

WHAT'S ON

**Exhibition**  
Featuring Life and Works of Mihuk Munier  
Venue: Dhaka Art Centre, Dhamondi  
Date: July 22-31

**Theatre**  
Play: Lihoboti Akhyan  
Troupe: Loko Natya Dal  
Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, Shilpakala Academy  
Date: July 27

**Theatre**  
Play: Raja...ehong Dinamo  
Troupe: Prachyanat  
Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, Shilpakala Academy  
Date: July 25  
Time: 7:30pm

**Theatre**  
Play: Shona  
Troupe: Bot-Tola  
Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, Shilpakala Academy  
Date: July 26  
Time: 7:30pm

**Film Screening**  
Film: The Scarlet Flower (Faty Taki)  
Venue: Auditorium, Russian Centre of Science & Culture, Dhamondi  
Date: July 28

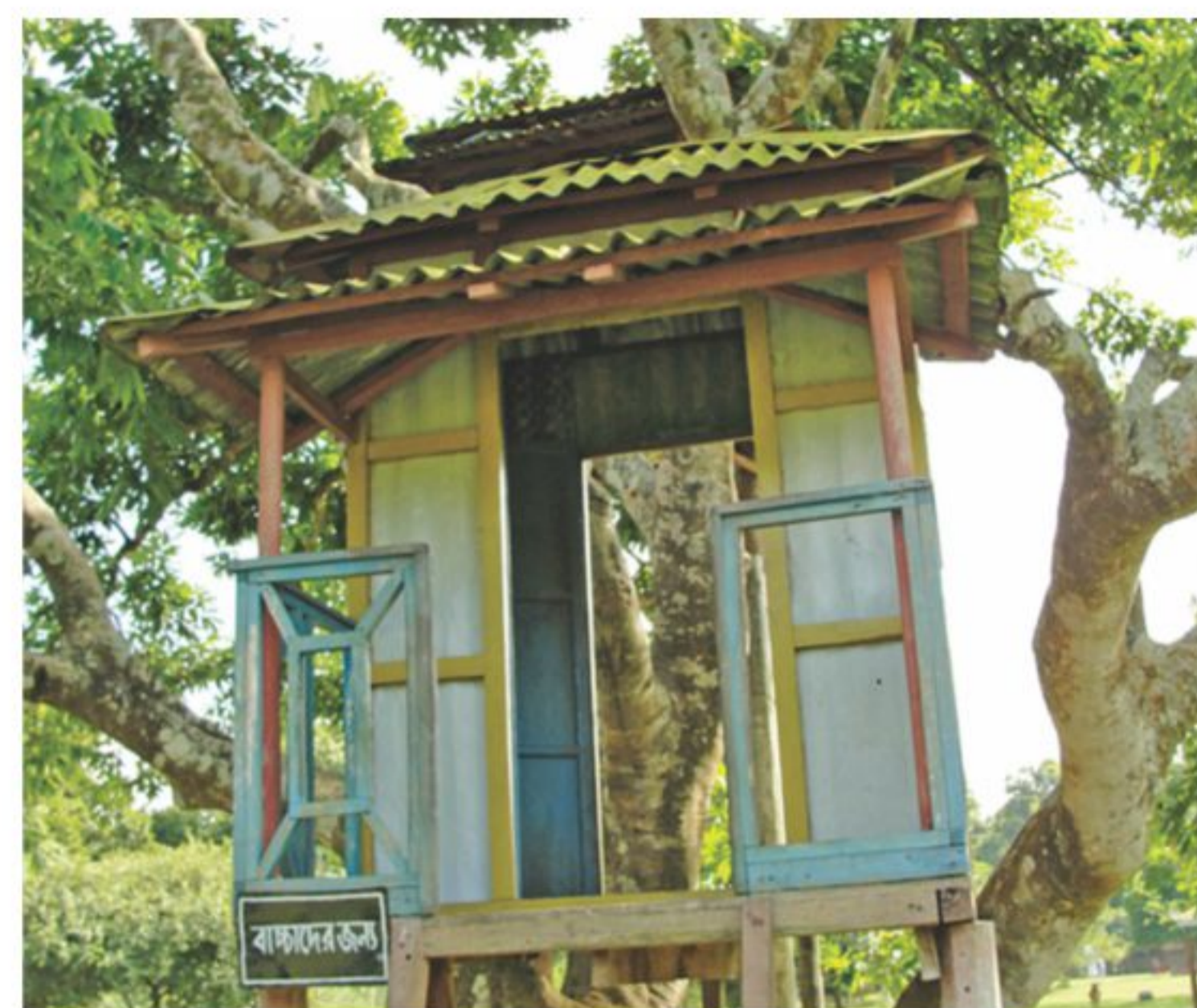
**Film Screening**  
Film: War and Peace (Part 1)  
Venue: Auditorium, Russian Centre of Science & Culture, Dhamondi  
Date: September 9  
Time: 6pm

