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National

Unesco asks India to get Auroville inscribed on World Heritage List

Staff Reporter

— Photo : T. Singaravelou



Unesco Director-General Irina Bokova (second from right) displays the Auroville Charter during her visit to Auroville on Tuesday. Also seen is Bhaswati Mukherjee, Ambassador/Permanent Representative of India to Unesco (second from left).

PUDUCHERRY: The Government of India has to take steps for the inscription of Auroville on Unesco's World Heritage List. Only then can the World Heritage Committee of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation take up appropriate discussions on the proposal, Unesco Director-General Irina Bokova said on Tuesday.

On her visit to Auroville along with a team from Unesco, Ms. Bokova told journalists that a high-level panel on peace and dialogue among cultures would meet for a day in Paris in mid-February. Terming it a "global peace initiative," she said all countries were invited to join the panel.

"The International Year of dialogue among cultures will be launched on the occasion."

In a step towards establishing discussions on issues of the present-day world, the panel would look into the question of tolerance, ways of reaching more people in the globalised world, extremism, conflicts and solutions, and the importance of cultural diversity in the globalised world.

Earlier, addressing a gathering at Auroville, Ms. Bokova reiterated the need for establishing peace and humanism in the world. "There is a huge

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technological advance in the world. At the same time, there is intolerance and disrespect for each other. We should be more engaged in this debate.”

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Referring to Unesco’s search for “a new balance and humanism in the 21st century,” she said globalisation brought in something new to the people.

“Today, peace can be defined not as what we aspired to 20 to 30 years ago. Peace and humanism are about respecting and helping the marginalised.” These were also about reconciliation between men and nature. “With climate change around us, we need to find a new balance/paradigm of how to treat nature.”

Ms. Bokova said education on peace, sustainable development, tolerance and rights of every human being was essential. “We cannot have sustainable development without being accompanied by moral and ethical values and respect for each other,” she said.

She urged the Auroville community to contribute to Unesco’s search for a new balance and humanism in the 21st century.

Ambassador/Permanent Representative of India to Unesco Bhaswati Mukherjee, Union Human Resource Development Ministry Joint Secretary Amit Khare, Unesco-New Delhi Director A. Parasuraman; Auroville Governing Board member Aster Patel; and Auroville Foundation secretary M. Ramaswamy were present.

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