

**WHAT'S ON**

**Bengal-ITC SRA Classical Music Fest**  
Organisers: Bengal Foundation & ITC-SRA  
Venue: Army Stadium, Baranai, Dhaka  
Date: Nov 29-Dec2

**Print Exhibition**  
Title: Chapai Chobi-1  
Venue: Galleri Kaya, H-20, R-16, Sector 4, Uttara  
Date: November 24-December 4  
Time: 11am-7:30pm

**Int'l Theatre Festival**  
Organiser: Theatre Art Unit  
Venue: Shilpakala Academy  
Date: November 14-24  
Time: 6:30pm

**Theatre**  
Play: Shesh Shunglap  
Troupe: Shomoy Natyadal  
Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, Shilpakala Academy  
Date: November 24

**Group Art Exhibition**  
Venue: Gallery Cosmos-2, New DOHS, Mahabali  
Date: Nov 16-24  
Time: 11am-8pm

**Solo Art Exhibition**  
Artist: Mike Woodcock  
Venue: Institute of Art and Culture, Gulshan  
Date: Nov 15-30  
Time: 12pm-8pm

**Solo Art Exhibition**  
Artist: Sabrina Mezzaqui  
Venue: Bengal Art Lounge, Gulshan  
Date: Nov 9-22  
Time: 12pm-8pm

**Commemorative Programme**  
Title: Remembering Sunil Gangopadhyay  
Venue: Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre, Gulshan-1

# Aim to promote their talent

Cultural programme for differently-abled children

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, *Pabna*

A two-day cultural and sports competition for differently-abled children from five districts, organised by SWID Bangladesh and Special Olympic Sub Chapter, Pabna unit, concluded recently. The programme aimed to launch special Olympics for them.

The cultural programme was held at Pabna Town Hall premises on Friday night. Earlier the children took part in painting, music and cultural competitions at the same venue. One hundred and twenty nine children from Pabna, Natore, Bogra, Sirajganj and Rajshahi district participated in the competition.

A sports competition was held in Pabna stadium on Saturday.

Lawmaker of Pabna-5 constituency Golam Faruk Khandaker Prince distributed prizes among the children.

Pabna Deputy Commissioner, Mostafizur Rahman distributed prizes among the winners of the two days competition as the chief guest. Among other veteran lawyer Advocate Jahir Ali Kaderi; Chairman of Pabna Sadar upazila parishad Mosharaf Hossain, and president of SWID Bangladesh Zawharul Islam spoke on the occasion.

Such competitions will promote the talent of the differently-abled children. We have to give them scope so that they can display their talent, the speakers said on the occasion.

Earlier the children participated in cultural events.

# Prachyanat holds three-day street theatre fest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As part of its yearlong celebration marking its 15th anniversary, one of the leading Bangladeshi theatre troupes, Prachyanat, arranged a three-day street theatre festival at the amphitheatre inside Suhrawardi Udyan in Dhaka. The festival took place on November 15 to 17. Nine plays by seven troupes were staged at the festival.

Veteran theatre personality Mamunur Rashid inaugurated the festival. Among others, Azad Abul Kalam, chief of Prachyanat; and Indian theatre personalities Bivash Chakraborty and Banshi Kaul, who were in Dhaka to attend the Theatre Art Unit festival, spoke at the inaugural programme.

Prachyanat staged three plays at the festival. The invited troupes were the theatre wing of Udichi; Oikik Theatre; Opera Theatre; Natyabed; Jahangirnagar Theatre (Auditorium) and Jahangirnagar Theatre (TSC).

Prachyanat staged "Lash-er Desh", "Gorto" and "Bish Panchali" at the festival. "Lash-er Desh" has been directed by Saiful Islam, while the others have been directed by Kazi Taufiqul Islam.

Each day featured staging of three plays. A huge turnout enjoyed the plays, especially the evening shows, as many Dhakaites like to come to the park to relax.

