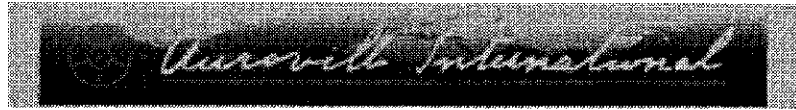


# Evolve



A Quarterly Newsletter of AVI USA

Winter/Spring 2000

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Editorial Letter

The American Pavilion in Auroville by Rod

At the AUM 99 Conference in Crestone last year (Aug 7-11), there were several opportunities to discuss the idea of an American Pavilion in Auroville. The main occasion was a large forum in which a panel representing various organizations in America - AVI, SAA, SALC, FWE, SASP, etc., brought the idea forward in a formal way. The idea that AVI might be the best organization to focalize the project was generally agreed upon. The discussion was later carried on by a focus group and other informal talks. The focus group came up with a concept based on the comments made in the larger forum.

The fundamental principle generally recognized was that the "pavilion" could have a modest beginning and serve the practical purpose of focalizing interest in Auroville among a broader spectrum of individuals and institutions. For example, it could provide a channel for bringing students and professionals to work on various pertinent projects in Auroville, and it could provide a topic for discussion in introducing Auroville to various governmental and non-governmental organizations which might like to participate in some aspect of Auroville, including the pavilion project.

This "concept" included: A) the construction of a multi-purpose building or complex in Auroville which could begin small and grow. This building could include: a) accommodations for 10-20 people, b) a communication center: library, meeting room, computer, etc., and c) a cultural hall for performances and exhibitions. And B) the functions to be carried out by this facility could include: a) research projects, b) work-study programs, c) cultural programs, d) accommodation of visitors aligned with the project, consultants, performers, etc.

A number of meetings and discussions took place during the following months, both in Auroville and here, with the most recent, important, and exciting result being a formal proposal to Auroville from AVI for the American Pavilion to become concrete! An excerpt from the proposal: "AVI-USA has the funds necessary to start the actual materialization of the American Pavilion. We request the purchase of two acres of land in the International Zone for the American Pavilion. AVI-USA will follow up with a proposal for a collaborative process to design a program, structure, and management plan to ensure that the pavilion is developed to meet all concerns and aspirations of those within Auroville and throughout the U.S. who are interested in the pavilion project, and who can assist in its materialization. Our desire is to start with a low-key presence and structure to encourage educational and cultural exchanges for the benefit of international visitors (especially university students), and the residents of Auroville." I believe this could be a true expression of that American spirit of dynamic self-giving for the collective good which characterizes much of what has been truly unique in American culture. Bravo!

## Reflections for a Pavilion: Foundations of the American Spirit

by B (William M. Sullivan)

The United States of America is an actual spiritual union. This is hardly ever recognized or acknowledged. The roots of its union are nurtured in the spiritual reality. "In God we trust." The Declaration of Independence, unanimously adopted in 1776, declared the famous "We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." What was declared, and later framed into a Constitution, represents a new world view, a spiritual world view.

This spiritual heritage of America has as its building blocks the thoughts and ideals of its Puritans, Pilgrims and Enlightenment free-thinkers, as well as the influence of its African, Asian and Indigenous Indian traditions.

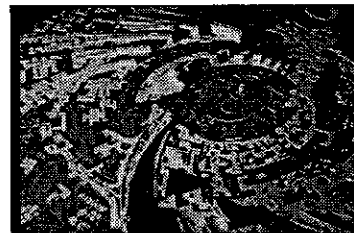
How have the destinies of India and America become spiritually linked? America was unconsciously prepared by the transcendentalist philosophers, like Henry David Thoreau, who wrote: "In the morning I bathe my intellect in the stupendous and cosmological philosophy of the Bhagavad-Gita, in comparison with which our modern world and its literature seem puny and trivial."

