

A Masterful Comedy of Deception: *Gorakhdhanda* Delights Audiences with Humor and Insight

On November 10, the Mask Players Art Group brought to life Jayvardhan's comedy play Gorakhdhanda at Gurugram's Rang Parivartan Auditorium, delighting audiences with laughter and charm under the skilled direction of Chandrashekhar Sharma.

The storyline of Gorakhdhanda is a clever, layered satire on deception and morality, following the antics of a crafty property dealer and his equally sly servant. The two exploit a unique business model—illegally renting out government houses. Enlisting the help of a resourceful actor friend, they devise numerous ways to extract extra money from unsuspecting tenants. They pose as fake police officers, manufacture absurd emergencies, and even cut off tenants' cable wires, all to manipulate and swindle money out of them.



However, their clever games reach a turning point when they encounter a new tenant, Geeta, a quick-witted woman who begins to see through their schemes. Unlike previous tenants, Geeta decides to fight back, taking matters into her own hands. Her pushback throws the scheming trio into a spiral of missteps, confusion, and unintended consequences. This leads to a brilliantly funny climax, where each character is forced to confront the absurdity of their deception, making for a deeply engaging and humorous plot twist.

Chandrashekhhar Sharma's direction is seamless, reflecting both his understanding of the play's humor and his ability to highlight social commentary without losing the comedic essence. Sharma managed to balance the farcical elements of the story with a simplicity that made the scenes relatable and accessible. His careful pacing kept the audience engaged, and he ensured that every punchline landed. The transitions between scenes were smooth, and the intricate dynamics between

characters were allowed to unfold naturally, making for a cohesive performance that held the audience's attention from start to finish.

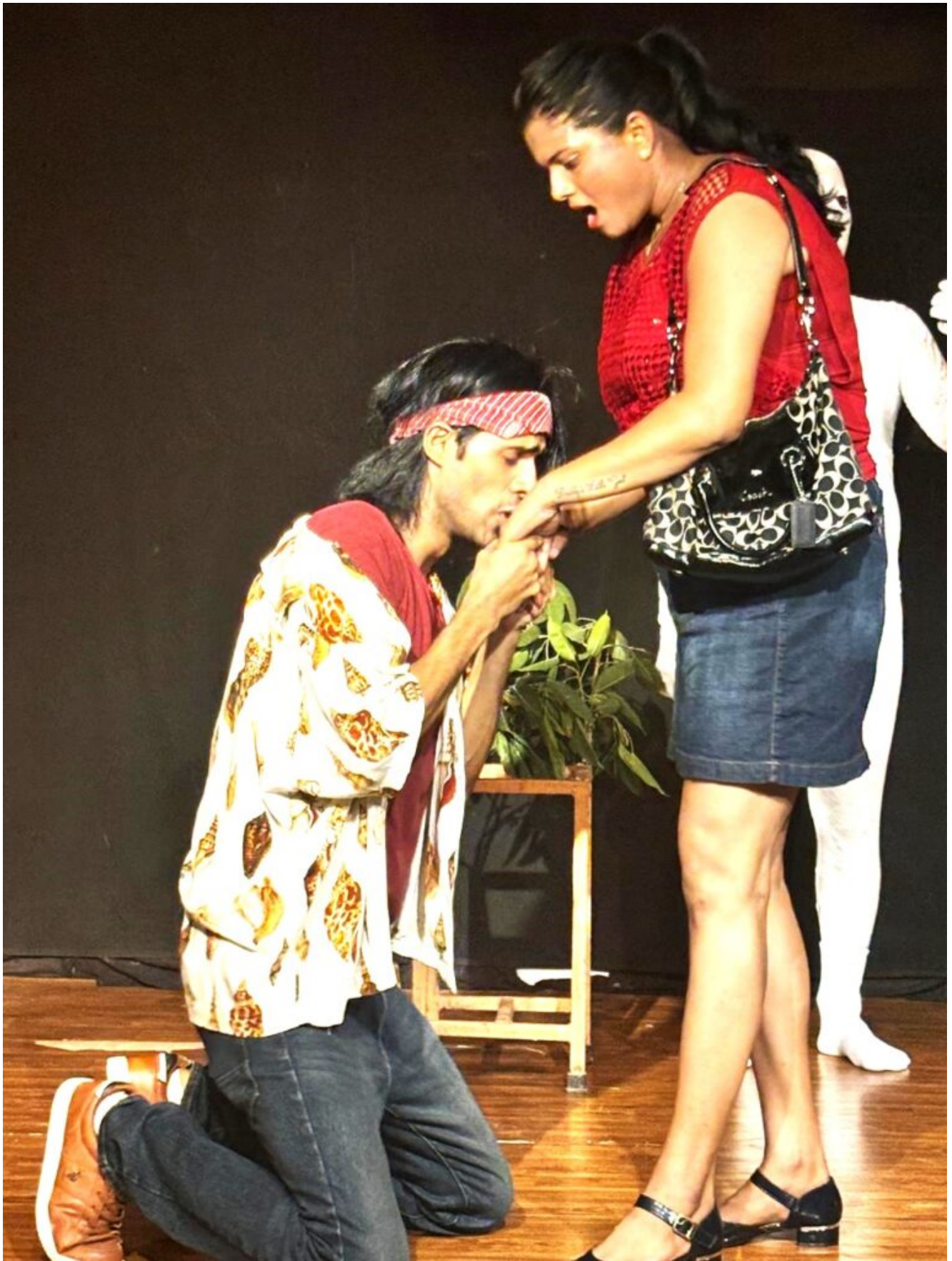
The cast of Gorakhdhanda shone on stage, each actor embracing their character with authenticity and energy. Ashish Sharma, Nikhil Jha, Eva Dandona, Pushkar Sagar, Ashutosh Srivastava, Jatin, and Mayank Sharma added rich layers to the play with their roles, enhancing the comedic timing and providing moments of slapstick that were both skillful and hilarious.

