

WHAT'S ON

Victory Day Celebration
Organiser: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy
Venue: Shilpakala Academy premises

Theatre
Play: Debotar Grash
Troupe: Manipuri Theatre
Venue: Studio Theatre Hall, Shilpakala Academy
Date: December 29

Solo Art Exhibition
Artist: Abdu Shukur Shah
Venue: Gallery Chitra, R-6, H-A, Dhanmondi
Date: Dec 27-Jan 10
Time: 10am-8pm

Solo Art Exhibition
Artist: Shahabuddin Ahmed
Venue: National Museum, Shahbagh,
Date: Dec 18-28
Time: 10am-3:30pm (Friday: 3-8:30pm)

Solo Exhibition
Title: Enlightened Area
Artist: Sajid Bin Doza
Venue: Alliance Francaise de Dhaka, Dharamondi
Date: Dec 30-Jan 12

Shamisen Meets South Asia
Organiser: Embassy of Japan
Venue: National Music and Dance auditorium, Shilpakala Academy
Date: December 28, Time: 7pm

National Folk Music Fest 2010-2011
Organiser: Bangladesh Lok Sangeet Parishad
Venue: Dhaka
Date: Dec 30, 31

Group Art Exhibition
Title: Crossover
Venue: Dhaka Art Centre, Dharamondi
Date: Dec 23-28
Time: 3pm-9pm

Three Day Rabindra Utshab by Shurer Dhara

Rehearsal in full swing



Rezwana Chowdhury Bannya (R) oversees rehearsal session at Lalmatia Mahila Collage.

ZAHANGIR ALAM

To mark the 150th birth anniversary of Tagore, music school Shurer Dhara plans to hold a three-day Rabindra Utshab at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the festival on December 29 while Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen Sen will launch the album series (22 DVDs) titled "Shruti Geetabitan" at the inaugural programme. Four hundred Bangladeshi Tagore singers have recorded all the songs (2300) of Geetabitan, composed by Rabindranath Tagore.

Noted Indian composer and music conductor Debojyoti Mishra (Kolkata) will conduct a musical orchestra that will set off the inaugural day's event. A number of Shurer Dhara artists along with almost a thousand Tagore singers across the country will take part in the exclusive musical extravaganza.

The artistes will lend their voices to 12 Tagore songs, including "Aguner Poroshmoni", "Akash Bhora Surja Tara", "Kanna Hasir Dol Dolano", "O Amar Desh-er Mati", "Gram Chhara Oi Ranga Mati Poth" and "Dui Haat-e Kaler Mondira Je Shodai Bajey".

"I have used both Eastern and Western instruments like harmonium, sitar, sarod, pakhawaj, violin, viola, cello, woodwinds, etc., in composing the songs so that it can have a universal appeal of melody. I am happy to

conduct such a huge live musical orchestra," said Debojyoti Mishra.

Noted Tagore exponents, poets, litterateurs, and educationists from both Bangladesh and India, including Dr. Zillur Rahman Siddiqui, Professor Syed Manzoorul Islam, Professor Fakhrul Alam, Professor Rafiqul Islam, Professor Dr. Atiur Rahman, Litterateur Selina Hossain, Shankha Ghosh, Amiya Dev, Ramkumar Chattopadhyay, Sushabhan Adhikari, Ketaki Kushari Dison, Alpina Roy and Kumkum Bhattacharya will conduct eight seminars at the venue. Starting from 10 am four seminars will be held everyday (December 30-31) and will continue till 4 pm. Finance Minister AMA Muhith will be present as chief guest on the concluding day (December 31) of the programme.

"A 35-member international orchestra named "Gandharva Loka Orchestra", featuring star musicians and singers from over 15 countries: USA, Canada, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, France, the UK, Scotland, the Netherlands, Columbia, Brazil, Poland, Slovakia, Macedonia, Iceland and New Zealand will also perform Tagore songs at the programme.

Panchajanya Burri will lead the orchestra," said director of Shurer Dhara, Rezwana Chowdhury Bannya.

"A troupe from Jalpaiguri, India, will stage a Tagore dance drama "ChandaliKa" on the inaugural day while another troupe from Shantiniketan will stage "Chitrangada", another

dance drama by Tagore, on the concluding day of the festival," added Bannya, also secretary of the festival council.