Then a spiritual pioneer like Ramakrishna, who universalized his own religious experience beyond all the cultural categories, inspired Swami Vivekananda to come to America. And a few decades later Paramahansa Yogananda built another bridge, establishing the Self-Realization Fellowship and inspiring a true respect for both Christ and Krishna. He dedicated his Aurobiography of a Yogi to Luther Burbank, the American botanist who dramatically improved many of the agricultural products the whole world consumes today. Burbank so exemplified the American spirit of enthusiasm and practical organization, with a tireless compassion for humanity, that Yogananda recognized him as a saint.

More recently, in the late nineteen-fifties, the whole body awareness/consciousness movement began principally through such institutes as the Esalen Foundation in California, which was directly inspired by Mother and Sri Aurobindo, as its founder, Michael Murphy, has acknowledged. A simultaneous development in psychology, which weaves into and complements the "New Age" focus on developing the human potential, was known as the transpersonal school of psychology, whose teachers at Stanford University were also influenced by the work of Sri Aurobindo.

The purpose of the Cultural Pavilions, given by the Mother, is education, especially for the children, "so that they may know and respect equally the true spirit of all the countries upon earth." Here we might discover the Mother's intention, that the "sun-eyed children" of Auroville and the Earth truly become the "flaming pioneers" and realize their challenging mandate as "the architects of immortality."

Translating this spirit into a functional pavilion for Auroville, according to what the Mother wanted, is the creative opportunity we have. Our challenging mandate is to grow this pavilion as a teaching tree, from the roots of our spiritual heritage. The advances of information technology, and the miracles of science, can dazzle anyone. But without the truth of their foundation in the Divine, nothing of lasting worth can be built.



*( An excerpt from "The Mother, the story of her life" by Georges van Vrekhem. This fragment was shared with Aurovilians on February 28, 2000, the thirty-second birthday of Auroville, and is printed here with the author's permission. )*

There had already been several occasions in the Mother's life when she had tried to give shape to the dream in totally different circumstances. The ones we know of are the following:

The first had been before the Second World War. 'I almost had the land. It was in the time of Sir Akbar, from Hyderabad.' Akbar's name may ring a bell with the reader, for he was the dewan (prime minister) of the Nizam who had been instrumental in the funding of Golconde. 'They sent me some photographs of the State of Hyderabad and there, in those photographs, I found my ideal spot: an isolated hill, quite a big hill, and below it a large flowing river . . . Everything was arranged. They sent me the plans, the papers and everything, saying that they were giving it to the Ashram. But they laid down one condition . . . nothing could leave the State of Hyderabad . . . I asked if it was not possible to have it [the condition] removed; then Sir Akbar died and that was the end of it.'<sup>43</sup> The Aurobindonian world could have looked very different indeed if Auroville had been located in the State of Hyderabad, now Andhra Pradesh, and not near Pondicherry where it is today.

It seems that when the Mother founded, in 1943, the University Centre, which afterwards would become the International Centre of Education, she had a much different, broader conception of it than what the Ashram School has turned out to be. M.P. Pandit remembers: 'She said in sum: students from different countries, with their different civilizations and traditions, should be given opportunities to stay in independent blocks; students from France, students from Japan, students from America - each in a separate block not demarcated by walls but by the free development of their own pattern of life, so that if any student wanted to know of the Japanese way of life he could straightaway walk into the Japanese sector, a distinct part of the hostel, mix with the students there, see what kind of food they ate, how they cooked, how they lived. And at that time she also said that each country must have its own pavilion - a pavilion where its own culture at its highest point should be represented in its special characteristic way . . . She saw the whole area round the Ashram, with all buildings contained in it, split in twelve different segments together forming the Mother's symbol.'<sup>44</sup> Whatever the accuracy with which M.P. Pandit noted down the Mother's sayings, it is clear that the ideas behind them resemble more closely the features of Auroville than of the Ashram school.

