
Clarification by the Land Board

by [Andy](#) on May 25, 2018, 11:49 am

A clarification from the Land Board regarding the recently purchased plot next to the wood yard.

The negotiations regarding this 8.17 acres plot covered a span of almost 3 years and involved many hours of discussions and negotiations with the owners. There were 10 different owners involved.

A month after the deal was concluded, our workers were violently attacked while putting up a fence on the land by the brother of one of the original owners. With the help of around 10 supporters he then installed a fence as well as a small gate. We have registered a case against him at the AV Police Station but despite our efforts to get the police to act, they have instead allowed him to proceed. The Secretary AVF as well as the WC and the FAMC have been informed of the developments.

For this deal we have followed the prescribed process of having all the documents including the Encumbrance Certificate, the Patta etc. scrutinized, first by our staff and then by our lawyer from Pondy who specializes in land matters. Upon receiving a green light from him we have presented the details of the deal to the FAMC, who together with the Working Committee gave the final approval as they agreed that this plot is extremely valuable for Auroville's development. After that we surveyed the land while the opposite party was watching and verified the boundaries, before finally registering the sale in Vanur on 26.04.18.

There was no indication of anything being wrong at this point. However, it turned out that because of a family dispute a court case had been registered in Tindivanam in 2009 against one of the owners by his brother. This case has been pending since that time. Mention of this case does not appear in the land registry at Vanur. There are also no records in our office pertaining to this court case, nor have we received any information from anyone that would indicate the existence of a legal problem on the land. The sellers are of course required by law to inform the buyer of such a pending legal matter, but didn't do so.

The Secretary, Auroville Foundation, has pointed out that the Land Board should have maintained institutional memory, as he had been informed that a deal concerning this land a few years ago was cancelled because of this case. The members of this Land Board have taken office in December 2014, which was well after this case was started. The members of the former land purchase group, then known as LCC had not kept a file which mentioned this case in the Land Board office, and neither was there anywhere a document informing about this case.

We are confident that we will regain possession of the land of which we are the

rightful owners, with the help of the Secretary AVF, the local authorities and if necessary through legal recourse. The opposite party has so far not produced any valid legal document and has only used threats and violence to grab the land.

In a situation such as this, it is important for our community to stand together, extend trust and support to the concerned groups, instead of spreading false information and rumors, thereby creating division and mistrust among Aurovilians. Ultimately the other side will only benefit from such actions.

The Land Board

Kanniappan, Sukrit, Andy, Banu, Helena, Yuval, Padmanabhan

Posted in [Announcement](#)

by [Paul Vincent](#) on May 25, 2018, 11:59 am

Dear friends,

You will recall that I send you photos of the new land purchase by the land Board near the LRM Wood Yard on May 1 st 2018...

Now as on today, here attached is a new set of photos of the same land on the tar road side...

You can see that a new way has been laid in side and a new gate has been erected this morning...

The problem is that it was NOT done by Auroville...

If fact it was done by a member of the owner's family who claims property's right and said that Auroville should not have purchased the lands because there is a court case on it since many years due to family dispute...

So the outgoing Land Board has purchased lands that should not have been purchased without court clearance...

The Land Board should have known that, had they consulted their records...

Nearly Rs 5 crores have been spend without proper purpose; when there were more urgent land purchases that were needed to protect the city or the Green Belt from serious threats...

This call for a review of the Land Board membership specially in the light of the recent change that as been done under the supervision of the Working Committee, of the FAMC, of the Council and of the TDC...

When I was nominated as a member of the new Land Board, I knew that I could not work along with some of the old members continuing like Kanayppan, Sukrit, Andy and Haridas...

The problem mentioned herewith is only the tip of the proverbial iceberg...

I can not believe that none of the outgoing LB knew anything about the claims on this lands, this is part of the records of the LB since nearly 10 years...

They were negotiating to purchase this land for the last 3 years...

I therefore call the immediate dismissal of the above names people from the Land Board and look afresh at the candidates that have been left out from the list that was accepted so as to create a clean new Land Board.

This blunder has cost so far nearly Rs 5 crores of much needed funds for land purchase; the losses and costs of this magistral blunder should be put in the

balance of dues from the above names Aurovilians...

Any attempt to dilute this story by the Auroville Administration will be seen as a cover-up attempt to protect vested interests...

