



The Auroville Earth Institute was previously named the Auroville Building Centre / Earth Unit, which had been founded by HUDCO, Government of India, in 1989. The development of the former building centre evolved in such a way that the Auroville Earth Institute came into existence in 2004.

The Auroville Earth Institute is researching, developing, promoting and transferring earth-based technologies, which are cost and energy effective. These technologies are disseminated through training courses, seminars, workshops, manuals and documents. The Institute is also offering various services, and provides consultancy within and outside India.

The emphasis is focused on the research and development of earth based technologies and their dissemination through training courses. The most promoted technology today is Compressed Stabilised Earth Blocks (CSEB).

One of the aims of the Auroville Earth Institute is to give people the possibility to create and build for themselves their own habitat, while using earth techniques.



Office of the Auroville Earth Institute

The Auroville Earth Institute is part of a world network with [CRATerre](#) (The International Centre for Earth Construction), [ABC Terra in Brazil](#), and a number of Indian NGO's. A training convention has been passed with the School of Architecture of Grenoble, France, for giving long-term training courses to their students.

The Auroville Earth Institute is today the representative for Asia of the [UNESCO Chair "Earthen Architecture, Constructive Cultures and Sustainable Development"](#). This Chair aims to accelerate the dissemination of scientific and technical know-how on earthen architecture amongst the higher education institutions, in the following three domains: environment and heritage, human settlements, and economy and production.

The Auroville Earth Institute is also partner of [BASIN South Asia – Regional Knowledge Platform](#) and it provides information and guidance to whoever asks for it.

The training course activities and the endeavour to promote raw earth as a building material for sustainable and cost effective development has brought since 1989 thirteen awards: Two international awards and eleven Indian awards.

The Auroville Earth Institute plan to develop its activities in the future and we are seeking to offer, after some time, a one-year curriculum to students of various levels which would be granted with these diplomas:

- Post diploma "Specialisation in earth architecture" to architects and engineers
- Diploma "Bare foot earth architect" to educated people, for setting up entrepreneurship
- Diploma "Master mason earth builder" to uneducated people

This syllabus will be organised in the following years, the time for the Auroville Earth Institute to be reorganised and developed.

SATPREM MAINI



Satprem is a French national born the 18th May 1959 at Bône, Algeria. Soul of the Auroville Earth Institute, he is the executive of the institute. He works as an architect and builder, consultant, researcher, trainer and lecturer. He graduated in France and he has an architect master and a postgraduate master degree in Earthen Architecture. Since 2000, he is the representative for Asia of the UNESCO Chair "Earthen Architecture, Constructive Cultures and Sustainable Development.

He is an occasional consultant of the United Nations (UNESCO, UNIDO, UNDP, UNCHS / Habitat); a member of CRATerre/ENSAG (International Centre of Earth Construction, France), an honorary member of ABC Terra (Brazilian Centre for Earth Construction), a member of the German Network of earth builders (Dachverband Lehm e.V.), a member of ISET (the Indian Society of Earthquake Technology), and a member INHAF (India Habitat Forum).

PERSONAL PHILOSOPHY OF SATPREM

Since the early 1980's, his endeavour has been based on the adaptation and renaissance of traditional techniques, use of local materials, participation of individuals and the reconsideration of the role of the architect: from creator and builder to animator and psychologist. Since 1985, the endeavour to revive traditional techniques and local materials has been essentially based on the use of raw earth as a building material.

With this background, the field of action was oriented for several years towards humanitarian help and small-scale training in developing countries. But this quest was unsatisfactory and imperfect, as the main dimension was missing, namely Spirituality. While conducting a training course in India, the circle was closed. Auroville was discovered, and the choice of a new and different life decided upon.

Since 1989, Satprem's life has been dedicated to Auroville, India and the World for the recognition of our Mother Earth, while using its matter for the sake of sustainable developments. His life is a burning brazier offered to the Lord and is dedicated to Karma Yoga, the work done as an offering to the Divine, for the Lord's Action upon Earth. The research conducted with the earth as a building material is focussed upon discovering the consciousness hidden within the material. The contact with this consciousness helps the latter to evolve, as well as our own consciousness.

Satprem's fields of research and action are based in Auroville, for building the first city of a new era. His expertise and intervention are not limited to Auroville, and his services are offered worldwide. 30 countries benefited of his services over the last 25 years, for periods varying from a few days to a few years. Since 1989, Satprem has trained more than 6,500 people, mostly Indian nationals, but also nearly 1,000 people from 65 other nations.

Today, the architectural research being conducted by Satprem integrates symbols and a holistic approach to life. A life where men and women must melt themselves into the environment, while using sustainable techniques and energies, and evolve spiritually so as to rediscover again their cosmic origins. Since 1992, the Sanskrit surname Satprem, meaning Truth and Love, has replaced the birth surname, Serge.

T. AYYAPPAN



Ayyappan is an Indian national born 18th February 1971 at Edayanchavadi, Tamil Nadu – India. He followed a standard education in his village, and became over the years a very skilful, dedicated and trustful technician. Today he is the right arm of Satprem, and works as a draftsman, site supervisor, researcher and trainer. He supervises also the long term trainees who are doing the architectural studies for the various projects.