Apart from staging plays, the organisers honoured three talented and young female actors, one



on each day. The awardees are: Samiun Jahan (Dhaka Theatre), Jyoti Sinha (Manipuri Theatre) and Fauzia Karim (Theatre Art Unit).

Samiun has impressed audiences with her memorable performances in "Nimajjon" and "Tempest". Jyoti Sinha is the lead female actor of her troupe, while Fauzia Karim has been performing as lead actress in several plays including "Amina Shundari" and "Shesher Kobita".

In between shows, Prachyanat members entertained the audience with songs from their popular productions.

On the last day, after staging of three plays, the festival came to an end with a brief performance of traditional *lathi khela*.

The festival slogan was "Poth Chherona Pother Manush".



The festival was held at the amphitheatre inside Suhrawardi Udyan.



TAKIR HOSSAIN

Under the title "Nostalgia and Reality", Toronto Public Library in Don Mills, Canada has organised a solo painting exhibition, featuring the works of Bangladeshi expatriate painter Babul Mahmood. The exhibition was inaugurated recently and will continue till November 30. This is his sixth solo painting exhibition.

Babul's paintings feature bold colours, forms of different objects like kite, spinning top (Latim), fish and natai. Strong brush strokes and subtle expression of spirit are also two significant traits of his paintings. He is an experimental painter and has identified himself inextricably with the cultural heritage of Bangladesh.

The artist told The Daily Star over the telephone, "All the way through my journey as an artist, I have concentrated on themes like childhood dreams, the underwater world and diverse social calamities. Childhood nostalgia is one of my beloved subjects.

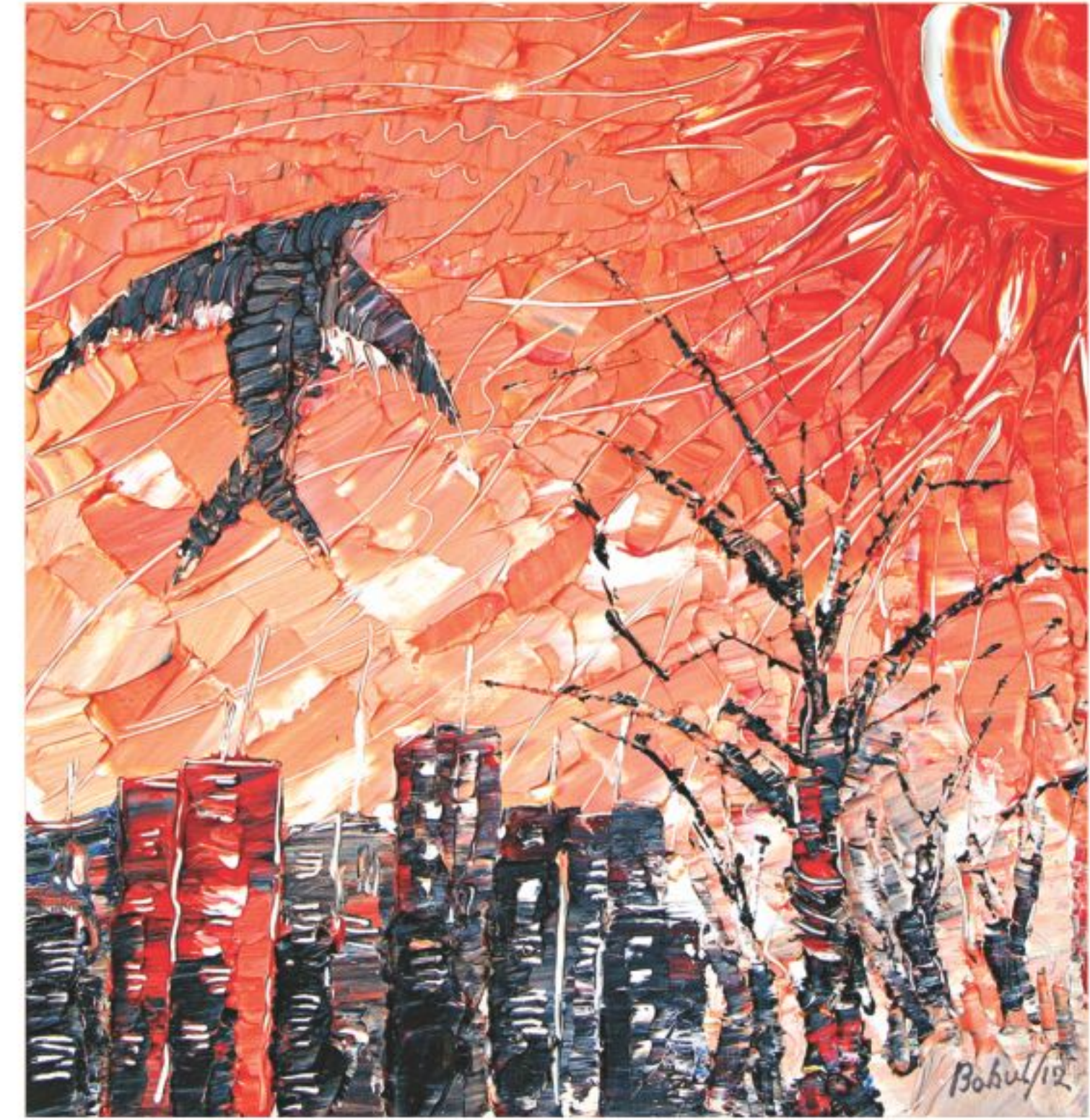
"My 'Underwater World' series inspired me when I visited Saint Martin's Island. I discover a joyful and free-roaming life under water. I strive to represent the vibrant life of small fish, green shrubbery and unknown foliage all in the watery world."

