

Students add flavour to book launch

CHITRA MAHESH | CHENNAI

There are book readings and book readings. Most times the celebrities read out excerpts or chapters or interact with the gathering and talk about the newly released books. And then, well-known personalities talk about their experiences with the book in question, making for an evening of discussion.

But the launch of *The Man From Chinnamastha* by Indira Goswami at Odyssey, Adyar, under the aegis of Katha, was made different thanks to the participation of children from the Karuna Club, formed by the students of the Sankara Senior Secondary School, Adyar.

And their contribution was a skit that decried the practice of animal sacrifice — a theme that features prominently in the book by the well-known Assamese writer. The thoughts and ideas that the children had come up with were charming.

The earlier part of the programme saw poet Kanimozhi and Nandita Krishna,



(Left) Kanimozhi and Nandita Krishna at the launch of *The Man From Chinnamasta*. Photograph by A.R.ANSER

director, C.P. Ramaswamy Aiyar Foundation, releasing the first copy and receiving it respectfully.

While the author herself was not present, she said in her message, "The writing of *Chinnamastar Manuhto* was provoked by my encounters with the tradition of animal sacrifice at the famous Kamakhya temple in Assam, a tradition that continues till this day it's a gruesome sight, there are rivers of blood flowing on festival days. My book raises a simple question — if you can change tradition to stop human sacrifice, why not change it to exclude animal sacrifice!" Indira Goswami is known for her original style with different themes and her short stories and novels are set in different locales of India. Her works have been translated into many Indian languages and English. The varieties of violence, all avoidable, are some of the themes that run through her work. A Jnanpith and Sahitya Academy Award winner, Indira Goswami is also known as Mamoni Raisom Goswami.