

THE HINDU

Online edition of India's National Newspaper
 Sunday, Sep 06, 2009
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Karnataka

Life as it is in the heartland of India



Sonali Kulkarni and Nakul Vaid in 'Mohandas'

Mohandas (Hindi)

Cast: Nakul Vaid, Sushant Singh, Sonali Kulkarni, Govind Namdeo, Aditya Shrivastav

Director: Mazhar Kamran

They no longer keep it as real. Cinematographer turned director Mazhar Kamran denudes cinema of all its pretences as he weaves the tale of a young man fighting for his identity. It comes across as life as it is in the heartland of India which is out of the radar of the TRP-seeking media. Where justice can be easily buried, as evidence can be bought and honesty can be transferred so that there are no ripples on the ground.

Based on the story by Uday Prakash, a noted name in Hindi literature, Kamran tells the tale of a weaver's son, deliberately named Mohandas (Nakul Vaid), who studies hard in order to have a better tomorrow. He gets the marks and a coveted job in a coal mine in Anuppur only to be duped by an impersonator (Sushant Singh). When Mohandas finds out that he has been robbed of his name and job he knocks on his employers' door but they want documentary proof.

A stringer reports the issue and ultimately a celebrity journalist (Sonali Kulkarni), who has managed to hold on to her conscience amidst the onslaught of never-ending 'breaking news', shows interest in the case. But do things change? This is the best part about the film. Mazhar has not opted for easy solutions. In comes a firebrand advocate (Aditya Shrivastav), who tries to fight the case in court. But when the local *lekhpal* has to investigate, who factors in caste and economic hierarchy before arriving at a decision, even an honest advocate and a competent judge (Govind Namdeo) cannot do much. Then there is always the sword of transfer hanging on the head of the competent.

Mazhar holds a mirror to our helplessness in front of a corrupt system through a heart-wrenching screenplay and some commendable performances, particularly by Shrivastav. It is bereft of humour but we can do without it as there are plenty of options for that kind of entertainment.

ANUJ KUMAR

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