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Pashi Kapur, an Auroville pioneer, passes away

A resolve that his children not have a conventional education led him to the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and Auroville in the early 1970s

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Pashi Kapur, among the early pioneers who closely collaborated with Auroville founder, The Mother (Mirra Alfassa), and French architect Roger Anger who she entrusted to manifest the vision of a universal township, died on Friday night at the age of 91. He is survived by two sons and a daughter.

According to Auroville, Pashi Kapur (Prakash Chandra Kapur), who hailed from Rawalpindi (now in Pakistan), left for Delhi at the age of 18 coinciding with India's transition to Independence. Later, he went to the U.K. for higher studies in mechanical engineering and returned to India to work as a lead engineer in a British firm in erstwhile Calcutta.

A resolve that his children not have a conventional education led him to the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and Auroville in the early 1970s. Shortly, he wholeheartedly joined The Mother's project for a universal township that

would manifest Sri Aurobindo's spiritual philosophy, cradle the collective realisation of a higher consciousness and progress towards human unity.

In Auroville, Pashi had numerous meetings with The Mother and worked closely with Roger Anger, who was appointed Chief Architect and project holder by The Mother. He was appointed member-secretary of a committee formed by The Mother and a trustee of the first trust created in the township.

Pashi was instrumental in the creation of Auroservice d'Auroville to undertake township planning and development work for projects outside Auroville and create resources for L'Avenir d'Auroville (Auroville's Future), the planning office.

His corporate management background helped build bridges between Auroville and external bodies, institutions, and individuals who supported the development of Auroville.

The turmoil in Auroville in the wake of The Mother's passing (1973) led him to start a new life as an entrepreneur and he founded Tanmac India, a leather tanning enterprise. However, he kept returning to serve the Auroville project.

During his last years, he was engaged with the proposal for the Centre for International Research on Human Unity (CIRHU), and in fact, was in the midst of preparing a comprehensive presentation on the project in December, Auroville said.

The mortal remains have been kept at Farewell Centre in Auroville for friends and well-wishers to pay their last respects. The cremation is scheduled at 4 p.m. at Adventure in Auroville on Monday.