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Sarpanch springs a surprise at Girijan festival



• **G.V. PRASADA SARMA**



Traditional fervour:YSRC MLAs Roja and Giddi Eswari participating in the 'anupu' utsavam at the Moda Kondamma festival at Paderu in Visakhapatnam district on the last day on Tuesday.—Photo: By Arrangement

As the ballet on Moda Kondamma ended, she took centre stage to narrate the story

In a befitting climax to the staging of Moda Kondamma ballet on the second day of the first Girijan festival at Paderu, sarpanch Killu Venkataratnam narrated the story to the gathering.

Students of Gnansagar, a vocational junior college run by the Brahmakumaris at Hukumpeta, staged the ballet narrating the story of Moda Kondamma, worshipped by tribals, her son Sanjiva Raju and his wife Gangu.

The ballet was written by Director of SAKTI Sivaramakrishna and principal of Sri Modamamba Degree College G. Varaha Murthy.

It was staged under their supervision on Monday night as part of the three-day State festival.

Spontaneous gesture

As the ballet ended, in a spontaneous gesture, Ms. Venkataratnam came onto the stage and narrated the story stating that “it is our story” to the delight of the audience and making up for any deficiency on the part of the dilettante artistes.

The sarpanch lives at Pata Paderu, which was the capital of Matsyarajus in the story, and in the same street where the temple and legends are located.

Paderu Sub-Collector Lotheti Sivasankar, who sat through the performance, wanted that the story be narrated in the form of ‘Burrakatha’, another folk art form.

Ms. Venkataratnam, owning up the story and narrating it with zest, lent a natural authenticity to it, Mr. Sivaramakrishna said.

Kimudu Achhamma from Matham near Matsyagundam rendered the songs in the ballet and Pangi Dappaiah of the Addumandi troupe and Lakshmana Rao the ‘kalyanam’ songs in the climax. Mr. Sivasankar wanted that the performance be repeated on Tuesday. Though a laudable effort, the performance of the students fell short owing to lack of knowledge of theatre techniques and rudiments of staging, he felt.

The young students, in their first theatre outing, were quite absorbed in their performance and carried away by it.

To improve their performance, they need to get training from some well-known theatre personalities in Visakhapatnam, he felt.

“By next year, such arrangements can be made,” he said.

Injuries as fireworks explode

Some persons were injured when a cracker fell on the dump of fireworks kept at a distance during the festival resulting in an explosion in the evening.

According to information reaching here, some people were injured when sparks from the explosion hit them and others in the jostling.

Some suffered serious injuries, it was learnt. No further details were available.