Starting from December 21, a rehearsal session is on at Lalmatia Mahila Collage, in Dhaka. More than a thousand artistes took part in a demo musical session yesterday both at the college playground and inside the auditorium. Rezwana Chowdhury Bannya, Debojyoti Mishra, Tagore singer Lily Islam, Shurer Dhara Teacher Himadhi Shekhor, Panchajanya Burri and others were present on the occasion.

Apart from this, Shurer Dhara artistes and Nagarik Nityangan will stage the Tagore plays "Kalmrigoya" and "Achalayan" respectively at the festival.

Choreographed by noted dancers Sharmila Bandyopadhyay and Tamanna Rahman, artistes of Nrotyanandan and Nriyayam will perform dances at the festival while five Bangladeshi dance troupes will showcase their performances on the concluding day.

Two documentary films "Rabindranath" by Satyajit Ray and "Bangladeshe-Rabindranath" by Chanchal Khan) will be screened at the festival. Bangladeshi designers Emdad Haque and Kaniz Almas will showcase the life of Tagore and several of his literary characters through their costumes.

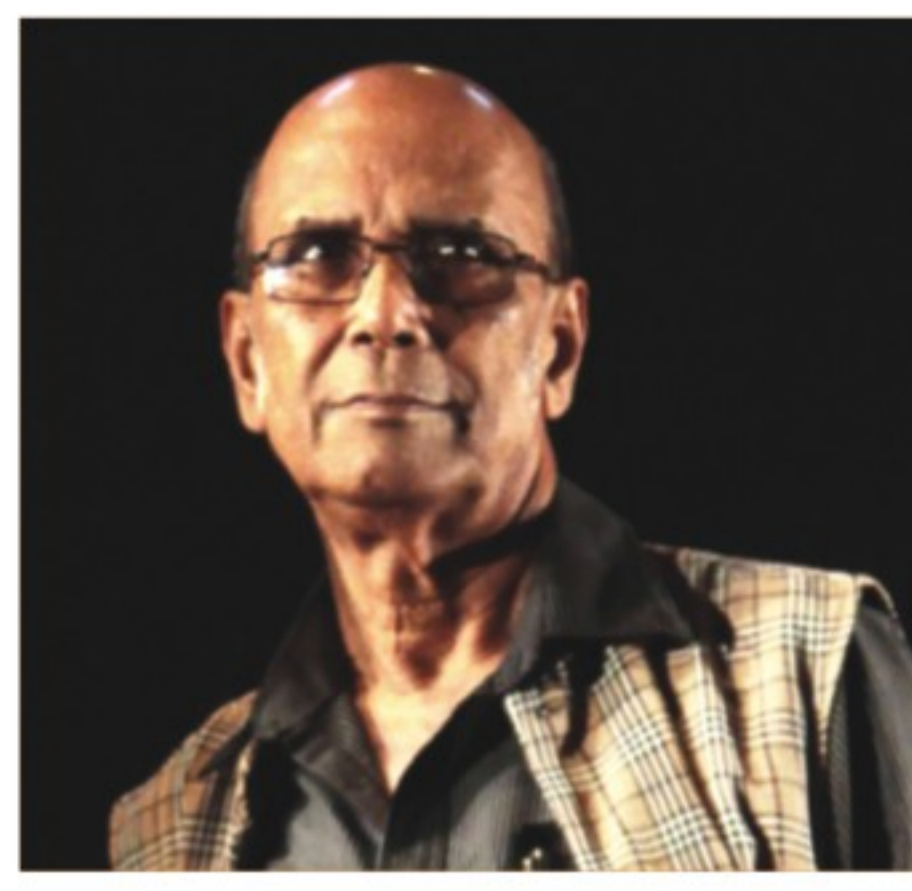
Professor Emeritus Anisuzzaman is the president of the festival council. The daily Prabhat Alo and Channel i are the media partners of the festival.

Syed Shamsul Haq turns 76 today

A CORRESPONDENT

Eminent poet, novelist and playwright Syed Shamsul Haq celebrates his 76th birthday today. On the occasion, a number of cultural and literary organisations will hold discussions, recitation and cultural programmes.

