

# 10 TN kids paint their distress

By OUR CORRESPONDENT

**Chennai, Aug. 18:** Around ten children came all the way to the city on Thursday from their villages, Sangolikuppam and Semmankuppam in Cuddalore, to display a set of paintings depicting the environmental and health issues faced by them in the district. The children, aged anywhere between nine and eleven years, also narrated shocking incidents of fathers being afflicted with rashes and skin diseases to a sym-

pathetic audience of about 250 children from city schools.

To questions on the impact the industries had on their lives, the youngsters from Cuddalore schools patiently explained that the acidic effluents from the chemical industries of State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu in Cuddalore had affected their lives and had polluted the air. Says nine-year-old Aruna Devi from Semmankuppam, "We are unable to breathe so often and feel choked

because of the foul stench emanating from the industries."

Iswarya from National Public School says, "After meeting these children, we realise the problems faced by them because of polluting industries. I now feel that the same fate can befall us too at anytime, if pollution goes unchecked." There were also concerns raised on the kind of medical facilities available to the people of Cuddalore and if there were possibilities of them being evacuated to a

safer place. "This is an outreach technique to bring city kids and village kids together and encourage them to exchange views and discuss the environmental fallouts polluting industries can have," says Shweta Narayan from SIPCOT Area Community Environmental Monitors, a community group from fighting for the rights of Cuddalore residents. The paintings were a result of a two-day workshop conducted by a young artist, Boldsov, from Chennai.