Paul Vincent

by [Paul Vincent](#) on May 25, 2018, 12:05 pm



Here is the proof that there is a court case pending on this land in Madras High Court since 2013...

Paul Vincent

Disposed & Pending Case Status

http://courtnic.nic.in/nics/content_1

Case Status
Disposed & Pending Cases Case- Status

Search Options:-

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May - 2018

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High Court of Madras
Case Status Information System

Case Status : Pending
Status Of CIVIL REVISION : PETITION 2304 Of 2013
Litigants : RAMESH Vs. S.SARAVANAN
Pet's Adv : M/S.D.RAVICHANDER
Res's Adv : M/S V.R.KAMALANATHAN
Last Hearing Tuesday, June 25, 2013
Date :
Category : ---

Disclaimer
Courts Informatics Division, National Informatics Centre, Ministry of Comm. and Information Tech.
A- Block, C.G.O. Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 110 003, INDIA.

by [Santo](#) on May 27, 2018, 1:47 pm

Paul, you should watch the way you talk to people. The way you agressed me today only because I wanted to tell you that '**the way**' you speak about other Aurovilian is a way I can not agree with even if you may have (may have...) valid points to bring to the discussion.

I wanted to, but could not as you started ranting against me and ' my friends' in '**a way**' that I had to ask you to please the table were I was sitting having my coffee...

I do not agree nor disagree I do not judge I just try to keep myself informed and wait to see how the whole issue evolve without judging. I am fully satisfied with

the clarification posted on the net by the land board.

Santo

p.s.

The days of the Guillotine have past gone

by [Paul Vincent](#) on May 27, 2018, 2:26 pm

Santo, I am the one that was aggressed by you today. Your helder in Auroville by many years. I just asked you one single question: "*are you following what is going on with the story of the land opposite Reve?*" Your reply was sharp and aggressive: "*I don't like your and Auroprem's attitude in this story in Auroville, go and sit somewhere else*" ... That is the content of your talk to me which lasted less that 10 seconds ... I left you to judge the way to assess who is wrong here, is it me who disagree to have Rs 5 crores lost for Auroville or is it you to support your friends on the wrong side of the fence who made a mess with land purchases for Auroville? The fact that you vent your frustration in Auroville is a clear indication of your stand...

by [Santo](#) on May 27, 2018, 4:24 pm

Twisted to fit your narrative.

Please do not talk to me anymore about Auroville.

by [Auroprem](#) on May 28, 2018, 8:48 am

Dear Paul and Santo,

Why am I being dragged unnecessarily in this issues? Don't think that you people can make me the scapegoat for things that I am not involved or being part off. I take this very serious and ask all those to stay away. Paul nothing personal. This is to those who unnecessarily involve my name with intention of making it even worse than it is now. I may be interested in putting my energy elsewhere where it hurts. Eventhough there is plenty to offer on this topic but Land Board and land issues are not my cup of tea at the moment. Of course it hurts when huge funds are wasted. And on top of that when you are also one of those contributing Land Fund as well....

by [Santo](#) on May 28, 2018, 12:02 pm

I am not dragging anyone in this issue and I have no intention of making anyone a scapegoat of anything...

by [Philo](#) on May 25, 2018, 12:32 pm

Thank you for these clarifications.

Let's hope that the new LB can solve this case, and AV's ownership of this land can be recognized legally.

In situations such as this, where anyone can see there's an issue, even violence has occurred and the police was involved, it's important that the community is informed promptly, rather than waiting for "rumors, thereby creating division and mistrust among Aurovilians".

Unfortunately, it was almost predictable: the core of this current issue is that the "memory" of the successive groups is too often lost in time, and, naturally, the blame for the inherited issues fall back on the predecessors. This questions directly the current system of decisions and responsibilities in Auroville, i.e. the way the groups in charge are defined, formed, and work. I trust that we can do better.

by [Auroprem](#) on May 25, 2018, 6:10 pm

Can't Auroville security Service and Srijita ask the

by [Charles](#) on May 25, 2018, 10:58 pm

"After that we surveyed the land while the opposite party was watching and verified the boundaries, before finally registering the sale in Vanur on 26.04.18."

Above statement shows that the Land Board was aware of opposition to the purchase of the subject land. As such they would have also known that the person was a brother of one of the owners of the land. Siblings being entitled to the inherited property probably universally why was such an opponent ignored? Was the lawyer informed about it? Did he still give the 'green signal'?

