



Thursday, November 17, 2016 Rizwan Mohammad

Rangmanch's newest play *Rajdarshan* delivered a rib-tickling performance, as promised, at the Playhouse Theatre in Glen Eden on Sunday, November 13.

The play is set in the Kingdom of Ayodhya before the Mauryan Empire came to power in 324 BCE. The tale revolves around the terminally ill King Maharaj Nand (Ujjal Ghosh). He announces donations of gold and silver to all priestly Brahmins of his kingdom in the hope for a miracle.

Half of the king's kin conspire to kill him and seize his throne. He is eventually poisoned by the maid Kubja (Rupal Solanki) on the orders of the king's youngest queen (Nirmita Ghosh) and his step-brother Chandraketu (Raj Singh).

Lambodhar Bhatt (Devdutt Paranjpe), a poor Brahmin, with his godson Abhiram (Chirag Solanki) travel to the kingdom to get his share of the riches. They are broken to hear about the king's demise. However, the god of misfortune, Shanidev (Jayanta Ghosh) promises to transport his soul into the king's body, and once the priest attains the riches, he can go back to his village with it. Maharaj Nand comes back to life, but his strange acts create a suspicion among the king's men.

A comedy of errors ensues in the kingdom. Greed and corruption ruin the pillars of the realm, inevitably leading to its fall at the hands of the enemies.

The play delves into a funny yet dark side of human beings, and it shines a light of wisdom on its audience. The period comedy-drama was successful in arresting the attention of its spectators as the packed house often burst into laughter.

As the story moves forward, Maharaj Nand's imposter gets killed again by Kubja, but luckily, his soul goes back into his corpse. Abhiram reminds his mentor and father about his humble origins and tells him that he was wrong in craving the unearned riches of the king.

The play concludes with a strong message that the greed decays the heart of the man and brings hardship and misery whereas one finds peace in honesty and loyalty.