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Untold story of Gandhi ji and his guru Shrimad Rajchandraji

Yugpurush: Mahatma Ke Mahatma performed

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JAMMU, May 4: Produced under the auspices of Shrimad Rajchandra Mission, Dharampur, Gujrat, Yugpurush-Mahatma Ke Mahatma, the Hindi version of original Gujarati play highlighting the relationship between Gandhi ji and one of his early mentors, Shrimad Rajchandra, was staged at the Zorawar Singh Auditorium, here today.

Directed by Rajesh Joshi and written by Uttam Gada, the award-winning play highlights the role that Shrimadji Rajchandra, a prominent Jain poet, and philosopher, played in Gandhiji's life. Gandhi ji met Rajchandra, for the first time in Mumbai, when he returned from England as a barrister in 1891. His knowledge of the scriptures and moral earnestness left a deep-rooted impression on young Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and their relationship blossomed over a span of two years.

After Gandhiji moved to South Africa, the duo corresponded with each other through letters. Rajchandra's adherence to the principles of Satya, Ahimsa, and Dharma later became the fundamental tenets of Gandhism.

The story of the play starts when, on the day of his assas-

sination, Gandhi speaks to his associates about Shrimadji. In a clever theatrical device, an older Gandhi acting as a Sutradhar on stage reminiscences about his past and takes the audience through his journey as a 21-year-old barrister to a revered leader of the nation.

Today production, told to be the 450th, performed by one of the six teams who has simultaneously staged this same play in 145 cities of the country and abroad, was immensely enjoyed by the audience as the hagiographical content instead of being preachy was laced with humour.

The scenes like the one where a young Rajchandra is shown to have performed Shatavdhan (a difficult memory test of memorizing 100 dif-

ferent things at a time) was savoured by the spectators. The play was conspicuous for engaging direction, impressive performances, dramatic music playing on cue and magic of Gujrati style parade of tastefully designed sets— cardboard trees and little white fences, motorized seats, optical illusions— changing one after another along with props appearing and disappearing in a flowing manner.

Prominent among the audience included Kavinder Gupta, Speaker Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Sat Sharma, BJP leader and MLA, Rajesh Gupta MLA, Rajkumar Jain, Padmashree S.P. Varma, Sarita Chauhan, Padmashree Balwant Thakur, Dr. Agni Shekhar, Danesh Rana and Anjali Sharma, Director of Radio Kashmir.