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Green lessons from Mata Amritanandamayi on birthday



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By [Express News Service](#)

KOLLAM: Mata Amritanandamayi stressed the need for harmony with nature for the survival of humankind in her 65th birthday message delivered on the Amritapuri campus of Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham on Thursday. Amma reiterated the need for conserving nature and the importance of compassion in life, in her message in the aftermath of the devastating flood in the state.

This time, she used examples from the flood and the lesson learned from it to drive home the points she has been campaigning for years. “When the rain beat down incessantly, flooding the rivers and starting landslides, turning Kerala into an ocean of disaster, people here forgot all divisions,” she said.

“This helped people understand each other better and they found the strength to overcome all obstacles. Hearts came together as one, and only compassion flowed. Actually, it overflowed, and we saw a second ocean rising from the floods - an ocean of compassion.”

Amma said while man, with his limited strength and intelligence, could not stop natural disasters, natural disasters could never stop man from extending a helping hand to those in need. “During such times, we are spontaneously able to express our compassion and love through our words and deeds. This strength is inherent in us. That is why it awakens in crises such as this,” she said.

Though the birthday celebration was kept low profile without a formal dignitary programme, people from all walks of life came to seek her blessings. Mizoram Governor Kummanam Rajasekharan, leader of the opposition Ramesh Chennithala, K C Venugopal MP and SNDP general secretary Vellappally Natesan offered their wishes on the dais. The pavilion was brimming with devotees who took turns to seek her blessings.

The birthday celebrations started with rituals such as ‘Ganapati homam’ and ‘Guru Padapuja’ led by senior-most disciple Amritaswarupananda Puri.

Help for the flood-hit

Amma’s concern for nature and people living around was not limited to words. The Math announced a slew of measures to help the flood-affected and in rebuilding the state. Amma gave Rs one lakh to 10 families of fishermen and others who died trying to rescue flood victims. She also presented certificates of commendation to more than 400 volunteers who manned the Amrita Help Line-a 24-hour call-in centre set up on Amritapuri Campus of Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham that over five days fielded more than 25,000 calls, connecting more than 100,000 flood victims across the state with relief services.

As many as 13,000 Amrita Sree SHGs donated C10 lakh to help the Math in its continued flood relief-and-rehabilitation efforts. The Math also gave away certificates for free surgeries at the Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences in Kochi. Cheques for Rs one lakh were also issued to widows of Kerala fishermen who died at sea in 2017-18. Free weddings were performed and free saris were given to 400,000 women. The Math had also completed the construction of 900 toilets in Kollam district, taking the total number of toilets constructed in the state to 12,000. Certificates of receipt were given to 200 representatives during the function.