

KIREET JOSHI
CHAIRMAN

4 November 1999

To All Members of Auroville

Dear Friends,

I am presenting herewith a concept paper on CIRHU in order to receive from all the members of Auroville their reflections, suggestions and inputs for improvement. You may like to send your responses to the Secretary of the Auroville Foundation, Mr. Bala Baskar, as early as possible so that I may have the time to study them and come back to you in a meeting.

As you know, the request for establishment of Auroville International Institute of Educational Research was approved by the then Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi, who made it a condition that the Institute should be named after Sri Aurobindo. She had also indicated that the Institute should be seen in the widest possible terms so as to embody the ideals of Sri Aurobindo and be well equipped so as to become equivalent to a world class university, although not a university of usual kind that is imprisoned in the ordinary concepts of instruction, examination and award of degrees. As a result, Sri Aurobindo International Institute of Educational Research came to be set up in Auroville in 1984-85. This Institute has since been doing some pioneering work, but it has still not grown at the required pace and its dimensions have not widened to the extent to which they are expected to be widened. Sri Aurobindo International Institute of Educational Research in Auroville has so far developed educational research in respect of kindergarten, primary education, secondary education and sports education as also in respect of some aspects of aesthetic education. Higher education has, however, not yet been attempted. Several students of the Centre are now ready for higher education and they require a framework and programmes suitable to their higher levels of development.

Recently, Sri Aurobindo World Centre for Human Unity has come to be set up. The contents of this Centre need to be further expanded and developed.

It is against this background that I have tried to crystallize some of the ideas, which are being developed in Auroville in respect of the Centre of International Research in Human Unity (CIRHU). I am enclosing a copy of the paper that I have attempted on this subject and I shall be extremely thankful if you could find time to peruse it, and give your suggestions for its improvement and enrichment.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

(KIREET JOSHI)

Encl: As above.

AUROVILLE

CENTRE OF INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH IN HUMAN UNITY (CIRHU)

A CONCEPT PAPER by KIREET JOSHI

(FOR CONSIDERATION, SUGGESTIONS, MODIFICATIONS, ENRICHMENT)

INTRODUCTION

Auroville was founded on 28.2.1968 with the declaration of the Charter announced by the Mother which, inter alia, underlined the aims of unending education, bridging the past and the future, and promoting material and spiritual researches for a living embodiment of an actual human unity.

In 1984, Auroville established Sri Aurobindo International Institute of Educational Research, which has been recognised by the Ministry of Human Resource Development as an All India Institution of Higher Learning. This Institute has a long-ranging programme that seeks to fulfil the aims of education and human unity that are envisaged in the Charter of Auroville.

Teachers and researchers of this Institute have, during the last fifteen years, conducted numerous experiments that are focussed on the problems that relate to primary and secondary levels of education. These experiments have promoted new methodologies of education, particularly those of "free progress system". It has undertaken innovative programmes such as those of interdisciplinary studies, poetry, art and music and body awareness. This Institute has also conducted research in some of the most fundamental themes of education that are relevant to all levels of education. The central question that has been raised in this research is as to what are the essential elements that every individual needs to study in order to attain true humanhood. Two publications which have become famous all over the country are "The Aim of Life" and the "The Good Teacher and The Good Pupil". The Institute proposes to continue this line of research and bring out further publications.

A stage has, however, been reached where research pertaining to higher education can now be undertaken. A good deal of thinking has already been done at Auroville so as to determine the areas in which higher education should be colicentred. Since the ideal of human unity is being fostered in Auroville, it seems that university level education and educational research should be focussed on the theme of human unity. At the same time, since this theme is very vast, and since it is also being pursued in several other international universities, it has been felt that this theme should be focussed at Auroville on certain special subjects, with their own unique features. These unique features arise naturally from the fact that Sri Aurobindo has written a very important book entitled "The Ideal of Human Unity", and this subject has also been dealt with in his other works such as "The Life Divine", "The Human Cycle" and "The Foundation of Indian Culture". Besides, Sri Aurobindo has shown how human evolution has at present reached a critical stage, where the actualisation of human unity has become inevitable. He has also underlined the necessity of laying the foundation of the human unity on the necessity of spiritual transformation leading up to spiritual mutation of humanity into the next species.

Another factor which will give other unique features in the proposed programme results from the expertise that is already being developed in Auroville, as also from the experiments which are already being conducted at Auroville.

A still further relevant factor is the design to establish in Auroville an International Zone, which will consist of cultural pavilions of various nations of the world.

It is also envisaged that the proposed research will seek international collaboration and promote the establishment of assembly of scholars belonging to different countries and cultures. The very nature of research will, therefore, be international in character.

