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## Connecting Lands Connecting Hearts

### Amma's Message Upon the Inauguration of Amrita Setu

20 December 2006 — Amritapuri

Salutations to all of you who are verily the embodiments of love and the Supreme Self.

It's been nearly two years since the tragedy of the tsunami. Amma can still clearly see the tears and hear the cries of those who lost their near and dear ones that terrible day. My earnest prayer is that such a tragedy never occurs again anywhere in this world. But when Amma sees human beings selfishly exploiting nature, she becomes fearful inside. These people do not have the mental strength to face the fury of another tsunami; should one come again, they will breakdown.



We are all aware of the general increase in Kerala's suicide rate, especially among farmers in the Wayanad District. May a similar fate not fall upon these people whose lives depend on the sea. Human beings may not have the power to prevent natural disasters, but they can at least stop inflicting misery and sorrow upon each other. The first step towards this comes in protecting Mother Nature. As per the latest survey reports, it is said that one out of every four people in the world will suffer from cancer. Maybe this figure is not accurate. If someone pricks us with a needle, we might take it lightly, saying, "It's okay, it's just a needle." But what if we were to be pricked by hundreds of such needles? Then it becomes dangerous. So too is the case with the exploitation of Mother Nature. If we continue to torture Her, it will only lead to our own destruction. If human beings show hesitancy in changing, Mother Nature will make us change. This is the message behind Mother Nature's retaliations. It is like the clay telling the potter, "Today, you may be the one manhandling me, but not so long from now, I will be doing the same to you." Let us not draw more than we need from Mother Nature's resources. Whether it is the treasures of the sea, the sands along the coast, our forests, mountains or lakes--preserving such treasures is the duty of every individual.

After the tsunami, Amma thought that, if only there had been a bridge here, so many deaths could have been prevented. On that day, Amma decided to construct one. With the grace of the Paramatman, today that work has come to completion. Amma is very happy about this. Amma's happiness is not only due to the fact that the villagers now have a bridge to use. The bridge is also a symbol--a symbol of the power of love and unity to bring human beings together. It is the nature of rivers to ever flow in one direction. But the flow of love is not like that. Love flows both ways, embracing one and all. With this bridge, Amma expects the notion, "I am from this< shore and you are from that< shore," and all the sense of difference originating from it, to come to an end. Amma knows that nothing can be forced upon anyone, but she believes that such change will now gradually begin to take place.

Wickedness and the feeling of "otherness" used to be seen only in cities, but today we find them even in small villages. In previous times, Indian villages were full of simplicity, purity and

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innocence. But today things have changed. It's not the fault of the villagers. We all are to blame. Therefore we should be ready to boldly face our responsibility and help usher in the necessary changes. The inauguration of this bridge here today heralds such an occurrence. If this bridge can help people hold hands in love, forgetting the attitude that "I am from this shore" and "I am from that shore," and make one feel, "We are from the same shore," wouldn't it be a great feat. Such unity is the solution to so many of our problems.



Even if we are not able to do big things, we might be able to achieve quite a lot by doing small things at the right time— Amma told a story of a doctor who was able to save the life of the man with a seemingly insignificant feather.

If we take one step sincerely, the next step will automatically follow. But in today's world, where there is so much competition and selfishness, nobody wants to take the first step. Everyone wants merely to look on, idly, from the side. Nobody wants to take a decision.

Only through unwavering love and faith in the ideals that benefit society can we make and implement the right decisions. Otherwise, there will just be promises and opinions that, although diplomatic, change nothing. In order to make a decision and move ahead with its implementation, we should first understand the needs of the people. We should have a thorough understanding of their problems and then put in sincere effort. We should not only please the "haves" and give only promises to the "have-nots." This only pushes them into a bottomless pit of expectation. Seeing no way out, they will become despondent and may even commit suicide.

Today we are completely governed by our lack of acceptance--to both the good and the bad. No one has faith in anyone else. This is the cause behind the lack of creative decision making in society, as well as its implementation.

The goals of religion and politics are the same: to unite everyone. Division only weakens us. Amma has hope in the coming generations. Allow them to grow emotionally, intellectually and spiritually. For this, there should be support from politicians and leaders. Instead of making farfetched claims regarding our superiority, may our efforts be unified. May this bridge not only connect two shores, but remain forever as a symbol of love and brotherhood, uniting human hearts as well. May the Paramatman's blessings fulfil this prayer.

May the country be able to use the talents and knowledge of the President so as to be able to most benefit from them.

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