Shortly after the Second World War, the idea of the Ideal City seems to have come knocking again. This time it would have been near the Lake, actually a big pond about ten kilometres to the north-west of Pondicherry, where the Ashram had acquired some land. Later, the Mother found some notes from that time reminding her to call the two architects of Golconde, Antonin Raymond and Franticek Sammer (who in the meantime had become a Group Captain in the R.A.F.) for planning the 'tremendous programme.' It may have been in reference to this occasion or to another one that she said in 1961: 'What I myself have seen was a plan that came complete in all details, but that doesn't at all conform in spirit and consciousness with what is possible on Earth now, although in its most material manifestation the plan was based on existing terrestrial circumstances. It was the idea of an ideal city, the nucleus of a small ideal country, having only superficial and extremely limited contacts with the old world. One would already have to conceive (it's possible) of a Power sufficient to be at once a protection against aggression or bad will (this would not be the most difficult protection to provide) and a protection (which can just barely be imagined) against infiltration and admixture.'<sup>45</sup>

In fact, the concept of the Ideal City seems to have been part of the Mother's Work throughout her Yoga of evolution in many lives, and a necessary condition or means to found or to fix the Life Divine upon the Earth. The reader is familiar with the incredible adventure of the founding and lightning-fast execution of the

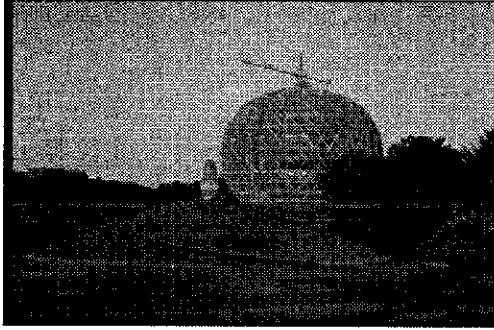
Sun City of Akhetaton, some three and a half millennia ago, by the pharaoh Akhenaton under the impulse of his mother, Queen Tiy, who was an incarnation of the Mother. The Mother is reported to have said that, although the Earth was not ready for the supramental transformation at the time, the creation of a city dedicated to the Sun and called 'Horizon of the Sun' (which means physical presence of the Sun on Earth) had to be undertaken 'to assure the continuity of its existence in the mental plane.'

What mental plane? In occultism, the existence of an 'ether' in which all events are recorded that ever have taken place and are to take place, is a known fact. It is the basis of the belief in a Doomsday Book and a Recording Angel. Sri Aurobindo and the Mother recognised the existence of this recording ether, known in the Indian traditions as *akash*, and were acquainted with it through their occult experience. Sri Aurobindo wrote, for instance, in *The Synthesis of Yoga*: 'All things sensible, whether in the material world or any other, create reconstituting vibrations, sensible echoes, reproductions, recurrent images of themselves which that subtler ether receives and retains. It is this which explains many of the phenomena of clairvoyance, clairaudience, etc.; for these phenomena are only the exceptional admission of the waking mentality into a limited sensitiveness to what might be called the image memory of the subtle ether, by which not only the signs of all things past and present, but even those of things future can be seized; for things future are already accomplished to knowledge and vision on higher planes of mind and their images can be reflected upon mind in the present.'<sup>46</sup>

The existence of this recording ether may explain the idea of the foundation of another Sun City in southern Italy around 1600, the year Giordano Bruno was burned at the stake. The initiator of this utopian idea was Tommaso Campanella, a defrocked Dominican monk, contemporary of Bruno (also a Dominican) and heavily influenced by him.' Like Bruno, Campanella got into serious trouble with the Inquisition, and was severely tortured and incarcerated for many years. He was however clever enough to escape execution and even to practise some magic with Pope Urban VIII himself.

The *Città del Sole* (City of the Sun) is the title of Campanella's most famous work; it was probably written in 1602, during his imprisonment. 'The City of the Sun was to be on a hill in the midst of a vast plain,' we read in Frances Yates. 'In the centre, and on the summit of the hill, there was a vast temple, of marvellous construction. It was perfectly round, and its great dome was supported on huge columns.'<sup>47</sup> '[Campanella's] ideas of a City of the Sun were a combination of two important concepts,' writes Gareth Knight: '1. the central importance physically and philosophically of the Sun; 2. the fourfold pattern of a city that is a representation of the cosmos . . . The City as an archetype of an ideal heavenly and earthly society is fundamental to Dante's *Divine Comedy*, and is also to be found biblically in the Book of Revelation, where the Heavenly City, the New Jerusalem, descends from on high at the end of the world . . . The holy city of Jerusalem is then described as being four-square, with the number twelve playing an important part in the design.' Tommaso Campanella 'hoped to establish his city on Earth as herald of a new age . . . The fourfold theme was again dominant. Four main roads led to the centre where there was a circular domed temple . . . All property would be held in common . . .'<sup>48</sup>