Why was the hurry to purchase the land when many seats in the Land Board were vacant? Why did they not wait just 3 weeks more, having taken already 3 years, when all the required members would have been selected.

by [Paul Vincent](#) on May 26, 2018, 9:57 am

Last but not least: what about the fund for the land around Rs 5 crores? And for the stamp duty paid to the Government (around 40 lakhs)? Are we going to be refunded? And what about the community credibility with donors?

by [Charles](#) on May 26, 2018, 11:35 am

Land Board says they are going to take legal action. Whether auroville or the govt. of India will bear the cost of legal action, it is innocent people's money that is going to be spent. LB members involved in the disastrous land deal should own up moral responsibility and resign.

by [Paul Vincent](#) on May 28, 2018, 4:39 pm

Dear Charles and others; taking legal actions will imply filing court cases to get back the funds paid to one of the owners. In order to do so in a court of law, one has to deposit with the court 7.5% of the fund that one want to claim back from the guy who cheated you; that would be something like another Rs + 40 lakhs and wait for anything between 10 to 20 years to maybe get a favorable order which may or may not be refunded for various reasons... The real question in this story is why these members involved in this questionable deal should remain in position as if nothing has actually happen? Who own the moral responsibility for this blunder? Is it going to be a ping-pong competition? Are there no honest people left here to say to all of us: *"sorry, we made an unacceptable mistake; therefore we step down from any executive posts we hold..."*

by [Paulette](#) on May 28, 2018, 7:17 pm

... and if we have properties or other valuable assets we give them to Auroville asking forgiveness...

by [Manoj](#) on May 26, 2018, 12:21 pm

Thank you Land Board for the clarification. It is very helpful and highly appreciated.

You are doing an extremely challenging work and this issue has again highlighted the need for accurate and accessible institutional memory which is available to our Work Groups. It is a common issue across the community and I hope these pressures will eventually lead to the development of living accessible collective memory.

Wish you all the best in this difficult challenge and I am sure we will get this land.

by [Charles](#) on May 27, 2018, 11:26 am

To Manoj: The Secretary's comment on "lack of institutional memory", with all due respect to him, has passed the buck to the Land Board. You are passing it to all others. "Nobody is to be held responsible" seems to be the philosophy.

The LB members should resign because they are the core members involved. The

Secretary ought to ponder why he failed to discover earlier the lack of 'institutional memory' and if he has anything to say to the donors.

by [Paulette](#) on May 27, 2018, 5:36 pm

There is a private mailing list with 57 names; with the exception of two, the reactions are quite resolute; but of course, only a few have the gut to write on the Auronet how indignant they are. Noblesse oblige.

You have just wasted 5 crores, innocently given by donors, without the least idea of first of all inquiring who is what - and you do not even have the decency to resign?

Question: you really did not know that there is a pending court case? What about Charles writing: **""After that we surveyed the land while the opposite party was watching and verified the boundaries, before finally registering the sale in Vanur on 26.04.18.""**

Above statement shows that the Land Board was aware of opposition to the purchase of the subject land. As such they would have also known that the person was a brother of one of the owners of the land. "

As Charles has observed, at least some of you knew. This raises the fatal question: those who knew, how comes they went ahead? **WHY?**

But of course, no one is responsible (and even less ready to pay out of his/her own pocket, at least a symbolical figure), as long as friends & relatives & fans keep running the show of the banana republic Auroville is (with the support of simpletons appointed for the specific purpose to be played with and used at leisure - as in this model case).

by [Remy Mercier](#) on May 29, 2018, 6:09 pm

Je souhaite vivre dans un monde, dans une société qui dirait toujours la vérité (et sur tout sujet) et alors meme que j'ai conscience que la vérité peut etre difficile a accepter.

Un groupe de quelques personnes dont le mandat serait de révéler la vérité sur les affaires courantes d'Auroville, un groupe ayant l'autorisation d'accéder a toute information (sans aucune limite) pourrait etre utile: il s'agirait d'aider (de pousser) les consciences a s'élargir, a grandir (pas seulement de jouer au gendarme).

Cependant, tant que nos consciences ne sont pas assez fortes pour voir la vérité en face (et d'abord la vérité sur la nature humaine, aussi minable en soi-meme qu'ailleurs), on a besoin de l'obscurité ... et dans ce contexte psychologique (qui définit aussi la réalité d'Auroville, pas seulement le monde extérieur), on peut comprendre notre besoin d'entourer certaines informations d'une dimension secrete.

