foundation of every single great culture on this planet. The obvious and logical thing to do is to start eating local food, and to discover just how good it tastes. To value local food, especially here in Auroville, we may however have to give up some habits, go beyond default preferences, and look beyond the products of industrialized agriculture that fill the shelves of our shops. We are invited to educate ourselves...

Looking to farmers to grow these foods is an incomplete strategy. Farmers can grow them easily, but as long as people want to buy pizza and have no idea how to cook a drumstick, the local vegetables may be on the shelves but no-one buys them. Each person is being asked to explore their own relationship with Mother Nature, which is very much reflected in understanding and using local foods.

The solutions are simple... Here in Auroville, we have land, we have resources, we have water, we have people and knowledge. We have to bring them together and act collectively.

The Circle Garden - The circle garden is a small permaculture module that can be made and maintained easily by anyone! It can support a fruit tree and other basic local foods. It can be made in community spaces, back gardens, schools, offices and public spaces. This is not a ‘final’ solution, but it is a first step, a reconnection to local foods. Just imagine if our whole community started to eat drumstick spinach, green papaya, turkey berry and chicken spinach once a week, all from plants that have no ecological cost and were grown by their hands...

I think we would also move into a deeper alignment with ourselves and the deeper aims of Auroville.

What can I do?
To make this happen, it will help to organize ourselves. By creating groups to help with implementing and maintaining the gardens. By getting the support of foresters and farmers and others who could help make nurseries and offer plants for the gardens. By community members teaching how to cook local foods. Through teams showing how to make bio-enzyme, which is a simple way of making soap that will allow us to recycle all our grey water. It will also mean administrators and community to work in communication.

When can we start?
July is the start of the farming season. If we start now to create the gardens and get everyone onboard, form action groups and see which communities are ready to join in, we can start to bring these threads together, including posters, videos and also official letters from our community to our working groups to create policy for schools, eateries, public spaces and architects, helping them find ways to integrate these ideas into our collective narrative.

This is a first step.
This first step is not only about growing local food, it is as much about growing consciousness and awareness of a subject so crucially important, and yet so often almost completely overshadowed by our materialistic values. We put a man on the moon, surely we can make this happen too!!

- Krishna, Solitude Farm

A call to this initiative is also on youtube:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2TR3Vnod8k
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9X0Kn5BIA
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UXQTeUBKQ
In the last columns we shared an ecological and environmental perspective on the current crisis. With the world in an extraordinary health emergency situation, and most of the world in lockdown, we are confronted with our dystopian relationship with the natural world - not only life is disrupted but livelihoods are lost.

As Sunita Narain shared in our favourite magazine Down to Earth: our focus must be on the millions of self-employed, migrant workers, refugees and farmers. It is hard to think of anything else that happened with such speed, and there is no rulebook that tells governments what to do; how to shut down economies; and when to re-open them.

What we should be really thinking about is the collective vulnerability of our world. The most macho leaders; the most high-tech societies; and the most mighty economic powers have all met their match in this lowly virus. It should make us humble - think about what we need to do differently; how we need to act and behave differently. But this is where I suspect we will err.

The Corona virus is an outcome of an interdependent globalized world, but our world is fractious and we did not act together: China, the WHO, the UN Security Council dragged their feet while the virus was spreading. Now, countries and states are pirating protective equipment and medical supplies and haggle about who will come out with the next vaccine. The norm seems to be every man for himself.

This pathetic state of global leadership should concern us. Many respected voices argue that COVID-19 shows the end of multilateralism - it’s the death of the UN and all that it stood for. Now, it will be unilateralism at its worst that will set the new world order.

Unfortunately we have another emergency knocking on the door: the climate crisis, and it’s making this one worse. As the Guardian reports:

“Climate change is about to supercharge the coronavirus emergency. In April, California’s wildfire season will start. Restrictions on work caused by the pandemic will make it harder for firefighters (...). Californians’ lungs could face Covid-19 and unusually intense smoke at the same time. A third of the country also faces serious flood risk through the spring. And in summer and fall, US forecasters predict “above average probability for major hurricanes (...”). In Ecuador, a muted government response to flooding in indigenous communities, for fear of spreading the virus.”

