

Another Play on "Tughlak"

In contrast with Cho's 'Tughlak' that caricatured the present day politics, Girish Karnad's Telugu play 'Tughlak' is a character study of the idealistic sultan Mohammed-bin Tughlak whose reign is considered one of the spectacular failures in Indian history. Karnad attempts to project the character in its true perspective. The complex scenes are subtly etched and are presented with a touch of symbolism. The play, with as many as 40 characters, poses a challenge to any director and theatre unit to successfully produce it on stage. And the Dramatic Club of Hyderabad and its Director M. Nagabhushana Sarma accomplished the job very well.

The play, that marked the dramatic club's two decades of existence was produced with imagination. A hilly terrain inside the Hyderabad Public School compound served as the stage and

Nagabhushana Sarma wisely divided the slopes into different places to stage various scenes. This lent colour to the scenes depicting some of eccentric acts of the Sultan like shifting his capital along with its people to Daulatabad. The scene in which the Sultan makes a self-revealing speech addressing god in heaven after ordering the killing of his step-mother who is found guilty of murdering his minister, Nazih was a moving spectacle to watch, full of pathos. Nadir E. Cheney in the role of Sultan Tughlak dominated the play with his powerful delivery. Chakravarthi and Jajagopal is the comedian kept the audience in good humour. Nazib as Vazir and Vazir and Malavika Rao as the stepmother of the Sultan were other important characters presented well by the artistes. The mob scenes were handled with discipline.—FAC.

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