The resemblances to Auroville are amazing. Auroville is being built on a plateau in the midst of a vast plain. In the centre and on the summit of the hill there is the Matrimandir, the Temple of the Mother, a marvellous construction which is round and supported on four huge columns. Auroville means City of Dawn and is closely connected with the supramental transformation, the Sun being the symbol of the Supramental. The basic plan of Auroville is a spiral nebula, divided into four sectors. The Matrimandir, supported by four pillars, is at the centre of Auroville and is surrounded by twelve gardens. The Mother's symbol itself consists of a central dot (representing the One), surrounded by a first ring with four sections (the four cosmic Powers of the Mother) and by a second ring with twelve sections (the twelve powers of the Mother necessary for the execution of her



Work). If, in addition, one considers that Campanella hoped to establish his city on Earth 'as the herald of a new age,' then the resemblance between his City of the Sun and Auroville can hardly be coincidental. Campanella, like most of the prominent Renaissance men, was a practising magician and may well have had access, knowingly or unknowingly, to the akashic records.

G.V.V.

**THE SAVITRI LEGEND** by Savitra (Alan Lithman)

with a forward by Robert A. Johnson

224 pp paper \$17.95

One of Auroville's true scribes, having written "**Sun Word Rising**," a number of articles and reports, and "Auroville the First Six Years," has recently completed a novel in the category of "visionary fiction". The fact that much of it takes place in Auroville is enough motive to read it. But I attest, additionally, that at the end of the book one is in an "atmosphere" that is priceless.

"The book left me in a golden haze. I believe it will touch the hearts and speak to the souls of those sincerely seeking to make sense of themselves and these terribly trying times." ~ Robert A. Johnson

"...a unique and potent insight probing into the very terms of our present mortality and future of the body..." ~ Michael Murphy, co-founder of Esalen Institute, author of **Golf and the Kingdom** and **The Future of the Body**

"The Savitri Legend is a masterpiece of spiritual adventure. Beautifully and intricately crafted, calling forth the rich kaleidoscope of sound, sight and psyche that is India, it is also a weaving of the strangely interconnected lives of those who would find the soul's true purpose. Gods and humans, myth and mystery are the matter of this compelling work. We are reminded that each of us is living a part of a Greater Life, reflecting ancient myths in modern themes. Indeed, the reader is set forth on a spiritual journey of her own following the brilliant path of the Savitri legend as it unfolds in us today. This is a work to be savored as much for its luminous writing as it is for its spiritual power." ~ Jean Houston, author of **A Mythic Life**

"The story is the Savitri legend set in modern India. The descriptions of scenes are truly magical, with the power to make you see, hear, and feel the colors, sounds, tastes and smells, and put you in the midst of all those sensations that many of us are so familiar with. ...The climax is an incredibly intense experience - a revelation of immense proportions." ~ Kirti Patel Hemsell, a lover of modern Indian fiction

THE FATE OF TIBET by Claude Arpi  
Forward by the Dalai Lama  
432 pp hb \$24.00

This book is an in-depth study of the origins of the fate of a nation. Claude begins from the time Buddhism was introduced in Tibet and studies the evolution of the Priest-Patron Relationship with the Mongol Khans and later the Manchu Dynasty. He observes the effect of the British Empire with its expansionist policies and its rivalry with the Russians. He looks at the conservative attitude of the Tibetan clergy that blocked all the efforts for modernization by the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, who in his prophetic Testament, warned his people of the impending avalanche: "and long and dark shall be the night".