Emerald green, crimson, azure, black, yellow, white and red are used predominantly, giving a fascinating approach to Babul's paintings. The strong backgrounds give the viewers a romantic and imposing view.

The painter cherishes childhood nostalgia, when life was

# Highlighting childhood nostalgia

## Babul Mahmood's solo painting exhibition in Toronto



Artworks by Babul Mahmood.

carefree and everything was possible. Spinning top and flying kites were part of that passion. He has concentrated on the theme of childhood and has tried to capture the theme in different forms, colours and shapes. Adroit application of light and shade are evident accomplishments, besides restless curves, round-square forms, rectangular-triangular and broken lines. This is because playing with forms is the foremost aspect of Babul's works.

Babul considers pure colour to be the most effective way to express emotions and sensitivity. He believes that colour approaches

# A Progressive Mind

## 124th birth anniversary of Mohammad Nasiruddin



Nasiruddin was a progressive man and wanted his daughter to be the same. He had wanted to bring women into journalism. He started an annual women's issue of 'Saogat' in 1927. Every year, one issue of the monthly would be dedicated exclusively to women, with writings by female writers. However, it seemed to Nasiruddin that one women's issue per year was not really doing much to improve the situation of women in journalism and, in turn, society. Thus, in 1947, a month before India's partition, the weekly 'Begum' was first published in

Calcutta. Its first editor was Sufia Kamal, and acting editor, Nurjahan Begum (daughter of Mohammad Nasiruddin).

Nasiruddin printed the photographs of poets, litterateurs, historians and educated Muslim women in the journal in spite of vehement protest of conservative Muslims. Through cartoons he sharply pointed at the anomalies prevailing in the society.

After the partition, Nasiruddin opted for East Bengal and settled in Dhaka wherefrom the 'Saogat' began to appear again regularly since 1954.

Nasiruddin was a fellow of Bangla Academy, a member of the Board of Trustees of the Bangladesh National Museum, and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Nazrul Institute. He received the Bangla Academy Award (1975), Ekushey Padak (1977) and Shadinota Padak. He introduced the 'Nasiruddin Gold Medal' in 1976 to be awarded among the creative writers and journalists. He breathed his last on May 21 in 1994 in Dhaka.