Haq was born in Kurigram in 1935. He is one of the most active figures in our literary field. In the early '60s, he introduced unique themes and style through his poetry and novels. His poems are unpretentious and uncomplicated and so captivate readers. His style and tone are unique. His poems focus on Bengali culture and tradition, romanticism, patriotism, nature, liberty and the Liberation War. He also writes plays, novels, rhymes, essays and short stories. In novels and short stories, Haq's writings delve deep into varied social, political and economic issues.



The poet has been honoured with the Adamjee Literary Award, Shadhinota Padak, Ekushey Padak, Padabali Kobita Award, Mazharul Islam Poetry Award, Nasiruddin Gold Medal, National Poetry Award and more.

Liberation War on canvas Group exhibition at Bengal Gallery



Dignitaries at the inaugural session of the exhibition.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To celebrate the 40th anniversary of Independence, Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts has organised a group exhibition titled "40of Struggle and Creativity", featuring the works of celebrated painters in our country. The exhibition is now on at Bengal Gallery, Dharamondi.

Among the 40 participating painters are Qayyum Chowdhury, Syed Jahangir, Samarjit Roy Chowdhury, Rafiqun Nabi, Monirul Islam, Mahmudul Haque, Biren Shome, ShahidKabir, Ranjit Das, Mohammad Iqbal, Anisuzzaman and others.

Belal Mohammad, one of the organisers of Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra, inaugurated the exhibition on December 25 as chief guest. Dr Sarwar Ali, trustee of Liberation War Museum; Mijarul Kayes, Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs were present as special guests. Sabir Chowdhury, director of Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts and artist Qayyum Chowdhury spoke on the occasion. The exhibition will continue till January 3.

National Folk Music festival held in port city



Veteran folk song composer, lyricist and artist Abdul Ghafur Hali inaugurated the programme.

PRANABESH CHAKRABORTY, Chittagong

Music enthusiasts of the port city enjoyed a plethora of folk songs at the day long National Folk Music Festival on December 24. Composers, lyricists and folk song artists from 11 districts of the country assembled on the occasion at district Shilpakala Academy auditorium. The festival was part of a country wide programme organised by Bangladesh Loko Sangeet Parishad (BLS) and supported Bangladesh National Commission and UNESCO. The countrywide programme began on November 18.

In Chittagong, veteran local and folk song composer, lyricist and artist Abdul Ghafur Hali inaugurated the programme as chief guest.

The festival featured performances by seasoned and upcoming talents in multifarious folk songs like Marfati, Murshidi, Bhatiali, Bhawaya, local songs, Lalon geeti, and songs of Hasan Raja.

The festival started with a seminar following a colourful procession that paraded through important thoroughfares of the city. Artists and composers as well as music enthusiasts took part in the celebrations.

Primary and Mass Education Minister Asfarul Amin addressed the programme as chief guest with cultural personality Md Abul Rahim in the chair.

Prof Sheikh Golam Sarwar Mohiuddin of Mostafizur Rahman College presented the keynote paper at the seminar.

Professor Mohammad Abul Kasem of Chittagong University (CU), central Chief Coordinator of the festival Indramohan Rajbangshi and folk songs

collector Md Faridul Haque Ihantu delivered speeches as special guests at the programme.

The minister said that the present government had pledged to promote folk culture. He urged all conscious people to come forward to preserve the invaluable resource of the country and help the government in preserving folk culture and collecting folk and local songs.

In his keynote speech, Mostafizur said our country has a rich cultural tradition of festivals and songs. Recalling the significant contributions of Kobial Sheikh, Achinta Kumar and MN Akhter, he said without nurturing its roots and traditions no country could evolve.

Indramohan urged the government to build an institute in the country to preserve the invaluable resources of folk music. The second session started with a group performance by the artistes of the organisation followed by renditions by 24 new generation artistes performing compositions of their own districts.

Many indigenous and local songs like "Mikhangla bama helile", "Na chang jabar ei", "Ango bari" performed by Oye Pruchin Marma, Rafique Amin and RatanMishra Bhaumik got a loud round of applause from the audience.

The programme concluded with the renditions by veteran artistes.

Abul Kalam Azad, Nasrin Ferdous, Swapan Mijan, AK Azad, Indramohan Rajbangshi, Hiryanang Das,Prithvi Rajbangshi, Tabssum Riya performe songs at the event.

The Daily Star is the media partner of the festival.