#### URGENT REQUEST:

The Pavilion of Tibetan Culture is the first building to go up in the International Zone of Auroville since Bharat Nivas, the Indian Pavilion. H.H. the Dalai Lama laid the foundation stone and already a monk-practitioner of Tibetan medicine is coming to run a monthly clinic for Aurovilians, the first of numerous activities to take place there. But funds are urgently needed to complete the first phase. Please send your donations directly to Auroville or to AVI USA, PO Box 877, Santa Cruz, CA 95061 Please make your checks payable to AVI-USA with a note mentioning the Pavilion of Tibetan Culture.

For more information, or to order **The Savitri Legend, The Fate of Tibet**, and the items listed below, contact:  
Julian Lines (JHL@aol.com)  
Auroville Information Office  
PO Box 676, Woodstock NY 12498

AVInfo@aol.com Phone: 914-679-5358 Fax: 914-679-5853  
<http://www.matagiri.org/avinfo>

Auroville 2000 Calendar \$10 plus \$2 S&H per address (sale)

Auroville Adventure \$15 includes shipping

Compilation of The Best of Auroville Today 175 pp 11 topics, photos

Auroville Interactive CD ROM: \$39 plus \$3 shipping

Searchable database, photos, movies, slide shows. Windows 95 or 98.

Auroville Today: \$38 (one year - 12 issues - via air mail) Monthly newsletter with articles, photos and recent information on various facets of Auroville's evolution.

Send check payable to AVI-USA and mail to Woodstock address.

VISA, MasterCard, AMEX or Discover number and expiration date processed through PONDICHERRY gift shop in Woodstock NY.

Information, Donations and Evolve Newsletter: Auroville International USA PO Box 877 Santa Cruz CA 95061

Auroville's Website:  
<http://www.auroville.org>

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

Dear Friends,

All of the email lists on compatible.com (such as auroconf, savitri, synthesis) have moved to aurobindo.org - at midnight (Pacific Standard Time) on Sunday, February 20. The names of the lists remain the same, but the part after the @ sign has changed to aurobindo.org. For example, you will send messages to "auroconf@aurobindo.org" instead of "auroconf@compatible.com."

You will not need to re-subscribe, or do anything else. Everyone will be automatically moved to the new lists. The new lists will function the same as the previous lists. The Sri Aurobindo Association will be managing the lists; if you have any questions please feel free to contact the list administrators Parag Bhatt (pbhatt@yahoo.com) or Dave Hutchinson (dbhutchinson@ucdavis.edu). We will repeat this reminder several times, along with additional information.

Sincerely,  
Dave Hutchinson and Parag Bhatt

WARMEST GRATITUDE FROM ALL QUARTERS TO LARRY TEPPER WHO HAS FACILITATED THE COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK FOR EVERYONE ON THESE LISTS LOW THESE MANY YEARS, AS WELL AS COORDINATING ALL THE ESSENTIAL ACTIVITIES OF AUROVILLE INTERNATIONAL USA. ALL THE BEST TO YOU AND YOURS AS YOU CONCENTRATE YOUR STEWARDSHIP CLOSER TO HOME . IN ADDITION TO THE COMPETENT MANAGEMENT OF THE COLLABORATION AND MIRAURA WEB SITES, THE SAA ADMINISTRATION, WITH DAVID IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT, WILL NOW ASSUME THE ROLE OF SYSOP, AND WE ARE ALL EQUALLY GRATEFUL TO YOU FOR QUICKLY AND EFFICIENTLY ASSUMING THE HELM.

## AUM 2000 JULY 5TH-9TH IN CONNECTICUT

The AUM 2000 Conference is The Bridge, which refers to the breadth of Sri Aurobindo's vision and how it can be a bridge to the future.

An extraordinary roster of speakers includes Savitri expert, Prof. Mangesh Nadkarni; the author of Beyond the Human Species and a new biography of the Mother, Georges Van Vrekham; and the editor of Auroville Today, Alan Herbert. We hope to have a concentrated emphasis on group networking for the American Pavilion in Auroville. There will be Hatha Yoga, meditative movement, and Savitri readings. Outdoor activities and excursions will include walking the Appalachian Trail, canoeing on the Housatonic, a garden tour in Cornwall, frisbee, tennis, and swimming.