Compiled by Correspondent

# Songs from Gitanjali hold sway over Chittagong audience



Members of Raktakarabi sing at the programme.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

SHAHENOUR AKTHER URMI, *Chittagong*

Last weekend, music aficionados of the port city attended "Gitanjali'r Gaan" -- featuring solo, duet, and choral renditions of songs, as well as poetry from Tagore's Nobel Prize winning "Gitanjali".

To mark 100 years of publication of "Gitanjali", for which Rabindranath Tagore was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1913, 'Raktakarabi', an acclaimed cultural troupe in the port city, organised the programme at Theatre Institute Chittagang (TIC) Auditorium.

Compiled and planned by Uday Sankar Das, and directed by eminent Tagore exponent Shila Momen, the programme featured three dances, 13 songs and one poetry recitation.

The event teamed with Tagore aficionados and many of them had to enjoy the programme standing on the aisle as the auditorium's capacity was unable to contain the rush. The programme started with a short discussion on Tagore's "Gitanjali" and its English version, "Song Offerings".

Professor Ferdous Ara Alam, educationist and writer, and Professor Abul Mansur of Fine Arts Department of

Chittagong University addressed the gathering. Shila Momen, in her welcome speech, briefly described the background and purpose of the programme.

In her speech, Ferdous Ara Alam briefed the audience on how Tagore wrote the manuscript of "Song Offerings", the translated version of "Gitanjali", and captured the hearts of eminent poets, scholars and literary connoisseurs like W.B. Yeats, William Rothenstein and Ezra Pound.

Recalling Tagore's contributions to the Bangla arts and literary arena, Professor Abul Mansur said that he favoured the tunes and rhythms of the songs composed by Tagore over the poems in "Gitanjali" as the tunes leave a lasting impression on him.

The programme started with a performance by Manipuri dance exponent Tamanna Rahman to the verses "Tumi Kemon Korey Gaan Koro" and its English version rendered by Uday Sankar Das and Subrata Das.

Following the opening performance, a choral rendition of "Ekti Nomoskar" by artistes of Raktakarabi enthralled the audience.

Recitation of descriptions and backgrounds of the songs and themes in between the performances were an added bonus for Tagore enthusiasts.

# Jackie Chan: Upcoming film will be last big action movie



Jackie Chan gestures in front of a car before having his Bentley 666 auctioned for charity in Beijing.

PHOTO: REUTERS

REUTERS, Beijing

Kung Fu superstar Jackie Chan said that while the upcoming film "Chinese Zodiac 2012" will be his last major action movie, citing his increasing age, he will still be packing punches in the world of philanthropy.

Chan wrote, directed and produced his latest film, set to premiere in cinemas in China next month. He also plays the lead role and said that he regarded it the "best film for myself" in the last ten years.

"I'm the director, I'm the writer, I'm the producer, I'm the action director, almost everything," the 58-year-old Hong Kong actor told Reuters while in Beijing to film a documentary.

"This really, really is my baby. You know, I've been writing the script for seven years," and the film took a year and half to make, he added.

In the film, Chan is a treasure hunter seeking to repatriate sculpture heads of the 12 animals of the Chinese zodiac, which were taken from Beijing's Summer Palace by French and British forces during the Opium Wars.

He said it was an important movie for him because it will be his last major action feature, although he insisted it is not the end of his action career.

"I'm not young any more, honestly," he said, noting that with special effects technology and doubles a lot can be done without physical risk.

"Why (do) I have to use my own life to still do these kind of things?" he said. "I will still do as much as I can. But I just don't want to risk my life to sit in a wheelchair, that's all."