**Solo Art Exhibition**  
Title: Heavy Metal  
Artist: Dr. Lambert Shambhu  
Venue: Bengali Art Lounge, 60, Gulshan Avenue, Dhaka  
Date: July 12-29  
Time: 12-8pm

**Coin Exhibition**  
Venue: Nalini Kanto Bhattashali Hall, National Museum, Shahbagh  
Date: July 10-25  
Time: 10:30am-8pm

# Home was his heart

## Humayun Ahmed and his Nuhash Polli



This was the haven of Humayun Ahmed, a magician of words, who spent most of his time there after he started directing TV plays and films.

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Most paths in Pijulia village, under Mirzapur union of Gazipur sadar upazila, are lined with thick Shal forest. One path with its beautiful play of light and shadow, welcomes passers-by, leading them towards Nuhash Polli, 25 km from Gazipur sadar.

This was the haven of Humayun Ahmed, a magician of words, who spent most of his time there after he started directing TV plays and films. Nuhash Polli was open to the public and visitors would traverse great distances to get a view of the picturesque estate.

Nuhash Polli was founded in 1987. Initially it covered 22 bigha of land. Now it covers around 40 bigha. Actor Dr. Ejaz helped procure the land. The heavenly 'village' was named after Nuhash, Humayun Ahmed and Gultekin Khan's (his first wife) son.

Ahmed was very fond of music. He loved to live amidst nature and relished the date plantation, which he had set up inside Nuhash Polli. When he recently visited Bangladesh for 20 days before going back to New York, the writer-filmmaker strolled around the garden for a long time.

There is a dighi (big pond) at the extreme north end of Nuhash Polli. A wooden bridge has been constructed over the pond. A tent was placed on an artificial island in the middle of the pond. Ahmed's wife, Meher Afroz Shaon, conceived a daughter who died before seeing the light of day. Ahmed called her Leelaboti, after whom the pond was named. Ahmed also wrote a multi-volume novel called "Leelaboti".

A building called 'Bhutbilash' was constructed adjacent to the pond while Ahmed was receiving treatment in USA. The last time he visited Nuhash Polli, Ahmed inaugurated 'Bhutbilash', hoping to behold a 'ghost', seated by the veranda of 'Bhutbilash' at midnight.