Trinity Conference Center is located 100 miles north of New York City on the outskirts of the tiny village of West Cornwall, CT, on the banks of the Housatonic River. This is Litchfield County and referred to as the "northwest corner" of Connecticut. It is sublimely beautiful and ecologically pure. The village is a five minute walk from the conference center, where you find restaurants, a book store, post office, and a few shops.

The closest airport is Badley International, north of Hartford, CT, about an hour and ten minutes away. We will arrange a shuttle for Wednesday and Sunday; there is no public transportation. New York airports are approximately two and a half hours drive by car, forty-five minutes by shuttle bus to Port Authority Terminal (\$45).

Costs for attending the conference will be \$345 per person. This includes a shared room, meals, and transportation to and from Bradley International. Commuter daily rates are \$60 per person. Space is limited to 64 people, so please reserve soon by sending a \$100 deposit to:

MATAGIRI - AUM 2000, 1218 Wittenberg Road,  
Mt. Tremper, NY 12457.

For details: [www.matagiri.org](http://www.matagiri.org) or [matagiri@aol.com](mailto:matagiri@aol.com)  
or Julian Lines, [JHL@aol.com](mailto:JHL@aol.com), 914-679-5358

# Auroville

## LAND FUND NEWSLETTER

No. 10, January 2000

### Welcome 21<sup>st</sup> Century

We would like to extend our best wishes for the year 2000 and the new century to all our readers and supporters. May this new century indeed see the realisation of this ardent prayer from the Mother that was distributed on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2000:

**O divine Master,  
let Thy light fall into this chaos and bring forth from it  
a new world.**

**Accomplish what is now in preparation and create  
a new humanity  
which may be the perfect expression of Thy new and sublime Law.**

### Dream in Danger

While preparing this issue of the Newsletter, we received an alarming message "Dream in Danger" from *Adventure*, a Green Belt community situated just at the edge of the city area. We decided to postpone all other info for the next newsletter and to publish the following main excerpts:

*"Here are some observations and thoughts about the land situation in and around Auroville, from some Aurovilians in Adventure where we are surrounded by developers and speculators on two sides.*

*Since about 1.5 month we hear the bulldozer, often day and night, pulling out tree roots and leveling the land and pushing through. We see many, many bullock carts, tractors and trucks full of cut trees passing by next to our community, and we can see behind our back fence a huge eyesore: about 50 acres of blank open red soil with marker stones for plotting of row houses up to the beginning of the Forecomers-Success forest. As we have learned from the developers themselves, they are plotting for a colony of 700 houses, which would mean about 3000 people if one counts 4-5 people for a house. And we know that the same group of speculators is trying hard to also purchase the remaining 50 acres around this plot. Which then means 100 acres, plus the Saradas plot of 50 acres (between Adventure and Evergreen), makes for 150 acres directly in Auroville's Green Belt.*

*Beside this, powerful and financially potent groups of speculators from Pondicherry and other more metropolitan regions in India have inquired about purchasable big plots of land that would be suitable for housing colonies inside and just outside of the Auroville Green Belt.*

*Many of these speculators and groups are interrelated and it can be assumed that most of them know what is happening at this moment next to and behind Adventure, and that they are following the happenings with interest. If this "test run" then is 'successful', we can expect an avalanche of investment of the unwanted type in land in and around Auroville.*

*To us it looks as if Auroville is about to become an exotic, beautiful bird, surrounded within and outside its Green Belt by barbed wire fences and walls and ugly housing colonies with high-rises looking on Matrimandir, on all sides! And this won't be taking as long as building "our" city, as the developers behind Adventure have proven in the last month by an incredible input of energy and money. They know that with every pillar, with every stone and invested rupee they are cementing their position into the ground in case they have to go to court.*

*This is perhaps the biggest challenge ever for the manifestation of Auroville. We pray that this crisis is taken as seriously as it is, that the entire (worldwide) Auroville family become united over this, and do our utmost to deal with this challenge."*

## **Responding to the Challenge**

This development is indeed a very serious threat for the physical integrity of Auroville and would create a dangerous precedent, if we are not able to stop this.