Chan was recently awarded the Social Philanthropist of the Year award by Harpers Bazaar magazine. He said he wanted to increase time devoted to charitable work and hoped China's leagues of newly wealthy will follow his example - which he underlined by auctioning a Bentley 666 for around 6 million yuan (\$961,837).



Dr. Zafar Iqbal speaks at the programme.

# The mystic in perspective

## Lalon's songs move the audience

SUSHANTA GHOSHI, *Barisal*

'Lalon Sandhya', an event dedicated to the mystic bard Lalon, was held recently in Barisal calling for a study of his philosophy to combat religious fundamentalism and prevent commercialisation of Lalon's songs.

Gano Shilpi Sangstha organised the programme at Ashwini Kumar Hall in the city. The event was presided over by Shanti Das, president of the organisation.



PHOTO: STAR

Local artistes sing a Lalon song.

Among others, Akkas Hossain, Manabendra Batobayal and Nazrul Islam Chinnu discussed the life and philosophy of Lalon.

The speakers said Lalon sought to answer universal and existentialist questions beyond any particular

religious faith.

Lalon believed in a loving relationship between the benevolent creator and his creation, and believed that a person who refuses to respect and honour humanity goes against the

creator, they explained.

Lalon uniquely combined both esoteric discourses and the tradition of mendicant singers. His songs were popular but at the same time esoteric with metaphoric riddles and enig-

# Faridpur celebrates Humayun Ahmed

REZAUL KARIM, *Faridpur*

A five-day long 'Humayun Mela', was held at Kobi Jasimuddin Hall premises of the town in Faridpur to mark the 64th birth anniversary (November 13) of noted litterateur Humayun Ahmed.

Humayun Ahmed Jonmo Utshab Parishad arranged the fair.

Educationalists, poets, artists, litterateurs, journalist along with people from different walks of life attended the fair. Ahmed's brothers Dr. Muhammad Zafar Iqbal and cartoonist Ahsan Habib, and Afroza Amin (wife of Ahsan Habib) were present at the fair.

To celebrate the day, a big cake was cut and a rally was brought out from Kobi Jasimuddin Hall premises, parading the Mujib Sarkar and its adjoining area. A blood donation programme and quiz competition were arranged by Sachetan Nagorik Committee (SANAK), a wing of Transparency International of Bangladesh (TIB).

Faridpur CDL presented a debate competition while Faridpur 'Abitri Sangshad' recited "Nibedito Pongtimala" on the occasion.

