

Stefan Haditanojo (AKA Navetsea) is the artist of these pictures. He lives in Malang, East Java, Indonesia, and provides the following comments briefly describing various pictures.



Slippery Pole Climbing (Panjat Pinang) was first designed by Dutch occupants to make fun of poor indigenous people while watching them climb and fall, covered in mud to get their presents, a hilarious spectacle to watch. Afterward somehow local people adopted it not as an insult but as a symbol of working together and prevalence spirit that is celebrated on our independence day.

It is still mostly practiced in villages where people and children are not afraid of climbing trees nor thinking about hospital bills in case anything bad would happen, we who live in the city only watch them on TV news, so I have zero personal experience in this.

The pole-climbing event is usually erected on a muddy area, or a little bit slanting over a river, I went with muddy "pond" thus the rectangle zone under the pole. However, I do not think making the children covered in mud is suitable or attractive for this picture, so all in all it is a bit of exaggeration for a cartoony feeling.

It can be categorized under celebration activity, or racing as they race to the top, to get presents for their group, actually it has enough presents for all participants so the ones who support their friends who climb over him also get something for their contribution, all in all it is designed so people have to cooperate to reach the top, so it is not a real competition.

Bakiak Racing (Balap Bakiak) teams wearing long (ski blade like) wooden platforms or sandals collectively, and rhythmically step as fast as possible to reach the finish line before the opposite team. A team consisting of two people or more wears the long wooden platform or sandal with multiple straps. The team that finishes first would be the winner, or at least get into the next round to race against other winners and so on.

Sack racing (Balap Karung) is where people step into a sack; hold the edges with both hands, and jump/ hop to the finish line.

Turtle Racing has other variants with a round track, but I choose this one. This is also a fun race and more of a celebrative activity rather than competition.

These activities are quite common on national holidays (like Independence Day) among people who live in more tradition bound areas. These are family activities, so everybody can participate, and are not so much about sport or performance, but only for fun to celebrate the holiday. Today I think they are still practiced occasionally, but more common in areas with stronger traditional values (less TV and less Internet) like rural areas. As you might be aware, globally MMORPG has replaced children's outdoor activities. I'm not sure kids can fly a kite anymore, or play with marbles so this kind of activity is dying out here

Tug Of War (Tarik Tambang) is also a celebrative event rather than a race. The rope pulling competition consists of two teams opposite each other holding a rope and trying to pull the rope to their side until the other losing team either lets go of the rope or passes a line on the ground.

Pig Racing is not practiced here in the city, but may be a popular event in some outlying islands. I tried to design several pig faces, but for a cartoony picture I feel that this round face is cuter than a more realistic pig face.

Marching Band every celebration has a band.

Heritage Celebration This is an annual event in our city celebrating the "good old times" by decorating the main street of the colonial era residential area with bamboo shacks, stalls, and period memorabilia. People who rent them for the event will sell traditional food, clothes, and items from the past or replicas. It usually starts in May or early June and runs from Thursday to Sunday afternoon. Some people also dress in matching clothes of the era, either colonial, independence wartime, or pre-colonial Hindu/Buddhist kingdom era.