

Village Action News

Monthly news about the efforts of AVAG to bridge the gap between
Auroville and the villages around it.

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Religion-Caste No Bars!

(Some positive results of AVAG's pursuit in bringing people together)



An interesting '**Microproject**' took place in Nesal village. The Muslim community of the village had been facing great problems during the time of funerals. The burial ground was covered with dense thorny bushes and there was no place to bury the deceased. The problem was discussed in the Women's Club which consists of Hindu as well as Muslim women. Eventually a plan was made and the money for the 'Microproject' was sanctioned by AVAG. There was a certain hesitation to support this project as traditionally it is considered inappropriate for Hindu women to go to the burial ground and it could lead to some kind of sensitive religious issue. On the workday, however, to the relief of all, no unpleasant incident happened. The men who passed by did look on with amazement but nobody bothered the women. After a full days work in the hot sun the burial-ground was finally cleared. The dead may rest in peace now.



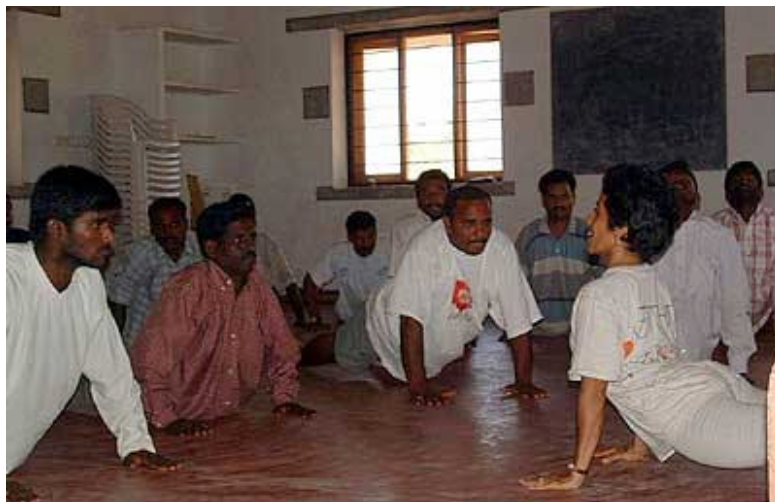
In the Thuruva village a landmark in AVAG's efforts to abolish **caste inequality** was reached when the people from dalit as well as non-dalit communities of the neighbouring villages came together to rebuild a badly damaged common road. It was only the second 'Microproject' of this kind where people from different villages and castes worked and ate together.

Some Goodwill & Good work for AVAG



Lesley Branagan (l) receiving a warm gesture of appreciation from Ambu, one of AVAG's most active development organisers

After relentlessly working for four months with AVAG, **Lesley Branagan**, a professional journalist from Australia, submitted the documentation of the 'Women Empowerment Programme'. She covered the activities of at least 30 women's clubs of the region. She presented her work in the form of a video-film, which was highly appreciated by all. The growing popularity and strength of 'Udhayam Women's Federation', which was established by AVAG three years ago, was very strongly brought forth in the film.



Long-time Aurovilian Abha (r) leading development workers into the art of hatha yoga..

Two Aurovilians, **Abha** and **Luisa**, initiated the Development Workers of AVAG into hatha-yoga. The workshop was arranged by Auroville with the objective to increase body consciousness in the villages. These Yoga classes are likely to take place on regular basis. In future Yoga might also become a development activity in the villages. It will be interesting to see how this ancient Indian practice finds a place in the lives of the people who may have a good deal of their indigenous virtues under the strong influence of television and cinema.

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