

WHAT'S ON

Animated Film Festival
Organiser: Dhaka Art Center
Venue: Dhaka Art Center, H-60, Rd-7/A, Dhanmondi
Date: January 4-11
Time: 4pm & 6pm

Memorial Programme on Sohrab Hossain
Organiser: Chayanaut
Venue: Main Auditorium, Chayanaut, Dhanmondi
Date: Jan 11

Solo Art Exhibition
Title: Life in Abstraction, Abstraction in Life
Artist: Biren Shome
Venue: Bengal Gallery, Dhanmondi

Theatre
Play: Sheh Roshida
Troupe: Natyjan
Venue: National Theatre Hall, Shilpakala Academy
Date: January 11-12
Time: 6:30pm

Premiere
Film: Shunte Ki Pao
Venue: Shawkat Osman Auditorium, Public Library, Shahbagh
Date: Jan 12

Mastercraftspersons Award and Crafts Fair
Venue: Bangla Academy
Date: Jan 11-13
Award Giving on Jan 11 at 11am

British-Bangladesh Jazz-Folk Evening
Organiser: British Council
Venue: Rabindra Sarobar, Dhanmondi

Film Festival
Title: The one minutes Jr.
Venue: Bangladesh Shilsha Academy, Dhaka
Date: Jan 10-11
Time: 10am-6pm

Chobi Mela VII to begin on January 25

Fragility is the theme

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Photography has put Bangladesh on the map. Bangladeshi photographers have firmly established themselves in the international circuit and photographers from across the world are keen on working here, said Shahidul Alam, director of "Chobi Mela" at a press conference held yesterday at Drik Gallery in Dhanmondi, Dhaka.

The seventh edition of the biennial photography festival, which is largest and oldest of its kind in Asia, will begin from January 25. The weeklong festival will feature works of 34 photographers from 24 countries.

Alam informed that India has initiated a similar kind of festival in 2011, while countries such as China, Singapore and Cambodia started their respective festivals after "Chobi Mela" began its journey in 1997.

"Fragility" is the theme of this year's festival and it was picked up from an online poll. But Alam assures that providing participating photographers a chance to focus on socio-political issues has always been the main concern. "The world is seemingly turning more fragile -- both politically and environmentally. Fragility, in that sense, is a very relevant theme," said Alam.

Among 34 photographers, seven are from

Bangladesh. Other participating countries include India, Malaysia, Iran, Italy, Vietnam and Nigeria. The organisers said that the participating Bangladeshi photographers are young and they have the creativity to go far.

The inaugural ceremony of the festival will be held at the National Art Gallery of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, on January 25 at 4 pm. Other venues are: Shilpakala Academy, Drik Gallery, Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, Dhaka Art Center, Chohobir Haat, Lichutala of Faculty of Fine Arts and Mall Chatter of Dhaka University.

At the opening ceremony, a Lifetime Achievement Award will be conferred on an internationally renowned photographer whose name will be revealed later.

Eight workshops will be conducted by some world-renowned photographers, including Morten Krogvold, Chris Riley, Chris Rainier and Gaëll Turine. Several other events such as panel discussion, artist's talk, seminar, gallery walk, slideshow and book launch will be held throughout the festival.