C'est toujours en l'ame et conscience de l'individu que réside le choix d'informer ou pas. Je veux dire que le groupe de personnes qui aurait acces a toute information, sans limite, serait composé d'individus qui, a un moment ou un autre se poseront la question de savoir si telle ou telle autre information (ou "vérité") est bonne a dire... conscient des limites de la plupart ou confrontés a leurs propres limites.

Je conçois l'experience d'Auroville comme un groupe de personnes partageant la volonté d'éliminer tout ce qui limite ou empeche la libre circulation de l'information puisque notre but futur inclut une quasi-omniscience (un etre suparmental ne serait-il pas supra-conscient?). Je ne reussis donc pas a comprendre ceux qui cherchent a justifier le secret dans leurs groupes. Ils ne semblent pas avoir conscience des effets pervers que cela engendre, comme, par exemple, de briser la dymanique de l'élargissement de la conscience, de briser la confiance mutuelle ou de pratiquement nier le but qui, pourtant, devait etre le notre.

by [Bertrand](#) on May 27, 2018, 7:10 pm

Land purchase in general is a difficult exercise that requires unique skills and competences. In the local context these skills have to be honed to avoid slip-ups. The misjudgement narrated by the Land Board is a case in point.

The new Land Board, who certainly doesn't lack in the desire to do well, should reassure the community by divulging their competences and prior experiences in land related issues.

The lack of institutional memory is a chronic problem in all of the Auroville services and the Secretary is well advised to put us on call.

In the meanwhile, despite the confidence of the newly appointed Land Board that we will regain possession of the land, the land is of no use to Auroville.

What gives the confidence to the new Land Board that the land will be regained is not known, unfortunately it is likely that the problem will be resolved in a protracted court battle, and Auroville will have to bear the legal cost needed to remedy this blunder.

The Land Board asks us "to stand together, extend trust and support to the concerned groups" but why should we in view of this monumental mismanagement of community funds. The crores of rupees that have been used in this botched transaction are "public" funds and the community is entitled to ask and get some accountability. It is easy to point the finger at the whistle blowers but the responsibility for this flagrant mistake lay with the Land Board itself and they should be humble and acknowledge their faults and in some cases recognise their incompetence to do the job.

by [Adhara](#) on May 28, 2018, 8:51 am

What i read and understood: "After that we surveyed the land while the opposite party (the sellers, not the opposing party whose existence was still unknown) was watching and verified the boundaries, before finally registering the sale in Vanur on 26.04.18.

There was no indication of anything being wrong at this point."

by [Christine](#) on May 28, 2018, 9:21 am

I understand the same

by [Charles](#) on May 28, 2018, 9:29 pm

Would the sellers be called 'opposite party'? Please see them referred again as follows in the LB statement: "The opposite party has so far not produced any valid legal document and has only used threats and violence to grab the land."

by [Adhara](#) on May 28, 2018, 10:59 pm

It would seem the same term has been used to describe two different parties - the first time the sellers, and afterwards the disputants. It is the only explanation i find given the sentence following the first instance "There was no indication of anything being wrong at this point."

by [Paul Vincent](#) on May 29, 2018, 10:50 am

Adhara, in the country of the blinds, the one eyed is king....
Paul Vincent

by [Paul Vincent](#) on May 28, 2018, 10:28 am

Institutional memory? Indeed, but also personal memories, Andy and Sukrit have been involved with lands deals since many years:

On Tuesday, 18th September 2007

The Working Committee has sent the following message to the below mentioned people only :

Sub: LRM

Dear friends,

The Working Committee notifies to you that the following names have been communicated to the FAMC requesting to appoint them as members of Land Resource Management.