Together, the ensemble cast displayed a natural chemistry, enhancing each other's performances and creating a lively atmosphere on stage. Their nuanced expressions, quick timing, and humorous dialogues conveyed not only the humor but also the subtle social critique embedded in the play.

Behind the scenes, a dedicated technical team brought the world of Gorakhdhanda to life with admirable precision. Sarita Rana, Manoj, Rakesh Sharma, Sangeeta Suyal, and Mamta Rani were instrumental in handling the set changes, props, and lighting that supported the narrative. Their efforts ensured that each scene flowed effortlessly, with no disruptions, adding polish to the production. The set design was simple but effective, allowing the audience to focus on the characters while still providing the necessary realism for the setting. Lighting and sound cues were timely, which helped to heighten the comedic moments and emphasized the shifts in tone as the story progressed.

For those who missed the Gurugram performance, there's good news—the play will be staged again on November 16 at Blank Canvas Studio, Mandi House, New Delhi, promising another evening of laughter and insight.

“Prem-Parinde”: A Tale of Changing Social Values in the Name of Love



On August 4, 2024, Mask Players Art Group performed the play "Prem-Parinde" at the Rangparivartan Auditorium in Gurugram.

Written and directed by Chandrashekhar Sharma, the play delves into the modern trend of forming romantic relationships without understanding their depth, turning it into a social pressure for today's youth. This phenomenon is leading to crimes in the name of love and causing familial disintegration. Additionally, social media is exacerbating the situation, with students prioritizing creating reels over building their future.

The play conveys its serious message in a humorous manner. The main character, Nisha, is a fan of a superstar and is so obsessed with movies that she lives her life in a cinematic way. This obsession leads her to fall in love with Rajan, a loafer who resembles a superstar, and she even finances his expenses. Their movie-like love story reaches a point where they realize they have only been deceiving each other under the guise of love and don't truly understand what love is.

The roles were well-portrayed by Pooja Singh as Nisha, Ashish Sharma as Rajan, Rakesh Sharma as the father, Hansika Jain as the wife, and Parth Srivastava as Bhola. The actors' timing was impeccable, adding to the entertainment of the audience. Behind the scenes, Nikhil Jha handled the lights and Mayank Sharma managed the music, both contributing significantly to the success of the presentation.

The play, while tickling the audience's funny bones, conveyed a profound message relevant to today's youth.