

May 23, 2021

Sub:

Immediate withdrawal of the Writ Petition filed by previous Working Committee members

I have just learned last week that a writ petition (for a writ mandamus) on the subject of land use / land use conversion was filed by the members of the previous Working Committee in the High Court of Madras, in January this year, just before the selection of new working groups, including new Working Committee members. The Auroville Resident Assembly has never been informed that the (previous) Working Committee unilaterally decided to file a writ petition on behalf of the Resident Assembly. Residents were kept in the dark about the content or the intention to do this act of significant import. This is a breach of trust given to the members of the Working Committee to only act on behalf of the Residents when there is a process followed that we all agree together to do something of this magnitude with outside agencies. The filing of a writ is of extremely grave consequences to the fabric of Auroville, its ideals and is a mockery of the call to Truth that each resident has been called to serve. To file a writ in the courts of India without informing the residents that such is being considered shows the impunity with which these individuals took the matter into their own hands. The mandate of the Working Committee as per the Auroville Foundation Act is to "assist the Residents' Assembly or, as the case may be, the Governing Board, in discharging its duties under this Act". Did the Residents Assembly or the Governing Board ask for assistance in the filing of a writ petition in which the Government of Tamil Nadu and the Government of India are two of the respondents?

Without getting into the demerits or legality of it all, just on the simple principle of honesty and basic integrity expected of fellow sincere aspirants of Auroville, it is expected that the writ petition be withdrawn immediately by the current Working Committee members (sans the remaining left-over persons from previous group who should be made to resign from their post without any further debate or delay). Details of how the legal costs relating to the filing of the writ petition were covered must be made public. Briefs given to the lawyers by the previous Working Committee must be shared.

During these very challenging times that reflect in the decline of the abysmal governance quality of the collective living and ethos that Auroville is to inspire, the only option left if this above expected action is not done immediately is to go public with this very damning fact that this writ has been filed. The politicking of the voting systems that transpired exemplifies the glaring audacity of residents to resort to falsehood for acting on their self-interest against the greater good of the Truth of Auroville with the confidence that they can do this and no consequences will ensue. The theft of gold from Matrimandir safe is another page of a thick book of misdemeanors from our recent history that shows that nothing would happen to the perpetrators of a variety of improprieties.

The Secretary (-in-Charge), Auroville Foundation office has asked that this writ be withdrawn. The Ministry of Education has asked that this writ be withdrawn. As a resident of Auroville, an ex-student and practicing teacher at the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education and

finally also an Indian citizen, I also ask you to withdraw this Writ Petition. Failing which, what would stop some of the residents of Auroville, citizens of India, to file show cause notice against these individuals to leave Auroville for taking such unilateral action which is detrimental to residents of Auroville and citizens of India?

Replacement of expelled Working Committee members has to happen immediately. The new Working Committee along with the Auroville Council and Finance, Assets & Management Committee has to institute the exit policy that has been languishing due to self-interests of working group members and selfish nature of residents to hide the misappropriations and misdemeanors of friends and family continuing over decades.

Hoping for a significant change in our community direction during these trying times,

Chandresh