Therefore, we are trying all possible avenues. We obtained meanwhile a court order forbidding the use of the access, which happens to be on Auroville land, to the plot, and we are exploring all other legal actions that can be taken.

In addition, we are placing advertisements in local and regional newspapers and real estate papers, making potential buyers aware that the land is in the designated Auroville area, and that Auroville is a project affiliated with and supported by the Government of India. We are also publishing the court order itself in local and regional real estate papers.

Now that the Auroville Master Plan has been approved by the community and ratified by the Governing Board on 18th December, we are also trying to obtain a protection for the designated Auroville area from the Government.

Whatever the final solution, one thing is sure: funds will be needed to purchase all lands (about 200 acres in total) which are under severe threat in this area. The total amount is estimated between \$750,000 to \$1,000,000.

Therefore, we are setting up a rescue fund to purchase these lands when they become available. Hopefully soon!

## **Visit of the Governing Board and IAC of the Auroville Foundation**

The esteemed members of the Governing Board and International Advisory Council of the Auroville Foundation met in Auroville in the middle of December. They allocated most of their time to the resolution of the land issue, which speaks of their deep concern and commitment to the land cause. The members also visited the area in the Green Belt that is being developed by a real estate agency from Pondicherry, and could see for themselves the seriousness of the situation Auroville is faced with.

However, against all odds and in the midst of this challenge, we enter the New Year with faith and optimism that this year will be a landmark for securing the physical integrity of this unique gift of the Mother to the world, called Auroville.

**Auroville Land Fund Newsletter edited, printed & published by Auroville Land Fund, CSR**

**Office, Auroshilpam, Auroville - 605 101**

*Phone: + 91 413 622168 / 622277*

*Fax: + 91 413 622057*

*E-mail: [landfund@auroville.org.in](mailto:landfund@auroville.org.in)*

Auroville Land Update 3/27/00:

Auroville has recently purchased the 50-acre plot in the green belt that was being developed by Saravanam Real Estate Agency. This was definitely not an easy decision, considering the scale of the purchase, the complexities involved, and the considerable amounts of money involved. We paid, indeed, \$1,500 extra per acre plus \$1000 compensation for investments made by the developer. The total purchase was \$62,500. Thanks to the purchase of this plot, we have obtained the option to acquire the two other 50 acre plots just north and south of it, which could have been easily bought by the same developer. To summarize, environmentally and strategically very important big pieces of land in the green belt have been secured by the purchase of the Saravanam plot. Several other real estate agencies were following the developments around this major project... If we had allowed this to happen, it would have set a very bad precedent. This danger is still there, but we have sent a clear message.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the donors, who have positively responded to our urgent appeal for funds to rescue the Saravanam plot. This purchase would not have been possible without your generous support. Your contributions are not only helpful to secure these crucial lands for Auroville, but they

are instrumental to safeguard the dream and vision of Auroville. (Guy)

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Auroville International USA reports that during the period of strong appeals for land purchase donations, between August and December, 1999, AVI received \$213,658, and a total of over \$400,000 was received for the year.

\*\*\*\*\*

AVIUSA is the primary channel for donations made to Auroville in the USA, and all donations are tax exempt. Please make donations payable to Auroville International USA and specify whether all or part of the donation is meant for Auroville Land, Matrimandir, the Tibetan Pavilion, the American Pavilion, Auroville International Outreach, or any other project.

The members of the Board of Directors of AVI-USA are: Bill Leon, June Maher, Ed Giordano, Constance Walker, Megan Thomas, Julian Lines, Nilauro Markus, Chandresh Patel, and Renu Neogy.

For information, contact:

**Auroville International USA**

**P. O. Box 877**

**Santa Cruz, CA 95061**

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