

## Watch 'Love Guru' with a sense of humour, Iskcon tells Hindus

Rejecting the notion that controversial film 'The Love Guru' is offensive to Hinduism, the Hare Krishna movement has called upon Hindus to take the comedy released Friday with a pinch of salt and a good sense of humour.

'We find it to be a typical satire that does not intend to hurt religious sentiments,' the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (Iskcon), North America chapter, said in a statement.

Perhaps the first Hindu organisation to comment on the Mike Myers' film after watching it, Iskcon asked Hindus 'to view the film in its context as a comedy, and to draw on the tolerance and broadmindedness that are hallmarks of our faith'.

Hindu groups had raised concerns, based on the film's promotional trailers and posters, that the raunchy comedy would denigrate the faith. By contrast, Iskcon said that 'while the level of humour contained in the film may not be uplifting' it could possibly 'lead to increased tolerance, dialogue, and understanding between Hindus and non-Hindus'.

Iskcon, a devotional movement that has many western followers, is no stranger to being satirised in popular culture.

Yet, alluding to the campaign against the film run by Hindu leader Rajan Zed, Iskcon said: 'We believe that pressuring filmmakers to censor, re-rate, or otherwise limit their artistic freedom is generally antithetical to the spirit of pluralism and tolerance within the Vedic or Hindu culture.'

'We recognise that, in certain cases, media depictions may so egregiously distort or maliciously denigrate our faith that boycotts, petitions and other acts of protest are warranted. 'The Love Guru', however, is not such a case.'

Indian American media too has not found the film offensive to Hindus while generally panning it like the rest of the US media for its crude humour that falls flat.

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