

# Sheshpal Singh's Munshiganj Golikand urf MookBalidaan

Playwright: Sheshpal Singh 'Shesh'

Director: Atamjeet Singh

Group: Individual, Lucknow

Language: Awadhi

Duration: 1 hr 40 mins

## The Play

In 1886, the British made the Avadh Rent Act and implemented it. In the Act, the Kings and Talukedaars got the right to collect Rent. Since their tax collection was arbitrary, the poor farmers opposed this recovery and under the leadership of Baba Ramchander, this movement spread in the districts of Rae Bareli, Barabanki, Sultanpur, Pratapgarh and Faizabad. Baba Janaki Das took over from Baba Ramchander, and was later captured along with his companions and put in the Rae Bareli Jail. Till then the Kisan Sabha had been formed. In 1920 farmers gathered in Munshiganj, across the Sai River, to free their leaders from jail. The farmers were fired on and hundreds of them were killed. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru came to Rae Bareli to meet the farmers, and the District Magistrate took him into custody. The commissioner, Colonel Founteray, realizing the gravity of the incident of the Munshiganj firing, ordered the injured to be shot as well so that they do not become witnesses of the massacre. Some of the dead bodies were loaded into Ikka-Taangas and drowned overnight in the Dalmau Ganges River. For the remaining corpses, four big pits were dug in Munshiganj, and a hundred corpses each were buried in them. Munshiganj is also called the second Jallianwala incident.

Director's Note

I had read about the Munshiganj shoot-out about 30 – 35 years ago, and the writer of our Nautanki, Sheshpaal ji, had also told me about it. Since then the design of staging it has been in my mind. Since this incident was from Awadh region, the idea was that it should be performed in Awadhi language. Since I have experimented in Nautanki area, I decided to get it written in Awadhi language. I asked Sheshpaal ji to take up the responsibility of writing which he gladly accepted. In this Nautanki, about 30 young artists have rehearsed with complete dedication. It was a difficult task for city artists to memorize dialogues in Awadhi but they did well. I think this is the first full-length Nautanki written in Awadhi language.

#### The Director

A theatre group Meghdoot was formed in 1974 in Lucknow by theatre lovers and young people. Atamjeet associated himself with this group right from its inception. It was under the aegis of Meghdoot that he acted in a number of plays. In 1977, Atamjeet Singh acted in Aala Afsar. The play was in nautanki form, written Mudrarakshash and directed by Bansi Kaul.

Later Atamjeet Singh started directing nautankis independently. He has directed around 20 Nautankis; some of these are Laila Majnu, Bhaand Charitram and Shaheed Bhagat Singh. Nautanki Baje Dhindhora urf Khoon ka Rang was performed in Bharat Rang Mohatsava. Apart from acting in a few movies and T.V. Serials, Atamjeet Singh has toured countries like Finland, Norway and Pakistan on theatre projects. He has been honoured by different institutions in India, and has been awarded an Honorary Diploma by International Amateur Theatre Association. In 2003 U.P. Sangeet Natak Academy also honoured him for his contribution in the field of theatre.

#### The Playwright

Sheshpal Singh 'Shesh' was born on 20th December 1958 in village Kasna, Dist. Raebareli

He has written and directed a number of plays and nautankis

for various government and semi government offices of Uttar Pradesh. He has written full-length proscenium nautankis Shaheed Bhagat Singh and Bhand Charitram and staged them in Lucknow under the direction of Sri Atamjeet Singh.

#### Cast & Credits

Sootradhar/Ahelkaar/Grameen Sandeep Kumar, Saurabh Kumar Mishr  
Munshi Kalika Prasad/Grameen Aditya Vishwakarma

Sootradhar/Zileदार/Pagal Sujeet Singh Yadav

Mangloo/Durga/Grameen Shivakant Awasthi

Sheetlu/Binda/Grameen Manoj Singh

Grameen/Isri Kaka Adarsh Singh

Raja Veerpal Singh Gagandeep Singh

Raja Tiloi/Ram Narayan Ramesh Chandra Saini

Raja Rampal/Mayor/Grameen Ashutosh Jaiswal

Raja Arkha/Sherif Vinay Kumar Mishra

Raja Tribhuvan Devasheesh Misra

Sootradhar/Zileदार/Grameen Subham Singh Chauhan

Gayika/Baandi Shreya Awasthi

Gayika/Grameen Pallavi Singh, Shubhra Pandey

Baba Ramchander/Kedar Pandit/Grameen Vikesh Bajpai

Siphai/Grameen Sarabjeet Singh

Siphai/Grameen/Daak Babu Abhishek Yadav

Amol Sharma Harsh Jaggi

Acchi Jaan/Gayika Supriya Chaterjee

Chaprasi/Grameen Ravindra Nath Yadav

Nasrullah Khan/Grameen Shubham Tiwari

Shivbalak/Badri Narayan/Grameen Shivam Singh

Gangadeen/Grameen Avinash Kumar Singh

Ram Awtar/Grameen Gaurav Dhingra

Baba Jankidaas/Grameen/Commissioner Abhishek Singh

Nehru Ji/Grameen Akshat Sunil

Stage Design Gagandeep Singh/ Manoj Singh

Stage Décor Abhishek Singh/ Ramesh Chanra Saini

Stage Property Aditya/Shubham/Shivakant

Rehearsal In-charge Devasheesh/Rozy Dubey/ Abhishek/Sujeet

Costume Karamjeet Kaur  
Music Harsh Jaggi  
Make-up Shaheer Ahmad  
Harmonium Zubair  
Nakkara Md. Siddiqui  
Dholak Md. Imran  
Light Assistant Nitish Bharadwaj  
Light Design Devasheesh Misra  
Dance Choreography Rozy Dubey  
Presentation Controller Assistant Sujeet Singh Yadav  
Presentation Controller Sarabjit Singh

Playwright Sheshpal Singh  
Concept, Sound Design & Direction Atamjeet Singh

#### Contacts

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