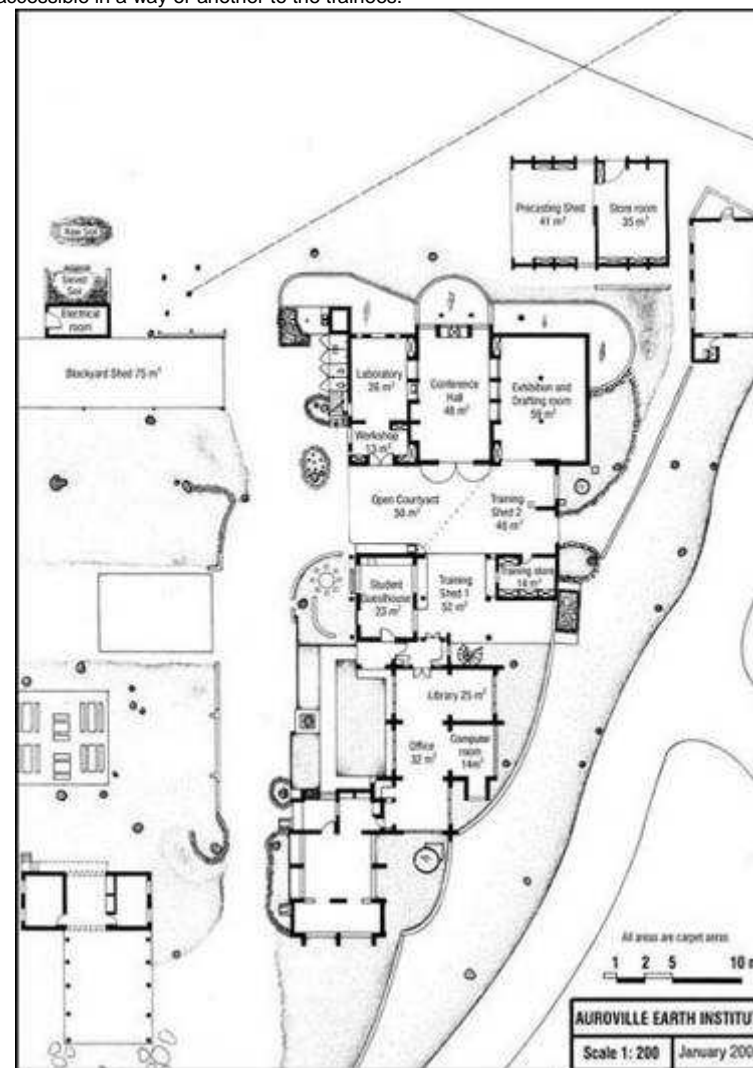
A TEAM OF BUILDING PARTNERS

The Auroville Earth Institute has become over the year a team of building partners, whose achievements have been possible only through their teamwork. Everybody plays an indispensable role in the team, which is composed today of 20 permanent and very dedicated workers and about 10 temporary workers, for construction sites and office work, for construction sites and office work.

BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE

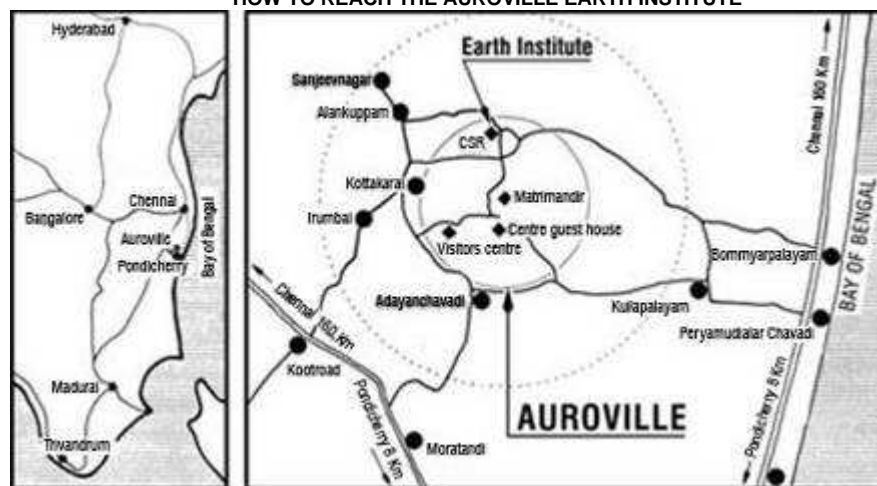
The following premises are available at the Auroville earth Institute. All of them are accessible in a way or another to the trainees.