Then there was the spike in methane. The International Energy Agency (IEA), reported that global methane emissions from the oil and gas sector increased by nearly four percent from 2018 to 2019. That trend could continue in 2020 and beyond, due, in part, to the economic downturn. What it may lead to a decline in carbon dioxide emissions, it could have the opposite effect on methane emissions. Lower oil and gas prices mean that “producers pay less attention to efforts to tackle methane.”

Very much like COVID-19, climate change needs global leadership — if one country continues to emit, then all actions of the rest will be negated. But if we want all countries to act, then we must build a cooperative agreement, one in which the last person, the last country, has its right to development. We need global leadership in a globalised inter-dependent world. With the Conference of Parties (COP 26) due later this year in Edinburgh postponed till next year, that could mean two things: A) a lost opportunity of steering the climate policies towards a Just Transition, sharing the burden fairly and protecting those most vulnerable; or B) a chance for non-state actors (citizen groups, companies) to prepare pathways and proposals that meet both short term AND long-term needs.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has called on Indians to come up with new business and lifestyle models that as he stated on LinkedIn: “care for the poor, the most vulnerable as well as our planet. We have made major progress in combating climate change. Mother Nature has demonstrated to us her magnificence, showing us how quickly it can flourish when human activity is slower. There is a significant future in developing technologies and practices that reduce our impact on the planet.” Who knows? What role could Auroville play in this regenerative revival?

Sources: Down to Earth, Guardian, IEA, LinkedIn

The Green Column appears bi-monthly in the N & N and on Auornet. We invite you to participate and comment on green issues in Auroville, the bioregion, and the world.

- Gjs & Lisbeth for avgrecenter You can write to us avgrecenter@auroville.org.in.

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The last two Sunday walks of April also stand cancelled.

The last walks of the season were to be at Terra Soul/Windarra with Juan and at Aranya with Saravanam (with bus and breakfast). Same as the four walks before that (Siddhartha Farm with Herbert, Fertile Field with Jan & Jana, Evergreen with Natasha and Udumbu with Gijs and Noe) they could not take place because of the lockdown.

This year the Sunday walks started after Pongal in January with a visit to Annapurna with Tomas followed by Pichandikulam with Joss, a cycle ride and walk in Hermitage with Kireet, Citadine town gardens with Luigi, the Botanical gardens with Marie & Nasim, Auro-orchard with Jasmin & Aravindha, Space with Island and finally Buddha Garden with Priya. We thank you all for the wonderful experience we had: Aurovilians, newcomers, volunteers and guests alike!

We give a heartfelt thanks and kudos to all those farm- and forest- stewards who have over the years given their time on precious Sundays to welcome us in their tucked away places, not easily discovered, sharing their precious insights into their vastly diverse work and environment. We hope that for the next season starting January 2021 the walks to Farms and Forests can continue in their 11th year. And maybe this crisis has the potential to motivate more people to get active in growing food and forests?

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CULTURAL EVENTS

AUROVILLE ART SERVICE - ‘basket’ for the week

1. CREEVA INVITES YOU to A HAPPY CHALLENGE - Take a 29 x 21 or larger piece of paper and a pencil or pen, and draw the room you live in the way you would ideally want it to look. Everyone may participate 3 to 100 years old. When it is done, please send only one picture of it to: aurovillearts@auroville.org.in. We will share it with the community with our delighted thanks.

3. EVER SLOW GREEN - brainfever media productions is offering a special one week online screening of this film about the re-afforestation in Auroville from Earth Day (Wed, 22nd April) until Tues. the 28th. To access, email Christoph at: EverSlowGreen@gmail.com.

4. AVAartists and AVFF are co-hosting the online screening of Stalking Chernobyl. The film will be online with free access until the 26th of April, commemorating Earth Day as well the International Chernobyl Disaster Remembrance Day. There will be an online Q&A with director Iara Lee on the 26th of April. To watch the film, go to https://youtu.be/x3wcUbm2gp4. For subtitles, click CC button >> settings >> subtitles and select your language. To attend the Q&A, register at https://zoom.us/meeting/register/upwodd-lvzyzlibmxynYjFwVpvrIfNPTze.