THEATRE TODAY "Young activists are less interested in literature"

--Ruma Modak, playwright, Jiban Sanket, Habiganj

JAMIL MAHMUD

Ruma Modak, one of very few young playwrights in these times, feels that young people are not interested in opting for her way, that is, in writing plays for the stage. They are rather more interested in writing plays for TV channels. "Maybe money is a factor here. But their lack of dedication to literature hurts me," she says. Ruma started writing plays in 1998. Her debut play "Kamolobotr Pala" (based on a local myth) for her troupe Jiban Sanket, Habiganj, was an on-stage success. Then she started seriously to think about becoming a playwright. "After the play's success I started to read Selim Al Deen's writings. Subsequently I wrote 'Bibhajan' for my troupe. The plot caught the eyes of Al Deen. Later he praised my writing over phone, which I consider as a great achievement in my life," said Ruma, who completed her masters in Bangla literature from the University of Dhaka.

Later she penned several more plays for her troupe, including "Rokeya Chari", "Shadharon Meye" and "Strir Patro" (the latter two are based on Rabindranath Tagore's writings). "Strir Patro"



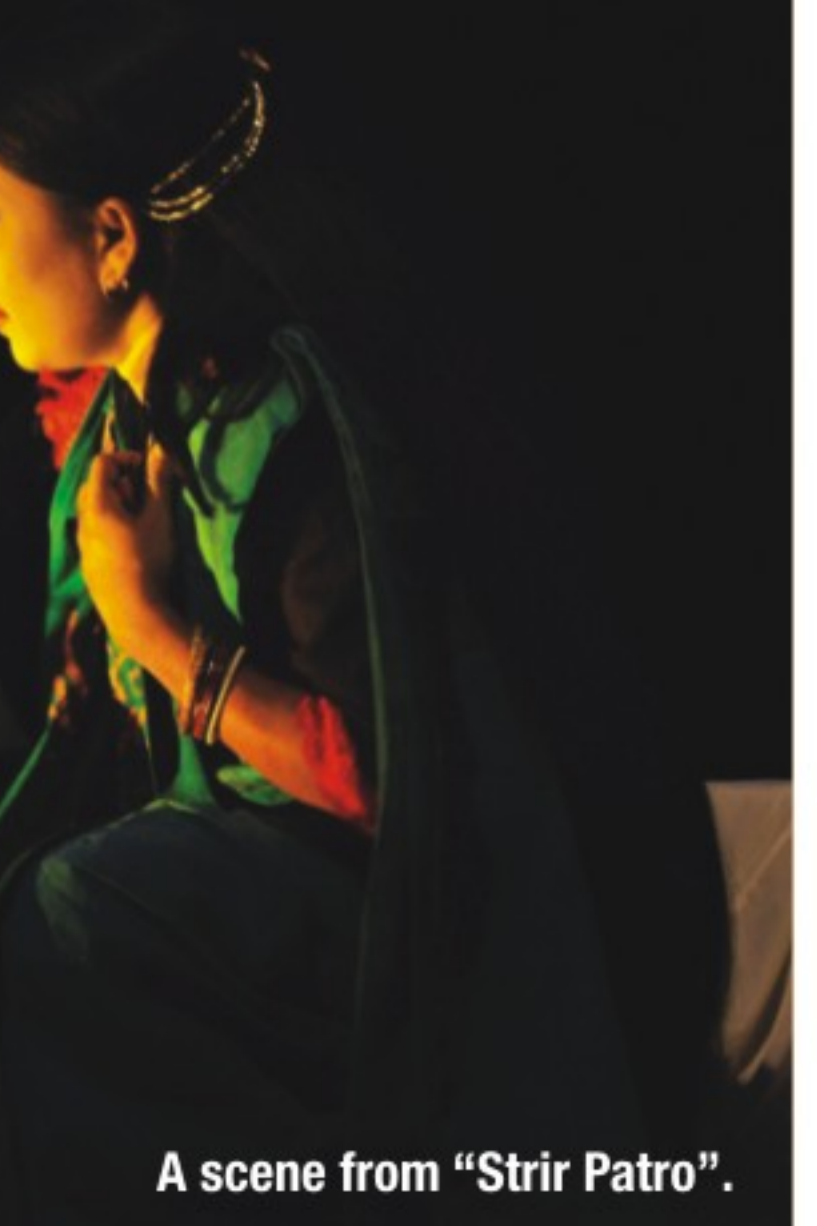
earned on-stage success throughout this year. As a result, Ruma received a chance to attend a bi-national workshop featuring young theatre activists from Bangladesh and India. The workshop took place in Shantiniketan and was on Rabindranath Tagore. Among ten Bangladeshi participants, Ruma and Shruvasis Sinha were from outside Dhaka.