- 1. Arun**
- 2. Jurgen**
- 3. Ramalingam**
- 4. Somu**
- 5. Subramanian**
- 6. Sukrit**

We wish you the best,

Valli,

Secretary for the Working Committee

WC report- May 2008

Tue, 10 Jun 2008 ::: 02:32 PM ::: 100

8) Land Consolidation Committee

As decided in the meeting of the Governing Board of April 9, 2008, the Secretary of the Auroville Foundation by Standing Order no 2/2008, has created the Land Consolidation Committee consisting of a 7-member executive committee with the Secretary as convenor and coordinator. As per the order, the Working Committee, the Funds and Assets Management Committee and L'Avenir d'Auroville each nominate 2 representatives on the committee. The tenure of the Executive Committee shall be three years from the date of notification of its composition by the Secretary. Meanwhile the order, the following names have been nominated and forwarded to the Secretary:

- a) By the FAMC: Paul Blancheflower and Dhanapal
- b) By L’Avenir d’Auroville: Prashant and Jacques
- c) By the Working Committee: Andy and Raman

We are awaiting the notification of the composition the committee by the Secretary.

9) Letter from Auro Real Agents Union re land purchase.

Copies of a letter from Auro Real Agents Union, ECR, addressed to the Chairman, Auroville Foundation, containing allegations against the Secretary and others have been widely circulated. Upon enquiry it has been found out that the person who has signed the letter does not exist and that those whose names are mentioned at the end of the letter (but have not signed it) have not given permission for their name to be added to this letter. The Working Committee has issued a statement in the News and Notes # 244 that this letter should be ignored.

11) Land Purchase

The AV Foundation have published an advertisement stating that the Foundation does not use the services of brokers for the purchase of land.

by Paul Vincent on May 28, 2018, 2:48 pm

வட்டாட்சியர் அலுவலக இணைய சேவை - அ-பதிவேடு விவரங்களை ப... http://eservices.tn.gov.in/eservicesnew/land/aregExtract_en.html?lan=en

அ-பதிவேடு விவரங்கள்

மாவட்டம் : விழுப்புரம்
வட்டம் : வானூர்
கிராமம் : இரும்பை

1. புல எண்	426	9. மண் வயனமும் ரகமும்	8 - 4
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3. பழைய புல உட்பிரிவு எண்	428	11. தீர்வை (ரூ - வெற)	2.75
4. பகுதி	-	12. பரப்பு (ஹெக்டேர் - ஏர்)	3 - 31.00
5. அரசு / ரயத்துவாரி	ரயத்துவாரி	13. மொத்த தீர்வை (ரூ - பை)	9.10
6. நிலத்தின் வகை	பஞ்சை	14. பட்டா எண்	1293
7. பாசன ஆதாரம்	-	15. குறிப்பு	-
8. இட போகமா	-	16. பெயர்	ரமேஷ்மற்றும 4பேர்

குறிப்பு 1:

ba	1. மேற்கண்ட தகவல் / சான்றிதழ் நகல் விவரங்கள் மின் பதிவேட்டிலிருந்து பெறப்பட்டவை. இவற்றை தாங்கள் http://eservices.tn.gov.in என்ற இணைய தளத்தில் 50855 என்ற குறிப்பு எண்ணை உள்ளீடு செய்து உறுதி செய்துகொள்ளவும்.
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Above is an official copy of the A Register proving who is the owner(s) of the land in dispute... One can see that there are 5 people involved... All of them should have been consulted in the negotiation, in the survey and in the registration of the purchase document by the Land Board...

by [Paulette](#) on May 28, 2018, 7:22 pm

Above is an official copy of the A Register proving who is the owner(s) of the land in dispute... One can see that there are 5 people involved... All of them should have been consulted in the negotiation, in the survey and in the registration of the purchase document by the Land Board...

5 + crores??? Maybe we need a psychiatric hospital. Alternatively-----

by [Charles](#) on May 28, 2018, 9:17 pm

For those who may not be able to read the Tamil text in the official document posted by Paul:

1. It says the land bearing survey number 426 / IC2 belongs to Ramesh and 4 others. Obviously, Ramesh is not just "one of the 10 members" as the Land Board has stated but an important one. The case has also been filed against Ramesh by Saravanan. However, this record doesn't mention who the 4 others are.
2. Saravanan has claimed this same survey numbered land as belonging to him. Note the number in the banner erected by him on the photo posted by Paul.

How many crores of rupees were officially paid for the purchase of this land by auroville is another vital information missing in the LB statement.

by [Adhara](#) on May 29, 2018, 6:28 pm

Thanks to a chance encounter with a member of the Land Board, i stand confirmed in my understanding that the first "opposite party" in their clarification indeed relates to the sellers. As i have no reason to doubt the sincerity of the Land Board's members when they state that they didn't know about the dispute, i shall leave it at that. And i wish them all the best in solving this unfortunate and trying complication.