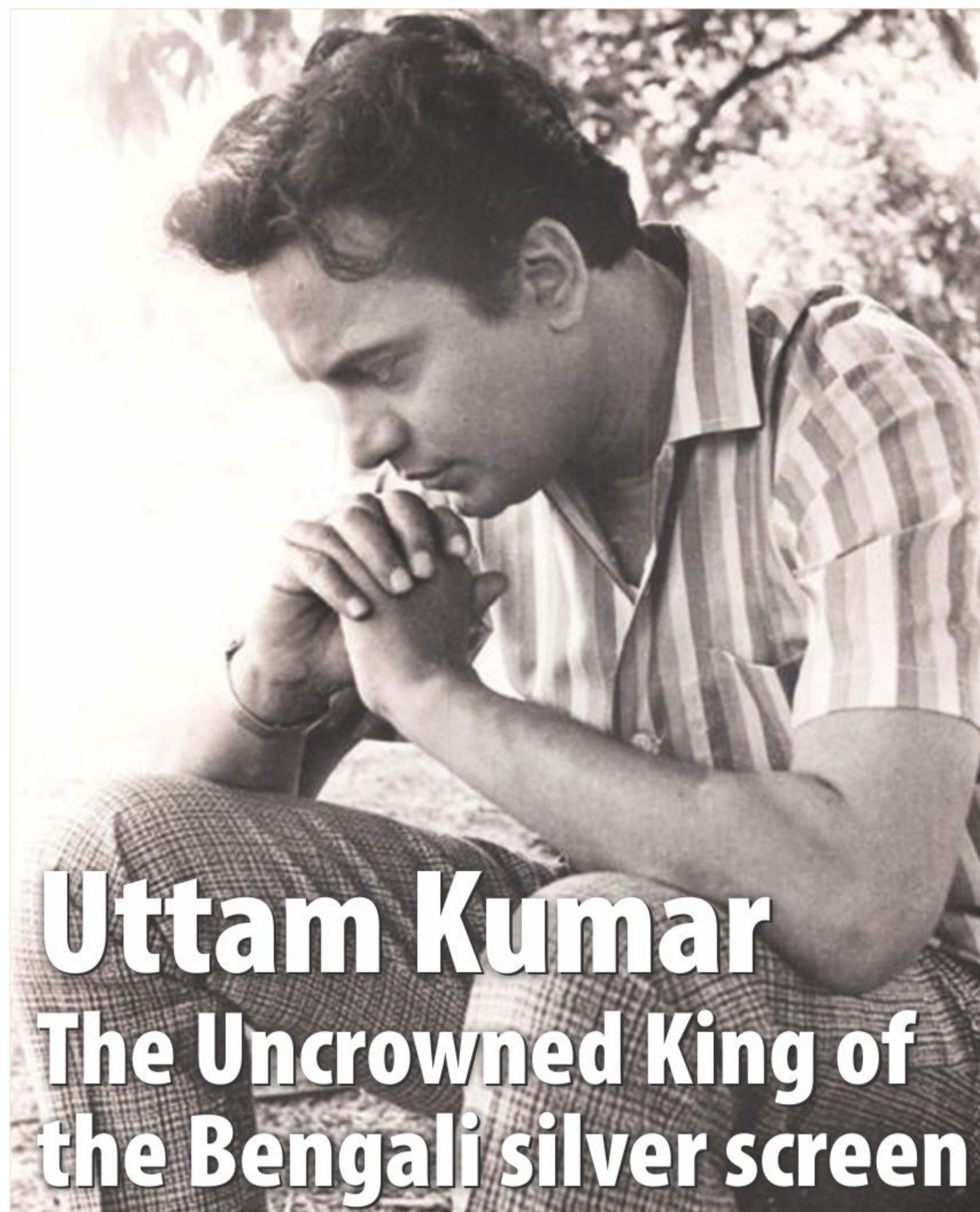
Nuhash Polli houses a large number of sculptures crafted by local sculptor Asaduzzaman Khan. Spectators cannot but be impressed by a sculpture, 'Ma O Shishu' (mother and child) at the entrance to Nuhash Polli. Ghost-shaped and frog-like sculptures have been made to amuse children. A tree house is a delight for

children. Ahmed enjoyed rainfall and moonlit nights. He created a room called "Brishti Bilash" from where he could observe the pattering rain. The green yard was always kept clean and tidy to indulge Ahmed's passion for watching the waxing and waning moon. The manager of Nuhash Polli, Bulbul, led a nine-member team in overseeing the overall management of the idyllic locale.