"The workshop helped me a lot in gaining courage to work on Tagore's literary works. I got a chance to exchange views with activists of our generation from Kolkata as well. As I observed, Indian young activists are not that courageous about experimental works as our young individuals," said Ruma.

About local theatre activities in Habiganj, Ruma shared her frustrations. As she said, there are three auditoriums in Habiganj but none of them is well equipped for theatre staging. Moreover, shortage of rehearsal rooms always hampers troupes in running their activities smoothly.

"The biggest crisis to me is that theatre troupes are less concerned about staging plays. Instead, they are enthusiastic about arranging different programmes related to different anniversaries," she said.

About Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation's initiative and activities she has a mixed impression. She thinks that the platform organisation does enough but sometimes she feels that Dhaka based troupes receive more privileges than those from outside. "Usually BGT recommends that we stage shows in different parts of the country; it arranges divisional workshops for local activists. But when overseas invitations come it is the Dhaka-based troupes which get priority," Ruma said.



A scene from "Strir Patro".

During her last visit to India, Ruma found that the West Bengal theatre was being patronised by the government. Certain members from different troupes from and outside Kolkata receive monthly remunerations. She feels similar endeavours should immediately start in our country. "We have great prospects for the theatre. We can take our theatre to the world stage. But to do so we need patronisation, especially from the government," said Ruma Modak.

A poem turns saviour against tyranny

BNAP celebrates 90 years of Nazrul's "Bidrohi"



The celebration aims at taking Nazrul's poetry to people's doorsteps.

MD MIZANUR RAHMAN HIMADRI

Bangladesher Nazrul Abriti Parishad (BNAP) celebrated 90years of National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam's poem "Bidrohi" (The Rebel) written during the last week of December 1921. A creative genius, his poetic work caused patriots to rise up against colonial rule in union and gave a taste of freedom to the country. The celebration at Shawkat Osman Memorial Auditorium of central Public Library, aimed at projecting Nazrul's poetry to every door in Bangladesh.

Nobel Laureate poet Rabindranath Tagore developed a great appreciation for the versatile talent Nazrul after reading the poem that was termed as the "savior" against tyranny, said speakers at the discussion.

Among others, eminent poet Al Mahmud, Nazrul scholar Professor Abdul Qaiyum and former executive director of Nazrul Institute Abdul Hye Sikder, were present at the discussion led by Nasim Ahmed, president of BNAP. Abdul Hye Sikder pointed out to the contribution of "Bidrohi" and its writer to the country's Language Movement that later stretched into the war or Independence.

The then communist leader Muzaffar Ahmed in undivided India was the lone witness of the rebel's poem while it was composed by Nazrul and later published in the 'Bijli' newspaper on January 6, 1922. Hye further said, Prof Abdul Qaiyum cited Bidroh Kazi Nazrul Islam, as "a household name in Bengal, who was the only poet to gain global fame, after composing "Bidrohi".

After the discussion, the poem was recited to a packed audience who braved the bitter cold weather to come to the auditorium.

A total of 23 poems from Nazrul were rendered by BNAP artistes. The poems included "Aj Shristhi Shukher Ullashe", "Kandari Hushiar", "Shebok", "Shikha", "Proloiullash", "Kuli Mojur" and "Jago Nari Jago among others. Mohammad Yusuf, Quazi Jannatun Naime Shimu, Maruf Sharif, Tanzina Aktari Mousumi, Farah Binte Bashir Dolan, Jahirul Islam Miraj, Abdur Rahman Raqib and Badiuzzaman, recited poetry.

A group rendition by children followed. The programme wrapped up with a choral recitation. This was the third event organised by BNAP since its inception.

