New Auroville Secretary brings new hope!

In his message to Andhra University, while writing about the future tasks before India, Sri Aurobindo wrote: “she (India) needs men whose training as well as their talent, genius and force of character is of the first order.” (Collected Works of Sri Aurobindo, Volume 36, page 523).

We have reason to believe that the newly-appointed secretary to the Auroville Foundation is one of those individuals. Her academic and career profile, her creativity, her experiences, her diverse achievements and her views on things – all give hope for a new bright chapter in the onward march of Auroville.

Here are some episodes from her administrative life:

Imagine that you are a civil servant and the government has posted you to a district on a seaside. One day, the sea is rough. There are ships in the high seas with 500 poor bonded labourers. Their lives are at stake. You are tasked with saving them and bringing them to shore safely. You need to marshal many things – resources at your disposal, resources at the disposal of other government departments, and you need to call in specialized agencies and trained seafarers. Jayanti Ravi managed all that and saved those 500 lives. Her age at that time: 25!
A few years later, you are posted to another district. One day, you find yourself tasked with managing and controlling the eruption of an extremely violent social upheaval between two communities. You are right in the epicenter of the upheaval. It is a challenge of the highest magnitude to maintain law and order and bring things to normalcy with the help of your staff, the police and other layers of the administration. It is a challenge to withstand the intimidating elements, to control the emotions of the crowds. Jayanti Ravi accomplished that too! While the storm raged far and wide, peace prevailed at the epicenter where she was!

The adoption of new things and new technologies always take time with the general public. Jayanti Ravi succeeded with that too. She introduced in her district via internet all the relevant Government schemes and services for the benefit of the common man. To avail of them, people no longer need to visit the government offices. From their homes or fields they can fill up the necessary forms and receive answers and the help they need.

The media and the government all recognized and appreciated her service, her talent, her creativity. Soon she was appointed as Director of the National Advisory Council.

A few years later, Dr. Ravi was called to serve the state she had earlier served – Gujarat - as a Labour Commissioner, as Director of Labour & Employment, as Commissioner of Higher Education and as Commissioner of Technical Education. Then, she came in touch with another former ISA officer and a great scholar of Sri Aurobindo, namely Kireet Joshi, with whom she worked for the establishment of the Children’s University, the Indian Institute of Teacher Education (IITE) and the Gujarat Educational Innovations Commission. Her work in all these fields led to the publication of her book Silver Lining.
In another of her appointments, Jayanti Ravi took up the equally important task of Swachh Bharat (Clean India). Another of her books, *Sanity in Sanitation*, narrated her experiences and insights on the subject.

As a Principal Secretary and Commissioner, health and Family Welfare, in Gujarat’s administration, she spearheaded the COVID-19 control activities in the state. Her leveraging of technology to scale up a decade-old digital health initiative pilot programme across the state, resulted in a great transformation of the health sector in Gujarat. This showed up in the ranking parameters of the national and international ranking agencies.

We can still add many more bright points to this profile of Jayanti Ravi but the obvious conclusion is – Auroville has been blessed with an officer who promises to open a new chapter.

Just before coming to Auroville she was asked by an Indian journalist: **What’s your brief for the Auroville Foundation?**

She replied: “I will be looking at nurturing and accelerating the process of making sure that the objectives that were in mind when it was first envisaged by The Mother (are fulfilled), in terms of sustainability, education, economy and also in terms of relationships... the Auroville Foundation has done some fantastic work in terms of water conservation, organic vegetable, landscaping, etc. So I will be looking at how all these areas are further nurtured.”

On taking charge, she was requested to speak to the community at large and on 19th July we had the joy of hearing her frank, friendly and inspiring message. Please click [here](#) to listen.

Jayanti Ravi, welcome to Auroville! We’re wishing you great success!
May your noble aspirations for Auroville be fulfilled!