Whenever Humayun Ahmed travelled within and outside the country, he would collect various types of trees. About 300 species of medicinal and fruit trees can be found within the precincts of Nuhash Polli. The writer also had a tea plantation at Nuhash Polli, which still exists. Initially, Ahmed accompanied his guests while they wandered through the Nuhash Polli estate. He introduced the visitors to various species and would invite them to taste the leaves of a particular scented tree.

A swimming pool stands near the bedroom of the deceased writer. He would swim there at times with his dear ones. Once he swam with noted Indian litterateur Sunil Gangopadhyay. Nuhash Polli was Ahmed's favourite shooting spot for almost all the TV plays and films directed by him.

Most of Nuhash Polli remain unchanged, only Ahmed is no more.



# Uttam Kumar

## The Uncrowned King of the Bengali silver screen

*"It is the demise of a leading light of the Bengali film industry... There won't be another hero like him."*

-- Satyajit Ray after Uttam Kumar's death

Uttam Kumar's hypnotic screen presence, mellow voice, unique charisma and dazzling smile made him not just a heartthrob, but also a legend of Bengali Cinema. To generations of Bangla film aficionados, he remains "Mahanyak" (epic hero), the undisputed king of the Bengali silver screen. Yesterday (July 24) marked his 32nd death anniversary.

Born as Arun Kumar Chatterjee on September 3, 1926 at Ahrilota, North Kolkata, he was called 'Uttam' by his maternal grandmother. The extended family had its own theatre group, 'Suhrid Samaj', which staged many amateur shows within the community. Besides acting, young Uttam was also into sports.

After graduation, the financial condition of his family forced Uttam to take up employment as a clerk at the Port Commissioner's office.

In 1947, he got an offer for a brief role in a Hindi film called "Mayador." The film never saw the light of day. His first release was the Bengali film "Drishidaan" (1948), directed by Nitin Bose. In the film Uttam was credited as Arun Kumar. The film was a flop. In 1949 he made his debut as the leading man in the film "Kamona," crediting him as Uttam Chatterjee. But this too bombed. By then the industry had labelled him a "flop master." During this time he got married to Gauri Ganguli (in 1948). Fortunately for Uttam, "Basu Paribar" (1952), co-starring Sabitri Chatterjee, was a big hit.

Uttam delivered another big hit "Sharey Chuattor" in 1953. In the film he was paired for the first time with Suchitra Sen. With "Agnipariksha", the following year, again hitting the bull's-eye, the Uttam-Suchitra pair ushered in the so-called 'golden era of Bengali cinema'. They went on to become icons of Bengali romantic melodramas for more than twenty years, becoming almost a genre in themselves.

Their films were famous for the soft-focus close ups of the stars, particularly Suchitra's, and lavishly

mounted scenes of romance against windswept expanses and richly decorated interiors. The storylines often revolved around a pattern wherein the lovers would meet and fall in love. And then either the family or difference in status of the two would cause hurdles in the romance. Some popular films of the pair include "Shap Mochon" (1955), "Shagorika" (1956), "Harano Shur" (1957), "Shaftopodi" (1961), "Bipasha" (1962) and "Grihadaho" (1967).

"Shonar Horin" (1959) saw Supriya Debi play the lead opposite Uttam Kumar. As they began to act in more films together, the two got involved off screen as well. Many of Uttam's films with Supriya too were huge successes at the box office but there was a marked difference in audience perception to these films as compared to his films with Suchitra.

When Satyajit Ray made "Nayak" (1966), he created the role of actor Arindam Mukherjee, keeping Uttam Kumar in mind. Many people feel the film is autobiographical to Uttam Kumar's own life -- the sense of anxiety and restlessness of the character mirrored Uttam's insecurities about his phenomenal success and abiding fear that his superstardom might not last. Ray later confessed that if Uttam had refused the film, he would have abandoned it. The actor worked with Ray again the following year in "Chirikhana" (1967).

