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Children get first lessons on Vijayadasami

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Chennai: Tiny tots took their first steps into the world of learning at special vidyarambam ceremonies across the city on Sunday. Dancers, singers, doctors, sports personalities and academicians initiated 350 children into learning through programmes organised by Education Times in association with the Chettinad Foundation's A School on Vijayadasami.

Children between the ages of one-and-a-half and four-and-a-half attended 14 centres of A School in Anna Nagar, Ashok Nagar, Alwarpet, Tiruvanmiyur, Valasaravakkam, Velachery, Washermanpet, Perambur, Kilpauk and West Mambalam. Well-dressed children lined up quietly with their eager parents in the flower-bedecked hall.

Eminent Carnatic vocalist Aruna Sairam, who was one of the chief guests at the centre in Alwarpet, said

B A Raju

BABY STEPS: Carnatic vocalist Aruna Sairam (right) inducting a child into the world of learning during the *Vidyarambam* ceremony

vidyarambam — the commencement of learning — was an important occasion in a child's life. "It is

a significant event. The role of a teacher in a child's life is very important. It is a great opportunity for

the children to be able to start their education in the presence of someone who inspires them," she said.

At the Alwarpet centre, the day began at 10 in the morning with the lighting of a lamp by the chief guests and teachers.

The children then took centrestage and parents helped them trace the alphabet symbolically on rice spread out on banana leaves, the akshara abhyasa ceremony. K Jayaramakrishnan, vice president, TCS, who was also a chief guest, said, "These are traditions left to us by our forefathers which have been lost along the way. It is good to revive them. I am very happy to be a part of this occasion as I myself did not have such a function."

RN Bhuvana, who participated in the event with her three-year-old son Gokul said, "It was great to have two such eminent chief guests with us today. It is a very good start for our son."