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4. Story Building Session with Rashmi - On Friday the 24th, at 11am, Rashmi, a professional theatre person, is offering an online story building session for 8-12 year olds. To join, sms or whatsapp her on 94482 35935.

Samskritam Auroville team is pleased to organize a 10-day Bhagavad Gita class online. All are welcome.

Bhagavad Gita - Chanting and Meaning

Over a period of 10 days, with a 90-minute session each day, we will chant all the Slokas from Bhagavad Gita in Sanskrit and also read Sri Aurobindo’s interpretation in English.

Friday, April 24th to Sunday, May 3rd
2:30 pm to 4:00 pm
Venue: Online (using Zoom video-conferencing)
Facilitators: Aravinda Maheshwari and Santosh Chandak

Test Video Call: For those who are new to Zoom video-conferencing software, we will do a test video call on:

Thursday, April 23rd, 2:30 pm to 3:00 pm
Venue: Online (using Zoom video-conferencing)

Register on devabhasha@auroville.org.in and we will send you more details.

When Sri Aurobindo was in Alipore Central Jail in 1908, he utilized this period of solitary confinement for an intense study and practice of the Bhagavad Gita which led him to many deep spiritual experiences. He later wrote: “...I looked at the jail that secluded me from men and it was no longer by its high walls that I was imprisoned; no, it was Vasudeva who surrounded me. I walked under the branches of the tree in front of my cell but it was not the tree, I knew it was Vasudeva, it was Sri Krishna whom I saw standing there and holding over me his shade. I looked at the bars of my cell, the very grating that did duty for a door and again I saw Vasudeva. It was Narayana who was guarding and standing sentry over me. Or I lay on the coarse blankets that were given me for a couch and felt the arms of Sri Krishna around me, the arms of my Friend and Lover.”

The timeless wisdom of Bhagavad Gita continues to guide humanity. In this phase of lockdown due to the spread of Corona Virus, which requires us to maintain a certain amount of ‘physical distancing’, we welcome you to join this online Gita class and strengthen the aspiration of ‘collective yoga’ in Auroville.

Warmly,
Aravinda, Anandi, Deven and Radhika
For Samskritam Auroville

Organising Online Classes & Courses (For Beginners)
Tuesday 28th April, 10am

In the times of social distancing, as more and more things are shifting online, I along with my team (Auroville Campus Initiative aka ACI) would like to offer a short online beginners workshop to help those of you who would like to give virtual real-time classes and courses in the coming months.

We have been organising Svadhyaya, an online course, for 3 years now and through Svadhyaya, we have been organising
1. Virtual group discussions
2. Virtual project work
3. Virtual movie screenings
4. Virtual collective reflections
5. Virtual ice-breakers
6. Virtual classes
7. Virtual workshops

These are very simple things that anyone can do, I will be sharing very simple tips and tricks that can help anyone planning to offer educational courses online. Our experience, so far, has been with virtual real-time courses and not so much with self-paced courses. Thus, we would be only able to offer support with the former. For your interest in the latter, consider doing the following:

- Course Organisation
  - https://www.udemy.com/course/how-to-create-market-and-sell-online-courses/

If you are interested in participating in the workshop on Virtual Course Organisation, please sign up using the following link:
https://forms.gle/a4SYrZTdHz7AxAwu9
Please sign up by 25 April i.e. Saturday.