In view of these considerations, it is proposed to set up a Centre, which will be called "The Centre of International Research in Human Unity" (CIRHU).

CONCEPT

The concept of the proposed Centre rests upon four needs:

1. Need to deepen, widen and heighten the tasks of higher levels of educational research;
2. Need to harness expertise, scholarship and professional experience, which are already available in Auroville, as also to invite such help that can be available from relevant institutions in the country and in the world as also from, visiting scholars and teachers;
3. Need to give a more concrete shape to the growing understanding of the concept of human unity that underlies the Charter of Auroville; and
4. Need to provide suitable environment and programme of higher education to the students of the Sri Aurobindo International Institute of Educational Research.

The Centre will have interdisciplinary approach as it is appropriate to the theme of human unity. In Sri Aurobindo's vision, human unity is a necessary step in the evolutionary progression of humanity, and thus it is closely tied with a larger interdisciplinary theme of evolution.

FACULTIES

The Centre will have seven Faculties with organic relationship among themselves and with a Central Faculty.

The Central Faculty will reflect vast interdisciplinary, and it will receive from other Faculties results of their specific themes of research and also promote them by a process of interchange and enrichment.

This Faculty will constitute the Sri Aurobindo World Centre for Human Unity (SAWCHU), which has begun to be organised at Auroville in 1999, as a part of the celebration of Sri Aurobindo's 125th Birth Anniversary.

This Central faculty will have five major themes of research:

- a) Evolution;
- b) Synthesis of Knowledge;
- c) Synthesis of Culture;
- d) Human Unity; and
- e) Next Species

There will be seven other Faculties, which are conceived to be supporting Faculties, and they will concentrate upon different aspects that are relevant to the theme of human unity in the context of evolutionary progression. These seven Faculties will be as follows:

- 1) Faculty of Indian Culture and Human Unity;
- 2) Faculty of East, West and Human Unity;
- 3) Faculty of Education for Human Unity;
- 4) Faculty of Arts, Crafts and Technologies;
- 5) Faculty of Synthesis of Knowledge;
- 6) Faculty of Futuristic Sociology and Business Management; and
- 7) Faculty of Studies in Sri Aurobindo and The Mother.

In due course, new Faculties will be added, along with their respective departments and sections.

METHODS OF RESEARCH

Methods of research will not be merely theoretical and ideative but they will centrally be experiential and experimental, and will aim at concrete realisations.

An important aspect of the study of the theme of human unity will be to create in the international zone cultural pavilions representing different cultures of the nations of the world with special emphasis on provisions that would transmit to the Students the messages of these cultures in a living, creative and experiential manner.

RESULTS OF RESEARCH

The results of research will be made available in the form of monographs, treatises, reference books, textbooks and teaching-learning materials, as also in the form of slides, film strips, full-length films and in the forms which can be adapted for the dramatic performances and other creative methods of learning and teaching.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

The Centre will establish contacts and relationships with international universities, international schools and other international organisations in India and in the world as also with such departments of educational and cultural institutions, which are engaged in studies which are relevant to the aims and objects of the Centre.

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH

With the increasing support, academic and financial, the Centre aims to promote what may truly be regarded as international research. Not only will Faculties have scholars representing different languages and cultures of the world, there will also be encouragement to develop a system of international fellowships and international exchange of students and teachers so as to foster a vast programme of collaboration in the fields of studies and experiments in human unity.

FACILITIES

It is envisaged to have for this Centre a suitable building with a central conference room with a capacity for 2,000 people, and a number of seminar halls, exhibition halls, committee rooms, classrooms, laboratories, central and departmental libraries, hostels and canteens. Other facilities will also be provided in this building which will promote new methods of student-centred teaching-learning. In due course, a printing press also will be added.

Residential quarters will be provided to the members of the teams of researchers as also for the members of the administrative staff. The Centre will develop programmes for training of teachers in international understanding, peace and human unity. For this purpose, the Centre will provide facilities for teachers under training to study and participate in the research programmes of the Centre. Other suitable facilities will also be made available to them.

Development of this Centre will be gradual and will be so phased as to encourage increasing help from the Ministry of Human Resource Development and various other national and international agencies.

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PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE

The Centre will not encourage studies for the sake of passing examinations and obtaining certificates/diplomas and degrees; it will aim at the pursuit of knowledge and development of the qualities of heroism and courage, of harmony and mutuality, and faculties and skills, – theoretical, practical and technical.

Students will be trained in the science and art of synthesis and interdisciplinary studies; they will have freedom of choice in regard to the selection of the subjects which are pursued in different Faculties and combine them meaningfully under the guidance of researchers and teachers. Emphasis will be laid on self-help, although requisite help will be available to them through lectures, seminars, group-classes, audio-visual teaching-learning materials, and innovative processes of testing and evaluation that will encourage integral development of personality.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN OF THE CENTRE

The architectural design and relevant details are being developed.

