Kinu Kaharer Thetar by Manoj Mitra

The Play & Director's Note

The minister of state of Putna has abused a woman. The governor general says, 'If it is not settled by law, the throne will be seized'. The king is now in trouble… the minister of state is his best friend, so how can he submit him to 14 slams of whip? He advises the minister to find out someone who will come to the court and state that he is the one who has committed the crime, not the minister, so that the punishment will be delivered to him. Jagadamba hands her lazy husband Ghontakarna to the minister, in exchange of four bags of money. Since then, all thieves, robbers, marked criminals gather in line at Ghontakarna's yard, with bags of money; they do the evil, and punishment goes to 'punishment receiving officer' Ghontakarna. Jagadamba is happy that finally her husband has learnt to earn money…The king is happy for the throne is saved….The minister of state is happy, because there is no problem of law and order…Peace is everywhere…..But, it doesn't continue as easily….The king suddenly gets accused of murdering a goat. The intelligent governor general submits him to be hanged. The king says, 'What to worry for? I have Ghontakarna. Go, Ghontakarna, stand up on the dice and get hanged.' And then…?

The Director

Kazi Toufikul Islam is a creative, highly trained and confident actor with strong stage instincts and extensive formal training. He has the ability to work successfully as part of a team in cooperation with directors, designers, stage managers, fellow actors, camera operators, and a variety of backstage and production workers. He possesses a proven ability to learn lines and stage techniques quickly, as well as being punctual and prepared when attending rehearsals and

auditions. He is committed to achieving the highest standard of performance and is always willing to listen and learn from others.

The Playwright

Manoj Mitra is the winner of Sangeet Natak Academy award for playwriting, Calcutta University Gold Medal and Calcutta University Best Bengali Stage Centenary Award, Asiatic Society's Gold Medal, Munir Chowdhury Award from Bangladesh Theatre Society, Dinabandhu Puraskar, D Litt., Kalyani award, ABP Ananda Shera Bengali award for Theatre, Filmfare Award for Best Actor, Kalakar Award for legendary performance in cinema and many more.

Manoj Mitra, along with late Parthapratim Chaudhuri and some college friends, founded the theatre group Sundaram. He has till date written over a hundred plays. Many of his plays like Sajano Bagaan, Galpo

Hekim Saheb, Parabas, Ja Nei Bharatey etc. are considered classics of Bengali literature and included in school and college texts. His plays are performed in Bangladesh, America, Australia, England and other places.

The Group

Established in 1997, Prachyanat is one of the leading theatre groups of Bangladesh. The group has many wings including Prachyanat School of Acting and Design, The Theatre in the Open, Prachyanat for Children, Theatre–lab Production, Prachyanat Research Cell, and the Musical Ensemble. In the last eighteen years Prachyanat has given eleven full-length productions.

Cast & Credits

Narrator Jaganmoy Paul
Clown Md Mizanurrahman

Kinukahar/Ghontakarna Mohammad Monirul Islam
Wazir Rontikbipu
Mouni Baba Mohammad Abu Bakar Siddiki

Lord Shahriarrana Jewel
Jagadamba Chetonarahmanvasha
Udashini Sanjida Anwar
King Shahriar Ferdous
Sentry Mohammad Rafiqul Islam
Police Officer Md Saiful Islam Jarnal
Musician 1/ Neighbour 1/Courtier 1/ Robber 1 Mohammad Fuadmian
Neighbour 2 /Courtier 2/Robber 2 Tanjim Imran Mahmood
Neighbour 3/Courtier 3/Robber 3 Been E Amin
Neighbour 4/Courtier 4/Robber 4 Al Amin Khandoker
Neighbour 5/Courtier 5/Robber 5 Mohammad Asad-Uz-Zaman
Musician 2/Neighbour 6 Parvin Akhter
Neighbour 7/Courtier 6/Robber 6 Md Faysalkabirsadi
Musician 3 Syed Rifatahammad Nobel
Musician 4 Kamrul Islam
Lights Mukhlesurrahman
Props Kamrunnahermony
Set Shafaat Khan
Make-up Mohammad Ali Babul
Playwright Manoj Mitra
Director Kazi Toufikul Islam

Jadubangsho

The Play

Jadubangsho boldly faces the problems of a tumultuous time. The time is the independent India in the 1950's, with Bengal cut in two- trying to survive the severing of old ties of languages, lives and love. Jadugopal's business flourishes in North Calcutta, but he is easygoing and childish. His wife Nandorani blames his laidback attitude for the fact that they are still without a child. She devotes all her time to rituals

in a hope that an heir is born, even though both husband and wife are way past their prime. With them stay Jadu's brother Narugopal who is a Jatra proprietor, rendered out of work because of the violence and restrictions that came with partition and Fagun, an employee's daughter from East Pakistan who has taken shelter from the mayhem all around. Dhurjoti, a distant relative of Jadugopal looks like a perfect gentleman, but is a thief unlike Sanai who though jailed for robbery, is not a thief. The two meet one night when a group of refugees are looking for a lost child.

Director's Note

The borders drawn in 1947 ripped not only across geographic terrain but deliberately tore people on the basis of religion, tearing individual from individual, threatening to wipe out the bonds of love and caring we shared since the beginning of time. Independence came to Bengal demanding labels. People were displaced, terrorised and killed. An entire generation was brutalized.

This play does not really focus on the anger and agony that Partition brought. It focuses on human relationships and the urgent need for communal harmony, a bonding across economic and social strata, a sense of belonging on which can grow a healthy sense of nationhood without religious considerations of any kind. More people are killed in the name of religion than anything else. As Jean Paul Sartre would have said Religion has proved to be a "costly hypothesis".

The production is also keyed to that…the stage is uncluttered and we go less for period sets, more for authentic thoughts and feelings that are often obscured by political propaganda. My characters (as varied as the birds on a tree) dominate with their backgrounds, their beliefs, their interactions…The music refers briefly to the sentiments of the time but the theme music rolls in and out constant, unbroken like the tune that binds all together.

The Director and the Playwright

Manoj Mitra is the president of the Paschimbanga Natya Akademi (Govt. of West Bengal), and Sundaram. His professional career began as a professor of Philosophy at the Ranigunj College. Today he is a leading playwright of Bengal. He has till date written over a hundred plays like *Mrityur Chokhe Jal, Sajano Bagaan, Parabas, Alokanandar Putra Kanya, Mesh O Rakhash, Noisho Bhoj, Operation Bhomragar* etc. His works have been translated into many languages and produced by directors like Ratan Thiyam, Rajinder Nath and others. They are extremely popular in Bangladesh, America, Australia, England and other places. He has written several books on film and theatre and is the recipient of many awards like, Sangeet Natak Akademi Award, Calcutta University Award, Bengali Stage Centenary Award, State Government Award, Filmfare Award for Best actor, Bangavibhushan Award etc.

The Group

Dedicated to the theatre of conscience, a tireless seeker of truth and beauty in all its forms –'Sundaram' was found in 1957 by a handful of college friends. The founder members of the group are: Manoj Mitra, late Partha Pratim Chaudhury, Prasanta Bhattacharya, Dulal Ghosh and others. Soon many more came to be associated with the group. At 58 with many new members Sundaram has a history of over 65 immensely popular original productions. To meet the paucity of original scripts in Bengali, for the last 23 years, the group has been conducting the only annual Bengali playwriting competition– 'Parthapratim Sarane Smriti Purashkar'. It has also launched two awards for children and backstage artists- Ananta &Ashim Purashkar.

Touring India and abroad Sundaram has won many, national and state-level, governmental and non-governmental awards and has, more importantly, won the support of countless theatre lovers.