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Free Education For 30,000 Children Employment Training For 5000 Women

MAM initiates new projects to curb suicides among farmers

26 July 2007

Amma, Sri Mata Amritanandamayi Devi, who made selfless service as her mission in life, announced two new projects to prevent the suicide of farmers and their families in India. Farmers of Maharashtra (Vidharba), Kerala and Andhra Pradesh, will be targeted for this project where the failure of crops and the unbearable burden of debt lead to suicide not only by the farmers, themselves, but by their entire families, as well. An expert panel from MAM will study the causes of the increase in suicide rates amongst the farmers.

Amma said, "Yet another generation should not become slaves of emotional weakness like suicide. They should understand that they need to develop self confidence. The future generation should have the mental strength to face life's challenges."

While talking to reporters during her South American tour, Amma said, "The fertility of the soil is decreasing. The number of honeybees is dwindling. Honeybees are one of the insects that maintain the necessary balance and harmony in nature's resources. The reduction in their population is indeed a matter of grave concern. There is a need for detailed scientific research on this subject, Amma has already taken steps to initiate it. But such research cannot be based merely on scientific facts. For such problems, we have to understand and become aware of the subtler factors involved. Amma has instructed students to conduct research in this manner."

Free education for 30,000 children

To provide free education to thirty thousand children all over India will be the first project. The children of farmers below the poverty line, or children who were forced to discontinue their education due to the lack of funds, will receive priority. Children who lost their parents, or were abandoned by them, will also be considered for this project. Children of all castes between the ages of ten and fifteen who are studying in government schools will be eligible to apply for this project. Such children will receive a stipend every month until they finish their education subject to their performance in their studies. Initially, 60% of the children will be from Kerala, with the remaining 40% taken from other states. Those who already receive funds from governmental or non-governmental agencies will not be eligible for these benefits.

Creating social awareness

Subsidiary to this project, the MAM is planning other awareness campaigns, including programs to inculcate values. A newsletter containing articles, stories and discussion forums to aid in the intellectual and mental growth of these children will be circulated amongst the selected 30,000 students. Also, special camps for advanced education, and symposiums on natural conservation and environmental hygiene will be conducted.

Amritashree: Employment Training for 5,000 women

MAM's another project is to give training in cottage industries to 5000 women from agricultural families. Upon receiving their training, women will also be given the necessary capital to start businesses in their respective areas of training. MAM is also considering discussing with both the nationalized and scheduled banks to provide loans for women who already have established businesses, to help them expand these businesses.

As a part of this project, Amma's devotees have already started an organization called Amritashree. This organization provides training for women to manufacture food and

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merchandise for daily use, and helps them to sell these, too.

Criteria

MAM will be appointing committees to find appropriate candidates for both these projects. Children and women belonging to the families of distressed farmers from various states in India will be selected only after detailed scrutiny. The first list of names of the selected candidates will be announced during Amma's 54th birthday, on September 27th, 2007. The first installment of the stipends for both the projects will also be distributed on that day.

How to Apply

Students and women meeting the aforesaid criteria may send their applications along with photo of the applicant and certificates obtained from authorities proving the age, class of study, annual income of the parent, non receipt of any financial assistance from any other agencies etc.

Send the application to
Free Education Fund, or Amritashree Project
Mata Amritanandamayi Math,
Amritapuri P.O., Kollam District, Keralam, 690525

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