Love,
Divyanshi

For ACI-Avinash, Divyanshi, Manoj, Lalit, Siddharth, Valentine

ACI Collaborators: Sandhya and Sivakumar

Online Yoga classes with Tatiana

Weekly online Yoga classes (Regular students only)

Mondays - all level for the spine at 7.30 to 8.45 am
Wednesdays & Fridays Level 1- at 7.30 to 8.45 am
Saturdays - yoga for immunity (level 2- 3) at 3.30 to 5 pm

Please register with Tatiana @ yogini@auroville.org.in
No admission to new students.
Note: if you need any further information please contact Tatiana by email.
SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM TRUST, Pondicherry  
24th April 2020

In view of the Lockdown measures being enforced by the Government, the Ashram Main Building remains closed, and it will not be possible to hold the usual Darshan program. However, we invite all to join in the following events via the Ashram’s official website: www.sriaurobindoaashram.org

1) Thursday, 23rd April 2020 - Individual Meditation (07:45pm - 08:15pm)
The meditation will begin with the Mother’s recorded statement of 27.01.1968: “The reminiscences will be short. I came to India to meet Sri Aurobindo, I remained in India to live with Sri Aurobindo, when he left my body I continued to live here in order to do his work which is by serving the Truth and enlightening humanity to hasten the rule of the Divine’s Love upon earth.”

This will be followed by a recording in Manoj-da’s voice of various important statements that Mother and Sri Aurobindo have made about their meeting on 29th March 1914 and 24th April 1920. The meditation will end with a few letters of Sri Aurobindo on the Mother.

2. Friday, 24th April 2020 Individual Meditation (05:55am - 06:30am) Since it is not possible to hold the usual morning meditation around the Samadhi this time, a live streaming camera feed has been arranged. A link on the Ashram website will take you to a live video of the Samadhi which will be broadcast during the meditation. At 05:55am, a few pictures of the Ashram Main Building taken from outside during this Lockdown period will be streamed. Then, as usual, the meditation will begin at 06:00am and end at 06:30am with the sound of a gong. As per usual practice, there will be no accompanying music for the morning meditation. Please note that there may be a time lag of up to a minute depending on various factors, including your internet speed. The recorded video of the Samadhi during the morning meditation will be available for at least 24 hours so that disciples in other time zones can also view it at their convenience.

3) Friday, 24th April 2020 Individual Meditation (07:45pm - 08:15pm) The meditation will begin with a recording of the Mother’s reading of Chapter 3 of The Mother by Sri Aurobindo. This will be followed by an Organ music piece played by the Mother on 25th April 1954 entitled Promise of the 24th.

4) Darshan Message Card - The Darshan Message Card will be uploaded on the Ashram website by 06:00am on 24th April 2020. It will be available in two formats - one for those who would like to print it out, and another for those who would like to read the message on their device itself. All of the above will be accessible through the Ashram’s official website: www.sriaurobindoaashram.org

Regarding the Mother’s and Sri Aurobindo’s Rooms: Even though the Ashram Main Building remains closed, it may be noted that the Meditation Hall and the Rooms are being prepared as it is done for every Darshan.

Strictly No Visiting: It should be noted that Section 144 continues to remain imposed. Any public gathering of more than 4 persons is an illegal act, and an offence under the law. Hence, please note that nobody should gather outside the Ashram Main Building at any point during the day. Please stay at home and make use of this unique situation to go deeper within and remain connected with the Mother and Sri Aurobindo inwardly.

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** Important Information about News & Notes **

Hard deadline for submissions or cancellations: Tuesday 5pm FOR THE ISSUE to be published that SATURDAY (though the digital version generally goes out on Thursday)

The contents of News & Notes are a reflection of the growth process of this community towards its ideals of harmony, goodwill, discipline and truth. Editing of submissions, mainly for reasons of space and clarity, is done according to an established policy.

How to submit material: Material (no pdf files, please) may be sent (in English only) to: newsandnotes@auroville.org.in. Please do NOT send submissions and inquiries as a “Reply” to the digital subscription mail! There is NO guarantee that anyone will see communications sent this way!

Please try your best to send your announcements, reports, film schedules whenever they are ready.

Any modifications of submitted News items must be sent to the editors before Tuesday 5pm. Please do your best to submit copy that is ready for printing (i.e. Word shows you typos, extra spaces, punctuation errors, etc - don’t make us do all the work!).

We regret not being able to attend to visitors on Tuesdays and Wednesdays due to work pressure.

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On our cover last week: The conformation wasn’t received until after Issue 814 was sent out, but that gorgeous night photo of the fountain in Matrimandir Gardens was taken by Manohar.