When the Indian Government instituted the National Awards for Best Actor and Actress in 1967, Uttam Kumar was the first recipient of the Best Actor Award for his performances in "Chirikhana" and "Anthony Firangee" (1967).

Uttam also tried his hand at Hindi films with the oft-criticised box office bomb "Chhoti Si Mulakat," a film he produced and starred in, among others that were better received.

A strict workaholic, he was rumoured to have said that his preferred demise would be on the floor of a studio, doing what he loved best, acting. Indeed, that is exactly how he died. While filming "Ogo Bodhu Shundori" in 1980, he died of a massive heart attack at the age of 54.

COMPILED BY CORRESPONDENT

## Multiple talents

### In conversation with SA Haque Alik



A CORRESPONDENT

SA Haque Alik is a TV play director, cinematographer, lyricist and theatre activist. About a 100 tele-films and TV plays, a dozen TV serials, and two mega serials, directed by Alik, have gone on air on different TV channels. Currently a mega-serial "Ladies First", directed by Alik, is being aired on Banglavisión. Meanwhile 135 episodes of the serial have so far gone on air.

Alik came into the limelight directing a TV serial "Dwitiyo Jibon", written by Anisul Hoque. The serial went on air on ATN Bangla. The director's other TV serial "Bhalobasha Mondobasha", that went on ntv, also earned him accolades. A TV serial "Khoab", depicting the life stories of slum dwellers, went on air on ATN Bangla seven years back. "Ebong Ami", "Din Chole Jeye" and "Achin Pakhi" are several popular TV serials, directed by Alik.

Alik also directed a film called "Hridoyer Kotha". The film, featuring Riya and Purinima as the protagonists, received much popularity. The promising director also earned recognition directing another film -- "Akash Chhova Bhalobasha". Alik's next mission is to make a film titled "Bridhasram".

At present, Alik is busy with shooting for Eid special TV plays.

# "Mahajoner Nao" sets sail to South Korea

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Subachan Natya Sangsad's musical play "Mahajoner Nao" will participate at an international theatre festival to be held in Republic of Korea, early next month. The play that narrates the life and struggles of the bard Shah Abdul Karim will be staged on August 9 and 10 at the Sun Theatre in Keochang, informed director of the play Sudip Chakraborty.

The play will take part at the 'Keochang International Festival of Theatre', where apart from Bangladesh, 11 countries will participate with their productions. Featuring nearly 200 plays, the festival will begin from July 27 and will continue till August 15. Subachan is participating at the festival as part of a selection by the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, says a press note sent by the troupe.

A 17-member troupe headed by Juma Chowdhury, secretary general, Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation will leave the country on August 7.

Written by Shakur Majid in a lyrical form, the play

features nearly 20 popular and lesser known Abdul Karim songs. Abdul Karim's life has been articulated partly through these songs, as he saw 'Nao' or boat as an allegorical proportion of the human body while 'Mahajan' symbolically represents the creator. Karim's stance against bigotry and social injustice has also been depicted in the play.

Mysticism was the core aspect of Karim's life. The audience will see a depiction of mysticism in the play through music and dance.

The cast includes Ahmed Gias, Ansar Ali, Asadul Islam, Sonia Hasan, Saiful Imam, Monirul Hossain, Amirul Islam, Tanveer Dipu, Aminul Islam, Hossain Imran, Roni Alam, Lithu Rani, Sohel Khan, Imtiaz Shaon and Fazul Haque.

Apart from directing, Chakraborty also designed the set, light and costumes for the play.

Subachan will hold a special show of the troupe on August 4 at the Experimental Theatre Hall, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy.



The play will take part at the 'Keochang International Festival of Theatre'.