OVERVIEW OF THE THEMES OF RESEARCH

An outline analysis that will give an overview of the thrusts of the research work of the Centre is given below:

CENTRAL FACULTY OF RESEARCH IN HUMAN UNITY

Major Themes of Research:

1. Evolution:
Theories of Evolution, Spiritual Evolution, Human Progress, Contemporary Evolutionary Crisis, Unity and Diversity, Human Unity, Towards the Next Species.
2. Synthesis of Knowledge:
Ancient synthesis of Knowledge: Veda, Upanishads, Gita; other systems of synthesis of the past; Science and Modern Knowledge; Need for a new Synthesis; Integral Philosophy; Integral Yoga; New Synthesis of Knowledge and Human Unity.
3. Synthesis of Culture:
History of Religions; Ethical, Aesthetic and Rational Cultures; Contemporary Internationalism; Humanism; Necessity of Spiritual Transformation, Development of Spiritual Culture, Cultural Diversity and Unity; World Culture and Human Unity.
4. Human Unity:
State, Nationalism and World Union of free Nations; New forms of Political, Social and Economic Organisation; Ideals of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity; League of Nations and its Failure; United Nations Organisation; Latest Developments; Towards Actual Human Unity.
5. Next Species:
Concepts of Human Unity and Superhumanity; Supramental Being and Next Species; Experiment in the birth and development of the Next Species; Sri Aurobindo and The Mother: Their Experiments and Realisations for Human Evolution, Human Unity and the Next Species.

OTHER FACULTIES

A. Faculty of Indian Culture and Human Unity

Major Themes of Research:

1. Indian Religion and Spirituality; Dharma and Social Organisation; Yoga.
2. Indian Art
3. Indian Literature
4. Indian Philosophy
5. Science and Technology in India
6. Indian Polity
7. Renaissance of Indian Culture
8. India and the World
9. Lessons of Indian Experience for Human Unity

B. Faculty of East, West and Human Unity

Major Themes of Research:

1. Common and Divergent Experiences of the East and the West: The Problem of Synthesis
2. Concepts of Civilisation and Culture
3. Pursuit of Truth, Beauty and Goodness in Eastern and Western Cultures
4. Pursuit of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity in Eastern and Western Cultures
5. Problems of Cultural and Political Unity in the East and in the West
6. Evolutionary and Revolutionary Movements in the East and in the West: Their contributions to Human Progress
7. Contemporary Trends towards Planetary Civilisation: Problems and Quest for Solutions

- a) Science and Technology
- b) Arts and Crafts
- c) Humanistic Thought
- d) Law, Constitutions and International Judiciary,
- e) War and Peace
- f) Globalisation: Economic and Commercial Trends, Monetary Systems, Industrial Trends, Trends in Communication
- g) Conflict of Religions, Races and Cultural Prejudices
- h) Science and Spirituality
- i) Concepts of the Centralised World-State and Federation of Free Nations in a World-Union.
- j) Ideal of Durable Peace, Harmony and Unity
- l) Ideal of Individual and Collective Perfectibility

C. Faculty of Education for Human Unity

Major Themes of Research:

1. Education for International Understanding, Peace and Human Unity
2. Methods and Contents of Complete Education for the Complete Human Being:
 - a) Physical Education
 - b) Vital Education
 - c) Mental Education
 - d) Psychic and Spiritual Education
3. Education for the Future:
 - a) Education for New Humanity striving for Human Unity
 - b) Supramental Education
4. Specific Themes of Teaching and Learning:
 - a) Languages;
 - b) Sciences;
 - c) Arts, Crafts and Technologies;
 - d) Humanities;
5. Specific Themes to Aid Training of Teachers:
 - a) Education for International Understanding, Peace and Human Unity
 - b) Educational Innovations and Reforms
 - c) The Aim of Life
 - d) The Good Teacher and The Good Pupil
6. c) Mystery and Excellence of the Human Body
- e) Stories of Heroism, Harmony and illumination
- f) Mind and Its Powers: Rational, Ethical, Aesthetic, Cosmic and Transcendental
- g) Concept of Divine Life and Education for Integral Science of Living.

