

Lokmata Ahilyabai Holkar” – A Powerful Confluence of History, Grace and Dramatic Sensitivity



Presented by the Hindi Academy, Delhi, the play **“Lokmata Ahilyabai Holkar”** emerged as a compelling blend of historical narrative, dignity and emotional depth, commemorating the 300th birth anniversary of Ahilyabai Holkar. Staged on 19th November, 2025 at the L.T.G. Auditorium, the production not only illuminated her exemplary courage and administrative acumen but also brought alive her profound humanitarian vision.

The event gained special prominence with the presence of **Hon’ble Chief Minister of Delhi, Mrs. Rekha Gupta, Mr. Kapil Mishra** (Hon’ble Minister, Department of Art, Culture &

Language, Delhi), and **Mrs. Bansuri Swaraj**. Their presence elevated the cultural stature of the evening and energized the audience.

Addressing the gathering, Hon'ble Chief Minister **Mrs. Rekha Gupta** highlighted Ahilyabai's life, her benevolent leadership and her unwavering commitment to justice. She noted that in ancient times women enjoyed education and equal rights, but circumstances changed drastically after the arrival of the Mughals—leading to restrictions and seclusion. In such a period, Ahilyabai stood as a shining example of strength, wisdom and progressive thought.

Hon'ble Minister **Mr. Kapil Mishra** and **Ms. Bansuri Swaraj** also emphasized the need to bring Ahilyabai Holkar's ideals to the forefront, stating that her life continues to inspire society even today.

The event was further graced by **Guest Mrs. Rashmi Singh (IAS)**, Secretary – Department of Art, Culture & Language. Under the leadership of **Mr. Sanjay Kumar Garg**, Secretary of the Hindi Academy, the entire programme unfolded with grace and coherence. All dignitaries appreciated the artistic excellence of "Lokmata Ahilyabai Holkar".

The play's director **Rohit Tripathi** transformed the narrative into a visually engaging experience with refined staging, balanced emotional transitions and well-structured dramatic movements. Writer **Mukesh Jha** brought historical events to life with clarity, flow and an engaging dramatic texture. Despite the narrative's breadth and the many characters involved, the presentation remained cohesive, gradually rising in intensity and drawing the audience closer to the towering personality of Ahilyabai.



In the lead role, **Shampa Mandal** delivered a restrained yet powerful performance, capturing Ahilyabai's resilience, compassion and unshakeable resolve. Her expressions, dialogue delivery and emotional precision made the character truly come alive.

Disha Gupta, as young Ahilya, added depth and charm through her expressive performance and graceful movements.

As Malharrao, **Sharad Tyagi** portrayed calm authority and dignified strength, leaving a lasting impact. **Guneet Singh** (as Khanderao) and **Nirbhaya Kartavya** (as Tukoji Rao, Vishwas Rao) brought emotional complexity and internal conflict to their characters with impressive conviction.

Despite the large ensemble, each artist—

Shikha Arya, Aryan Mavi, Gagan, Jai Prakash, Ankit Chaudhary, Aryan Singh, Mayur, Dhananjay, Sachin, Kritika Gaur, Ridhaan Gaur, Mohammad Siraj, and Ayushi Tripathi—maintained energy, rhythm and continuity throughout, helping the historical canvas unfold seamlessly on stage.

The backstage team added commendable depth to the production:

- **Chandrakanta Tripathi's costumes** preserved historical authenticity,
- **Tiara Tripathi's choreography** infused visual elegance and rhythm,
- **Rajeev Ranjan's music** enriched the emotional atmosphere.

This production by **Upstage Art Group, Delhi**, stands as a testament to how research, sensitive writing and cohesive direction can transform history from something that is merely narrated into something profoundly *experienced*.

The play reminded the audience that Ahilyabai was not just a ruler—she was a true **Lokmata**, whose compassion and strength still resonate across generations