PHOTO: JAMIL MAHMUD

# In remembrance of Mahmudul Haque



Mahmudul Haque

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

July 21 marked the 4th death anniversary of writer Mahmudul Haque. Different organisations and individuals, including Bangla Academy, Bangladesh Lekhok Shibir, Bangladesh Writers Association and National Poetry Council organised a discussion on his life and contributions.

Haque was a gifted writer. He was not exactly what is considered "popular" in the contemporary literary scene, but most aware readers were well-acquainted with his brilliant writing. He wrote, in fact, a few novels. His books could be finished at one go, as the essence is usually clear and easily comprehensible. The imagery he weaved was practically etched into the minds of his readers.

The most important aspect of all Haque's novels is his passion -- he never narrated a story just for the sake of storytelling. He analysed the characters elaborately and revealed their inter-relationships. One trait

that set Haque's novels apart is their slenderness. The thin volume, however, should not be considered a disadvantage, as it takes remarkable restraint and skills for a writer to express himself in limited words.

The subjects of Haque's novels are pragmatic and relevant. His inimitability lay in simplified articulation. He disliked complicated language. That however, does not mean that Haque's language was mundane and uninteresting; rather it was marked with subtlety and remarkable savour.

Mahmudul Haque first emerged as a short story writer in the mid-1960s, when the then East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) produced a number of outstanding poets, novelists and writers like Mahadev Saha, Shahid Kadri, Rafiq Azad, Belal Chowdhury and Rabiul Hussain. Haque's first novel came out in 1973. Since then -- after long pauses -- a total of six novels were authored by him: "Anur Pathshala", "Nirapod Tandra", "Jibon Amar Bon", "Matir Jahaj", "Kalo Baraf" and "Khelghar".