BUILDING	PURPOSE	AREA (m ²)
Main office	Administration of the unit and drafting room for the students	60
Library	Library for books, slides, videos, photos.	25
Conference hall	Lectures with or without slide show and video. Study room for the students	48
Exhibition room	Presentation of soil samples, earth based technologies, etc.	59
Laboratory	For soil analysis	26
Workshop	Maintenance of the equipment	13
Trainees storeroom	Small equipment for the training courses	14
Training shed 1	Practical exercises for masonry	52
Training shed 2	Practical exercises for masonry	46
Open courtyard	Circulation and practical exercises	50
Blockyard	Production of CSEB	75
Dormitory for men	For 10 men	30
Dormitory for men	For 15 men	50
Dormitory for women	For 5 women	18
Trainees kitchen	Common hall and kitchen for the trainees.	39
Student guesthouse	Room for long term students	23
Toilets	Toilets for the Unit and the trainees' boarding.	10
Precasting shed	For casting pieces for researches or building sites	76
Various premises	Various infrastructure, access to various buildings, staircases, galleries, etc.	45
Care taker's quarter	House of Satprem	71
TOTAL CARPET AREA		830



Auroville Earth Institute premises

HOW TO REACH THE AUROVILLE EARTH INSTITUTE



Map of Auroville

1. Reach Chennai (Madras is the old name of the city), by flight or train.
2. Auroville is 150 Km south of Chennai and 8 Km north of Pondicherry.
3. There are two possibilities for reaching Auroville:
 - **By taxi.** It is the simplest mean and it will take ~3 hours to reach Auroville:
 - A taxi from Chennai airport would cost Rs. 2,500 to 3,000 and you will have to bargain. Taxi drivers from Chennai would take some time to find the Institute. You should ask to be dropped at CSR, Auroshilpam at Auroville.
 - We can send a taxi from Auroville. They are very reliable. They know our place and it will cost Rs. 1,400 -1,500. Please give your train references (Train No. and name / Coming from / Day and arrival time) or flight details (Flight No. / Airline / Coming from / Day and arrival time).
 - **By bus.** It is cheaper but more complicated and it will take ~4.5 hours:

- Take a taxi or an auto rickshaw (3 wheelers) at Chennai up to Coimbat Bus Terminal (150 – 200 Rs.)
 - Take a bus for Pondicherry. Ask for a bus point to point by the East Coast Road and go up to the main bus stand (± 60 Rs.)
 - Take a taxi or an auto rickshaw from the bus stand to Auroville (180 – 200 Rs.) and ask to be dropped at CSR, Auroshilpam at Auroville.
4. In case of any problem, you can phone to (0) 413 – 262 3064 / 262 3330
5. Address: Auroville Earth Institute – Auroshilpam, CSR, Auroville 605 101
6. Note: 1 USD = ~ 44 Rs. – 1 Euro = ~ 66 Rs. (Value July 2008)

13 AWARDS

2010

First prize for Al Medy Mosque built in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in 2004 (Mosque of 457 m² built in 7 weeks)
Prince Sultan Bin Salman Award For Urban Heritage, Al-Turath Foundation, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

2006

First prize of the national design competition “Multi hazard resistant shelter”
Gandhigram Rural Institute, and funded by Bhoomika Trust
The final certificate was remitted by the President of India, Sri Abdul Kalam on the 27th July 2007

2005

First prize of the national competition “Hazard resistant house design contest”
Gandhigram Rural Institute, and funded by Bhoomika Trust & ICA-USA.

2000

“India Gold Star Award” and gold medal
Excellence award presented to “Only one very excellent individual from all over India for his exploit in his field of work.”
FFI (Friendship Forum of India), New Delhi – India

“Glory of India Award” and gold medal
Excellence award for “Great achievement and exploit in his field of work”
FFI (Friendship Forum of India), New Delhi – India

1999

“Nation’s Vikas Jyoti Award”
Excellence award for “Individual Achievement for the growth of Indian economy”
WEDF (World Economic Development Association), New Delhi – India

Gold medal

“Excellence in presentation of special display on Build Tech pavilion 99”
For the disaster resistant house, AUM house, which was built during the India International Trade Fair 1999
ITPO (India Trade Promotion Organisation), New Delhi – India

“Bharat Excellence Award” and gold medal
Excellence award for “Outstanding leadership and extra-ordinary achievements in his field of work
And for the services rendered to promote greater friendship and India-International co-operation”
FFI (Friendship Forum of India), New Delhi – India

1998

“Bharthiya Nirman Ratan Award”
Excellence award of Indian construction, for “Individual Outstanding Achievement and Nation Building”
IEDRA (Indian Economic Development and Research Association), New Delhi – India

1996

“Best Building Centre in India”
Award for “Outstanding performance”
HUDCO & Ministry of Urban Employment and Poverty Alleviation, New Delhi – India

1995

“Best Building Centre in India”

Award for "Outstanding performance"
HUDCO & Ministry of Urban Employment and Poverty Alleviation, New Delhi – India

1994

"Best Building Centre in India"

Award for "Outstanding performance"
HUDCO & Ministry of Urban Employment and Poverty Alleviation, New Delhi – India

1992

"Hassan Fathy's International Award for architecture for the poor"

Joint award with Suhasini Ayer for the Visitors Centre at Auroville
Hassan Fathy Foundation, Cairo – Egypt