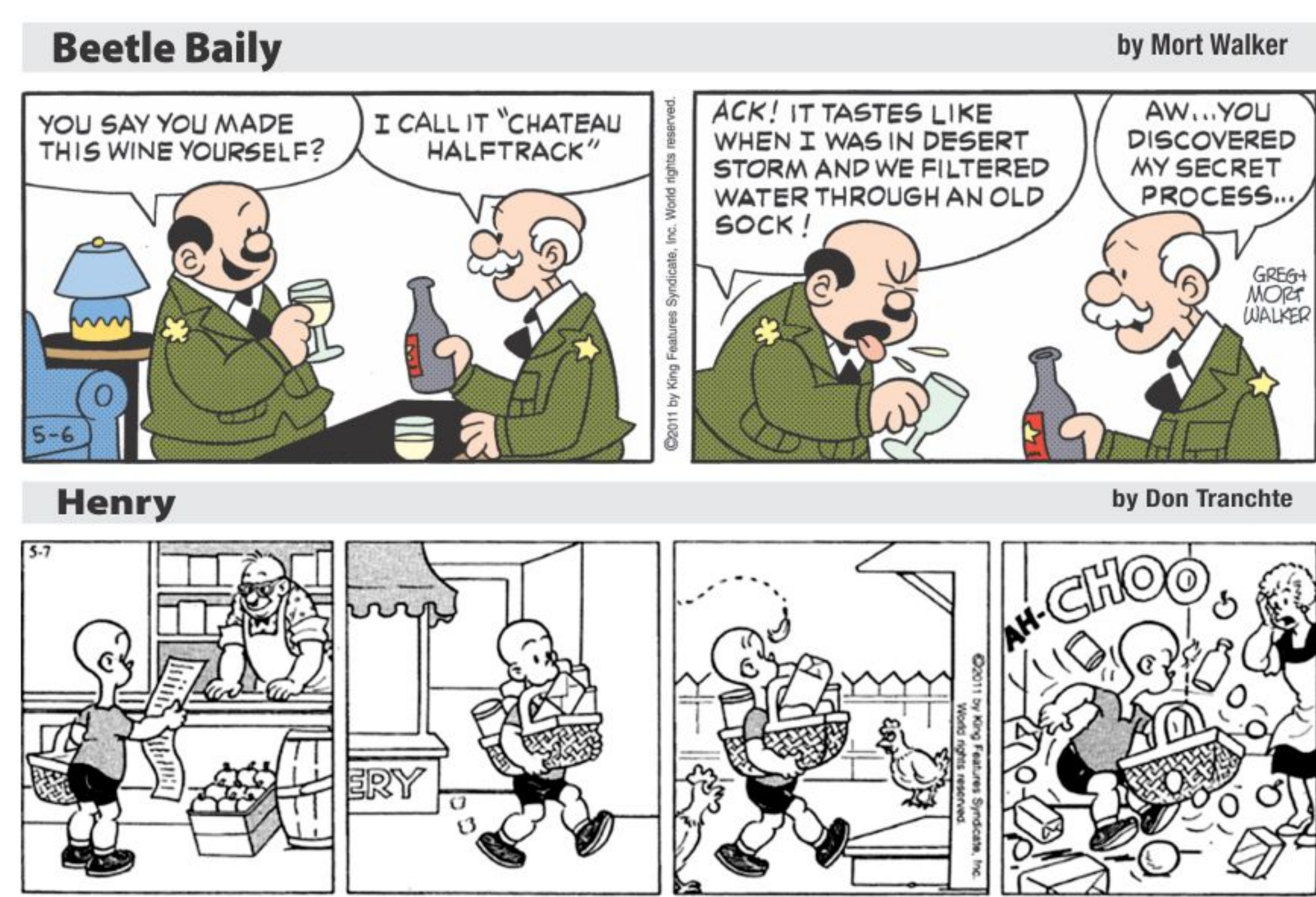
The five-day long fair also witnessed the film screening of "Humayun Ahmed-er Din Ratir", "Ekjon Durbol Manush"

and "Jhonthu Montu Dui Bhai" directed by Raju Alam. Meanwhile huge photographs, posters, rare sketches, books of Humayun Ahmed collected by acclaimed photographer Nasir Ali Mamun were exhibited at the fair.

Dr. Muhammad Zafar Iqbal and Ahsan Habib attended as chief guests in the commemoration programmes -- "Humayun Kotha" and "Amar Bhai Humayun" respectively -- on the occasion.

Dr. Muhammad Zafar Iqbal said, Humayun Ahmed was a litterateur, an artist, a dramatist and a filmmaker. He created a new generation of readers and fans in the country through his writings and creations. As Humayun was a nature lover, he taught us how to enjoy a moonlit night or rain. Although some critics take pride in calling Humayun's writings "silly", they actually enjoy his works secretly, he mentioned.

Educationalist Kazi Zainul Abedin, administrator, Faridpur Zila Parishad; veteran journalist Jagodish Chandra Ghosh; Zamil Hasan, Superintendent of Police in Faridpur; Sheikh Mahabata Ali, Mayor of Faridpur Municipality; Professor Hasina Banu, principal, Govt. Saroda Shundari Mohila College; Professor Alaf Hossain; columnist Mazid Imam Milon and cultural personality Shamim Ara Begum attended the fair. Singer Sipra Goswami performed songs on the occasion.



by Mort Walker

by Don Tranchte

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