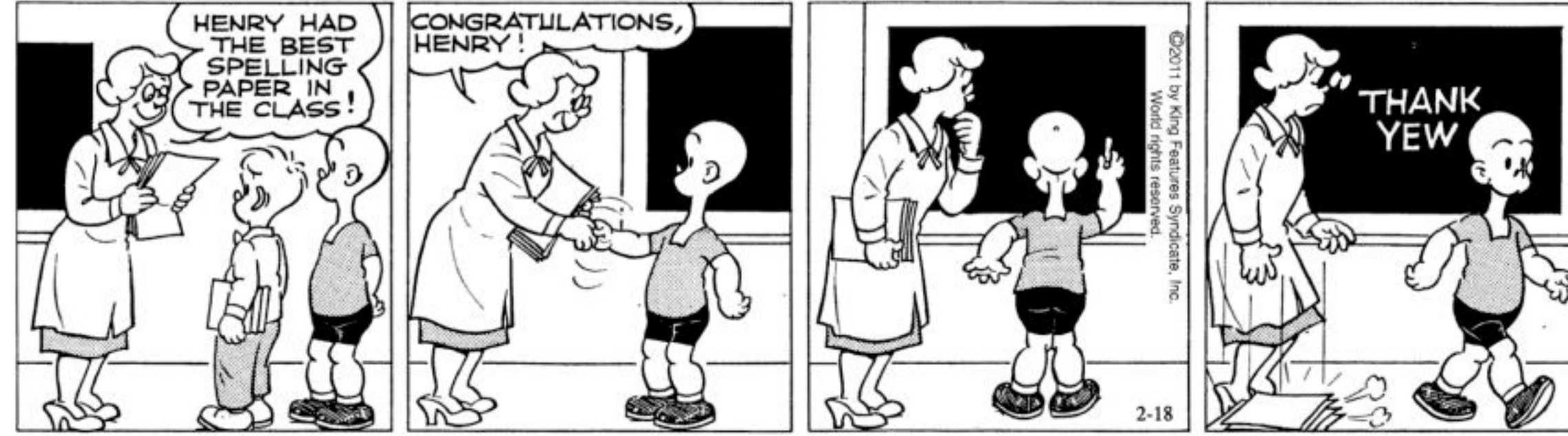
## Beetle Baily

by Mort Walker



## Henry

by Don Tranchte



**Boro Bhalobashi Gaan**  
On Boishakhi TV at 08:40pm  
Documentary  
Guest: Indra Mohar Rajbongshi

**Jhatpat Ifar**  
On ATN BANGLA at 04:45pm  
Cookery Show  
Host: Mumun

**Lethal Weapon 3**  
On HBO at 07:00pm  
Genre: Action/Crime  
Cast: Mel Gibson, Danny Glover & Joe Pesci

**The Business Show**  
03:30 Alakoto Path  
05:30 Ramzan Protidin  
08:35 Boro Bhalobashi Gaan  
11:00 Reporters Dairy

**BANGLAVISION**  
11:10 Bangla Feature Film  
04:05 Ramzan O Amader Jibon  
05:15 Qur'an-er Alo  
07:00 Style File  
11:25 Music Club

**Rtv**  
10:40 Tarokalap  
12:35 Bangla Feature Film  
09:05 Drama Serial: Boyra Paribar  
09:50 Lucky Line  
12:05 Ghar-e-Utshab

**Desh TV**  
05:00 Durpath  
06:20 Ramzan Protidin  
07:45 Drama Serial: Saatkaalon  
09:45 Bhalobashar Saat Gaan  
12:30 Total Sports

**Diganta TV**  
03:00 Drama Serial: Ekki Ganchal  
08:10 Down out with us  
11:45 Sports 24

**ATN BANGLA**  
09:20pm Posh Phaguner Pala  
CHANNEL 1  
07:50pm Bayanno Gofir Er Gof  
ntv  
09:45pm Dakhinajoner Din  
ETV  
09:30pm Kamini  
Boishakhi TV  
09:20pm Dgripath  
BANGLAVISION

**NEWS BULLETIN**  
Boishakhi TV  
News (Bangla) at 10am, 2pm, 7pm, 9pm  
News (English) at 10am, 6pm  
BANGLAVISION  
News (Bangla) at 9am, 2pm, 7:30pm, 10:30pm  
News (English) at 1pm, 3pm, 6pm, 9pm.  
Rtv  
News (Bangla) at 1:40pm, 6:40pm, 10:40pm.  
Desh TV  
News (Bangla) at 2pm, 7pm, 9pm, 11pm.  
ETV  
News (Bangla) at 1pm, 3pm, 5pm, 7pm, 9pm, 11pm.

**TALK SHOW**  
ATN BANGLA  
12:30am Lead News  
CHANNEL 1  
11:30pm Aloy Bhabon Bhabo  
ntv  
12:30am B Shomoy  
ETV  
12:05am Bushey-er Raat  
Boishakhi TV

**Boishakhi TV**  
08:15pm Bokuapure Jatri  
Rtv  
08:15pm Side Effect  
Desh TV  
08:15pm Radio Chocolate  
Maaranga Television  
08:30pm Khonkholi  
CHANNEL 9  
08:30pm Babehor the Family  
CHANNEL 24  
09:30pm Paa Rakhechhi Jashone

**Boishakhi TV**  
11:30pm Our Democracy  
Desh TV  
11:45pm Shuja Katha  
Maaranga Television  
12:00am Shangeok  
CHANNEL 24  
12:05am Modhyasat Muktak

**Boishakhi TV**  
12:00am Zero Hour  
Rtv  
11:30pm Our Democracy  
Desh TV  
11:45pm Shuja Katha  
Maaranga Television  
12:00am Shangeok  
CHANNEL 24  
12:05am Modhyasat Muktak

**Boishakhi TV**  
12:00am Zero Hour  
Rtv  
11:30pm Our Democracy  
Desh TV  
11:45pm Shuja Katha  
Maaranga Television  
12:00am Shangeok  
CHANNEL 24  
12:05am Modhyasat Muktak