

Matrimandir

February 2022

*“Let Auroville be the symbol of a progressive Unity.
And the best way to realize this is a unity of aspiration towards a Divine
Perfection in work and in feeling, in a consecration of the entire life.”*

This message was given by the Mother on 21 February 1972 – on the occasion of the actual beginning of the construction of Matrimandir fifty years ago.

IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING OFFERINGS TO MATRIMANDIR

Please note that all cheques/DD offered to Matrimandir should be payable to AUROVILLE UNITY FUND. The cheque/DD should be accompanied by a letter from the donor specifying the offering for MATRIMANDIR. This letter should contain the donor's full address, phone and email details and PAN DETAILS.

You may also send your offerings for Matrimandir by BANK TRANSFER to Auroville Unity Fund. To do so please follow the procedure as mentioned below:

1) Write to matrimandir.donations@auroville.org.in requesting bank transfer details.

We will send you the appropriate account number. (Account numbers are different for offerings coming from outside of India or from within India.)

2) During the transaction, please specify that it is for Matrimandir.

3) After the transaction, please send another email to matrimandir.donations@auroville.org.in with transaction details. If you need a tax exemption receipt, please send PAN DETAILS in this email.

When a strong breeze rustles the leaves and branches of a Peepal tree it recreates the sound of rain falling on the leaves. It is remarkable. With eyes closed one hears the sound of falling rain...

Lying on the grass under the tall Peepal tree in the Garden of the Unexpected this sound took me back through decades of memories.

This tree had stood in the central courtyard of the “Matrimandir workers’ camp”, a simple keet, thatch and bamboo structure built on this spot in 1971 to house about 20 of the early builders of Matrimandir.

Rooms in this camp were arranged in a “U” shape around the tree, with other rooms of the camp branching off from the central U. There were simple shared washing facilities and for a time, a kitchen at one end of the complex.

Long gone now, this workers’ camp, and the tree growing at its center witnessed the early years of the growth of Matrimandir. When the camp was removed in the mid 1990’s to make way for the contouring of the Matrimandir gardens oval, the Peepal tree remained standing alone, witnessing all, as construction proceeded on Matrimandir and then as work began in the inner gardens from 2009.

Fifty years have passed in front of the tree’s eyes. It was soon tall enough to view everything from its station close to the western edge of the Matrimandir gardens oval (this oval measures 360 meters long by 290 meters wide).

It has been scientifically established in recent years, that as the roots of trees reach out far underground they communicate with neighboring trees, conveying, through the agencies of fungal and

microbial growth, messages about their health, about insect challenges, and even offering nutritional help to each other through this underground communication system.

This Peepal tree stands about 100 meters from the central Banyan tree of Matrimandir gardens which is also the geographical center of the Auroville township. What conversations they must have had through their long roots, these two giant trees, as the project developed around them both! What sights they have seen... what events they have witnessed over these last 50 years.

First they will have watched the growth of Matrimandir up out of its excavation crater, reaching its full height of 29 meters in 1976, and then they will have watched the slow steady growth of the building's spherical outer space frame, completed in 1988.

In the late 1990's they might have been astonished as the building began to carry its outer cover of golden discs. Perhaps the trees thought that this

growing neighbor was showing off a new kind of golden flowers, or leaves. Leaves and flowers that, strangely unlike theirs, did not fall off and regrow as the seasons of the year revolved.

The Peepal tree, quietly taking in the changes over the decades, now has a fresh view to look at in its immediate surroundings. On the northern side of it, just 25 meters away is a copper roofed Pavilion in the Garden of the Unexpected.

And about 30 meters to the south east is the stately arrangement of flat topped stones which form the 24 meter diameter circle in the southern most section of this garden.

The Banyan tree, communicating through its far reaching roots, will have surely have updated the Peepal tree about the new gardens of Life and Power being created now under its eastern branches. The new gardens will be out of view from the vantage point of the Peepal tree, as they are hidden from it by the wide dense foliage of the Banyan.



The wide stone circle in the Garden of the Unexpected has the same diameter as the Inner Chamber of Matrimandir



The recently completed Pavilion in the Garden of the Unexpected, with the Peepal tree seen behind it, just to the left.

The Banyan has overheard the designers and builders of these two new gardens discussing among themselves, beneath its branches, how best to go about the work, how best to reach the goal that the Mother had set for the gardens. The goal, she said, was that each of the twelve gardens surrounding the Matrimandir would embody a particular state of consciousness, and this consciousness would be expressed chiefly through the significant flower that she had chosen and named for each of the twelve gardens. This interests the Banyan greatly, for it has had a long and close

contact with the Mother, since the day in 1968 when, for the Inauguration of Auroville, she had arranged that a ring was placed around its trunk with her message, "Auroville the City at the Service of Truth". Fifty-four years later, this ring remains encircling its central trunk (now there are 30 trunks!).

On 13 January 2022, a new tree was planted close to the Peepal tree in the Garden of the Unexpected, 20 meters from the Peepal tree. This was an ironwood tree, – the second that has been transplanted to this garden from the growing Lake excavation on the southern side of the gardens oval, some 300 meters away.

Over the last two years this ironwood tree watched the deepening excavation of the lake and during this recent monsoon, when Auroville received two and a half times its normal rainfall, the tree will have looked down on a very interesting sight: the



The outlines of the Garden of Life begin to emerge beneath the branches of the Banyan tree.



Clear ground water, over two meters deep, stands in the Lake excavation after the copious monsoon rains.

ground water level rose so high in the excavation that it has created, for now, a large body of clear standing water, – a first vision of the future lake!

Eventually, as it grows fresh roots, the transplanted iron wood tree will tell this story to the Peepal, and then, through the microbial message line, the Peepal will be able to bring the Banyan up to date on this remarkable growth of the Lake. Later, when the future lake is fully excavated all around the perimeter of Matrimandir, the Banyan will get a direct view.

The Peepal tree has seen the 50 years of Matrimandir's growth.

It has lived bathed in the deep energy of the Matrimandir site and blending in with this unmoving base of calm, it has felt the hopes, the dreams and the struggles of the humans living and working all around.

As the evening sun spreads golden light across the wide space of the Matrimandir gardens, the Peepal tree is surely happy, for the atmosphere is gentle, subtly perfumed with flowers, and below its branches the laughter of young children will be musical to the tree, blending with the wind-formed sound of rain falling on its leaves.

Matrimandir phone number for accounts: 0413-262-2228,
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