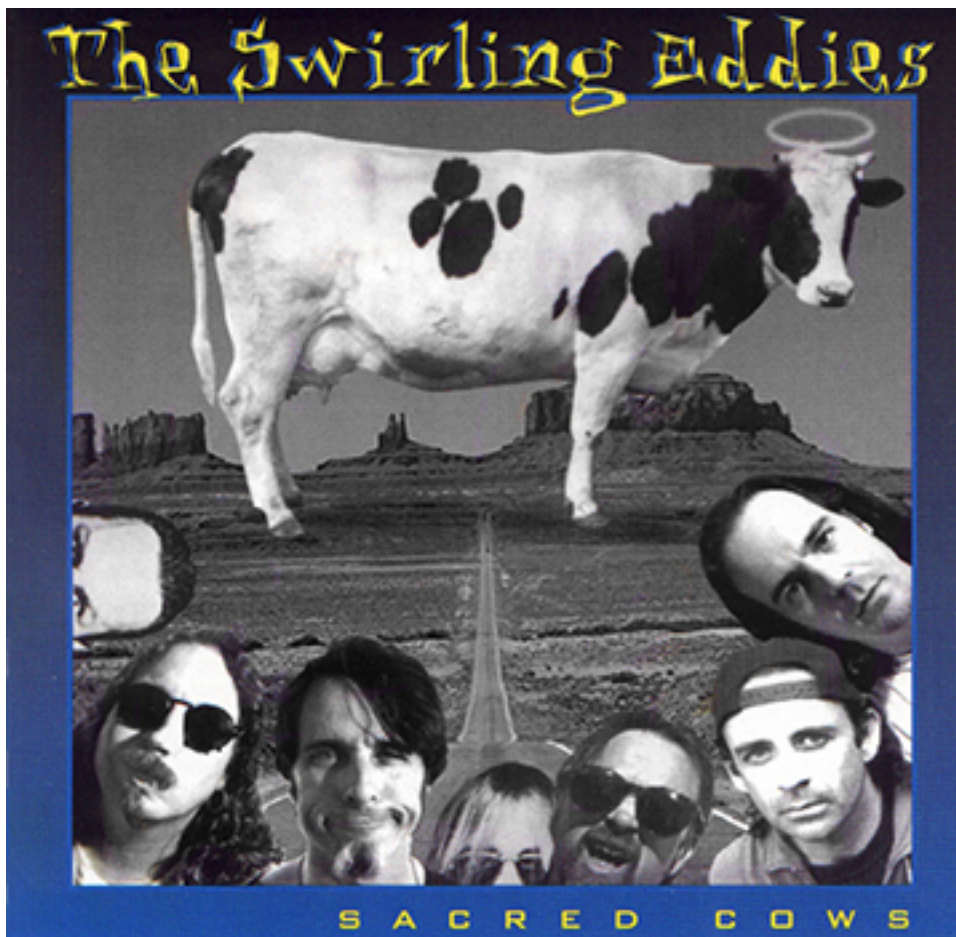
by [Adhara](#) on May 30, 2018, 12:56 pm

Forgot a small yet meaningful precision. Opposite party is a synonym of counterparty, the definition of which is as follows: an opposite party in a contract or financial transaction.

Opposite party can also describe an adversary in a law suit - hence the possible confusion.



SACRED COW: an individual, organization, institution, etc., considered to be exempt from criticism or questioning.



ps. Cows, notoriously, do not know the difference between 1 and 5 -- or what law and contracts are. Needless to say, they pay no attention either whether the figure is 1 rupee, or 5 + crores (the amount is, religiously, not indicated...)

All cows are equal, but sacred cows are more than equal.

PS 2. Do we expect cows, sacred or not, to acknowledge that seller(s???) and OPPOSITE PARTY, in English, certainly are not the same? Moreover when a court case goes on since years -- and the original amount requested even drops dramatically, yet nobody wonders about such portentous miracle!

by [Paul Vincent](#) on May 30, 2018, 1:33 pm

As far as I know today, there are no Saravanan or any Ramesh having a proven claim on this land... The confusion and suspense is growing up and need to be investigated deeply as there seems to be a broker involved in the purchase of the land by the Land Board.... To be followed...

Source URL: <https://www.auroville.org.in/article/69006>