Gunijan launches compilation of biographies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gunijan, a web-based organisation, has taken the initiative to compile biographies of noted Bangladeshis. The biographies will be available on Gunijan's website. As internet is not available across the spectrum, the organisation has taken an alternative initiative as well. As part of the initiative, a CD comprising the works and lives of 48 eminent personalities was launched on December 24 at the Liberation War Museum.

Titled "Mohima Tobo Udbhashito: Muktsangam", the CD is the third installment of the initiative. The CD mainly features personalities who were involved in various political movements.

Urmil Lohani, coordinator of Gunijan, delivered the welcome speech. Revolutionary Jasimuddin Mandal and former Chief Justice Habibur Rahman, among others, unveiled the cover jacket of the CD.

The guests expressed their appreciation of the laudable initiative taken by Gunijan. In his speech Jasimuddin Mandal said, "The sacrifice and patriotism I saw among



The CD comprises the works and lives of 48 eminent personalities.

youth in our times was enormous. Nowadays I cannot find such patriotism."

Justice Habibur Rahman praised Gunijan's endeavour in upholding the lives and works of such eminent personalities. He hoped that the initiative would continue in future.

The organisers also honoured Jasimuddin Mandal and revolutionary Binod Bihari Chowdhury. Chowdhury could

not be present owing to inclement weather. His son Dr. Moloy Mitra received the crest on his behalf.

The Gunijan web portal is run by a dynamic voluntary team. Anyone can contribute to the Gunijan initiative by providing information, photographs, publications and more at: www.gunijan.org/Donation/donate.php

Faridur Reza Sagar's "Television Arek Jibone" launched



The book highlights the contributions of the electronic media in the country.

A CORRESPONDENT

A book titled, "Television Arek Jibone", highlighting the significant contributions of the electronic media in our country, was unveiled on December 25 at a local hotel in the city.

The book has been authored by Faridur Reza Sagar, noted media personality and managing director of Channel i and Impress Telefilm Ltd. The book includes several stories based on TV channels and all that the author has witnessed in the course of his career in media. Eminent writer Syed Shamsul Haq, Professor Abdullah Abu Sayeed, noted painter Mustafa Monowar, veteran journalist ABM MUSA, noted mime artist Partha Pratim Majumder, Dr. Mahfuzur Rahman, chairman of ATN Bangla, Shykh Seraj, a founding member of Channel i, among others, spoke at the book launch.

Filmmaker Mostafa Sarwar Faroook, actors Mahfuz Ahmed, Afroza Banu, Nima Rahman and others were present on the occasion.

Table with TV programmes: ATN BANGLA, Maasranga Television, CHANNEL i, Rtv, RADIO.

Table with TV programmes: Morning Express, No Tension, Dhaka Calling, Fight Riders, RADIO TODAY FM 89.5, Green FM, Good Morning Dhaka, Today's Adda, U Turn, Today's Hit, Raat Bhor Gaan.

Raat Biraity On BANGLAVISION at 11:25pm Street Show Guest: Nawshin

Crazy Heart On Star Movies at 08:40pm Genre: Drama/Romance Cast: Jeff Bridges, Maggie Gyllenhaal

Obogunthan On CHANNEL i at 09:35pm Drama Serial: Fresh Zaker, Ruzi

Table with TV programmes: Kichu Dekha Kichu Kotha, HBO, The Informant, Black Water, Drive, Frozen, Final Destination 3, Star World, Love2 Hate U, Combat Hospital, Supernatural, The Shield, National Geographic Channel, The Indestructibles, Banged Up Abroad, Daddy Summer, Fight Masters, Banged Up Abroad, Discovery Channe, Swords, Man vs. Wild, Dual Survival, The Kennedy Detail.

Table with TV programmes: ATN BANGLA, Drama Serial, CHANNEL i, ntv, Rtv, Boishakhi TV, BANGLAVISION, Desh TV, Boishakhi TV.

Table with TV programmes: NEWS BULLETIN, BANGLAVISION, CHANNEL i, ntv, Desh TV, Rtv, BANGLAVISION, NEWS BULLETIN, CHANNEL i, ntv, Desh TV, Rtv.

Table with TV programmes: TALK SHOW, ATN BANGLA, CHANNEL i, ntv, Desh TV, Rtv, Our Democracy, Galpo Shalpo Gaan, Desh TV, Boishakhi TV, Zero Hour, Maasranga Television.