D. Faculty of Arts, Crafts and Technologies

Major Themes of Research:

1. Aesthetic Experiences and Artistic Expressions
2. Poetry; Theme of Future Poetry
3. Painting, Music and Dance; Theme of Universal Languages
4. Theatre and Cinema; Theme of Integration of arts, crafts and technologies
5. Art of Exhibition
6. Architecture and Planning; Problems of Rural and Urban Development for Human Culture with special reference to:
 - a) Environmental Protection;
 - b) Afforestation; ,

- c) Alternative Sources of Energy;
- d) Urban Centres for Helping Villagers in integral development of villages
- 7. Arts and Crafts: Their Interrelationship; Creativity and Productivity
- 8. Arts and Crafts; Role of Techniques and Machines
- 9. Science and Technology
- 10. Technologies and Perils of Mechanisation
- 11. Training in Specific Arts
- 12. Training in Specific Crafts
- 13. Training in Specific Technologies
- 14. Role of Arts, Crafts and Technologies in promoting human unity
- 15. Arts and Crafts of the Future; the Supra-rational in the pursuit of Beauty

E. Faculty of Synthesis of Knowledge

Major Themes of Research:

- 1. Ancient and Medieval Systems of Synthesis
- 2. Concepts of Modernity mid Post-modernity
- 3. Nature and Methods of Scientific Knowledge
- 4. Nature and Methodology of Critical Knowledge
- 5. Frontiers of Scientific Knowledge
- 6. Frontiers of Logical, Mathematical and Philosophical Thought
- 7. Contemporary Concerns of Biological and Medical Sciences:
Quest for Alternative Systems of Health care and Longevity; Quest for Human Bioengineering; Ethical Issues
- 8. Science, Ethics, Law and Religion in the current trends of thought: Conflicts and Quest for Resolution of Conflicts
- 9. Yoga as Science.
- 10. Emergence of Interdisciplinary: Problems and Quest for Solutions
- 11. Emergence of the Theme of Consciousness:
 - i) Importance of Psychology
 - ii) Psychical Research
 - iii) Higher States of Consciousness
 - iv) Relevance of Consciousness in Physical Sciences
 - v) Yogic Knowledge of Matter, Life, Mind and Spirit
- 12. Contemporary Research for the Recovery of Ancient and Medieval Knowledge
- 13. Need for a New Synthesis of Knowledge
- 14. Sri Aurobindo's contributions to the contemporary Synthesis of Knowledge
- 15. Synthesis of Knowledge and Human Unity

F. Faculty of Futuristic Sociology and Business Management

Major Themes of Research:

- 1. Society and its Unity;
- 2. Society, Civilisation and Culture;
- 3. Stages of Social Development; Infra-rational stage, Rational Stage,
 - 1. Supra-rational Stage;
- 4. Utopias: Old and New;
- 5. Future of Social Development: Advent and Development of Spiritual Age;
- 6. Advantages and Disadvantages of Economic Models of Capitalism, Communism and Socialism of various types;
- 7. Need for a New Economy:
 - a) Concepts of a new Economic and World Order
 - b) Uses and Misuses of Money
 - c) Motivation for Work: Economic, Humanistic, Spiritual

- d) New Economy for Work for All and Joy of Work, Work for Development of Faculties, Leisure for Inner Growth
 - e) New Economy and Prosperity: Avoidance of Perils of Hugeness of Organisation and Mechanisation of the Human Being
 - f) New Education for New Economy
 - g) Honesty in Business.
 - h) Promotion of Universal Fraternity as an aim of Business and Industrial Development
8. Primary Principles of Honest Business Management:
 - a) Aim to promote peace, concord and harmony; .
 - b) Utilisation of fighting instincts for conquering the causes of sufferings, weaknesses and ignorance;
 - c) Assignment of Higher Positions in the hierarchy for shouldering higher responsibilities to serve and organise;
 - d) Replacement of competition by relationships of emulation in doing well, of collaboration and real brotherhood;
 - e) Management for Profitability in terms of honest share for risk-taking and organisational responsibilities.
 9. Training in Honest Business Management;
 10. Experiments in Honest Business Management in Auroville;
 11. Development of New Economy in Auroville as a Pilot Project;
 12. New Forms of Political Organisation;
 13. New Forms of International Relationships;
 14. Law and Beyond Law;
 15. Concept and Practice of Spiritual Anarchism: Relevance of Experiments in Auroville.

G. Faculty of Studies in Sri Aurobindo and The Mother

Major Themes of Research:

1. Collection of Background Materials .required to study the works of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother, particularly, the following:
 - i. The Life Divine;
 - ii. The Synthesis of Yoga;
 - iii. The Supramental Manifestation on the Earth
 - iv. Mother's Agenda
 - v. The Ideal of Human Unity;
 - vi. The Human Cycle;
 - vii. The Foundations of Indian Culture; and
 - viii. Savitri
2. Problems of Training Teachers who can impart the contents of the Works of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother to the members of the coming generations.
3. Development of Methods of Research that employ Experience of the Supreme Truth without developing any religion.
4. Research in the development of the next species.