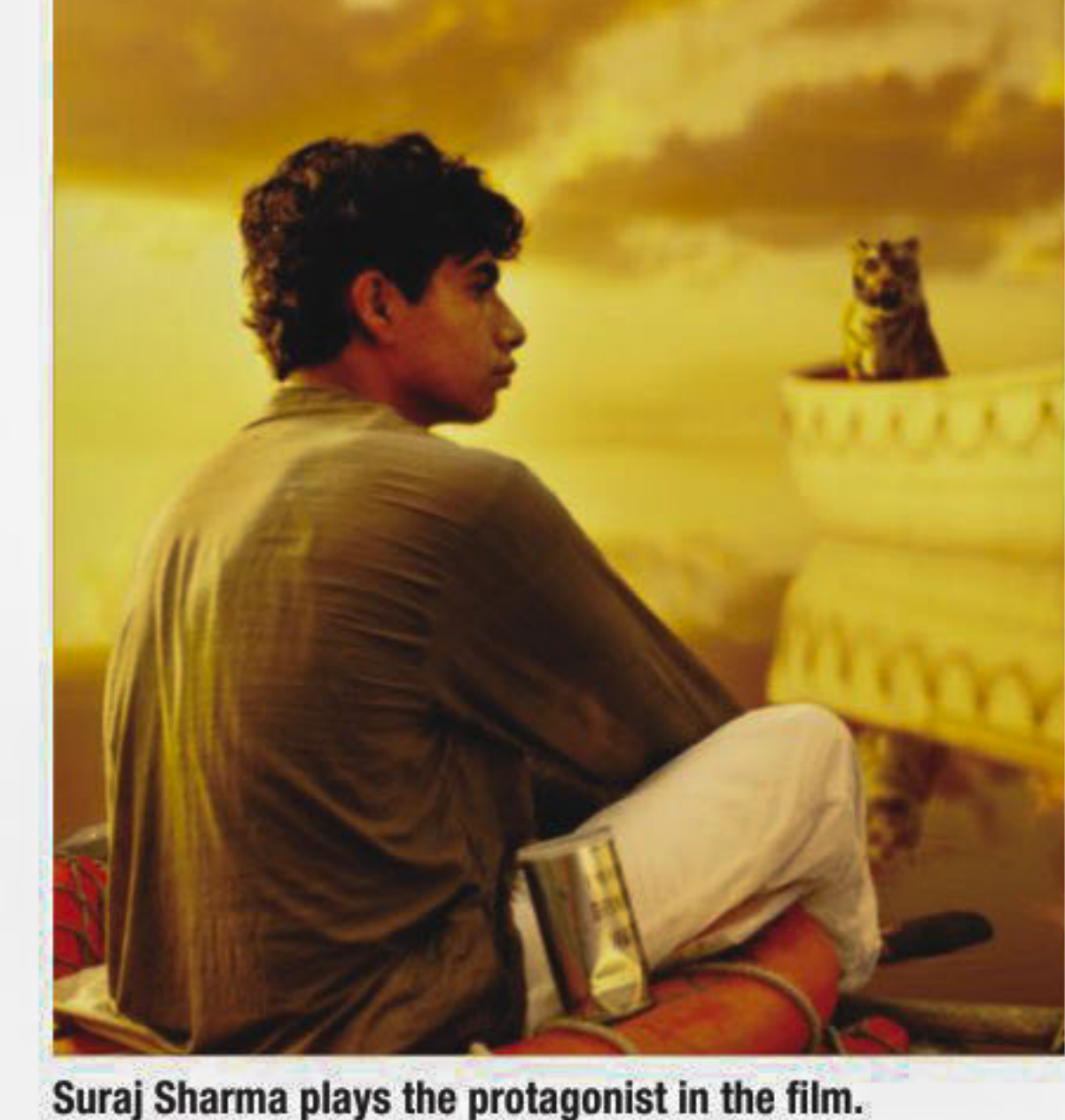
Members of the curatorial panel -- ASM Rezaur Rahman, Munem Wasif and Tanzim Wahab -- were also present at the press conference.

Drik Gallery and Pathshala: South Asian Media Academy are the main organisers of the festival. Details about the festival are on www.chobimela.org.



Shahidul Alam speaks at the press conference. PHOTO: DRIK NEWS

Life of Pi's rising star



Suraj Sharma plays the protagonist in the film.

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

There is an Indian touch to this year's British Academy of Film and Television Arts award nominations.

Delhi-based teenage actor Suraj Sharma, who played the protagonist in Oscar-winning director Ang Lee's fantasy adventure drama "Life of Pi", having been picked up for a chance to win the honour in the Rising Star category.

Nineteen-year-old Suraj, a student of Philosophy (Honours) in Delhi's St Stephen's College, is the only male actor who is nominated in the category along with British actresses Andrea Riseborough and Juno Temple, Swedish actress Alicia Vikander and Elizabeth Olsen from the US.

Based on Canadian author Yann Martel's Man Booker Prize-winning novel of the same name, "Life of Pi" is about the journey of an Indian boy who survives a storm on the high sea with only a tiger for company.

Suraj got selected for Lee's movie, beating off competition from about 3,000 aspiring actors for playing the role in the director's work, which also stars Bollywood stars Tabu and Irrfan Khan.

Lee's film has already earned three Golden Globe nominations, including Best Picture (Drama) and Best Director.

"Life of Pi" is in the running for the Best Film with four others, including Steven Spielberg's "Lincoln" and Kathryn Bigelow's "Zero Dark Thirty" based on the capture of terror mastermind Osama bin Laden.

The most basic human crises are universal

Kamar Ahmed Simon and Sara Afreen talk about their film "Shunte Ki Pao!"

FAHMIM FERDOUS

"Shunte Ki Pao!" (Are You Listening?), the directorial debut of Kamar Ahmed Simon, has already been praised heavily at two international documentary film festivals; one of the biggest -- Dok Leipzig, and the other the oldest -- IDFA. Founder of the European Documentary Network and noted Danish film critic Tue Steen Müller termed the film "a classic humanistic, cinematically brilliant work that character-wise brings back memories of the Apu-trilogy of Satyajit Ray".

Ahead of the Bangladesh Premiere of "Shunte Ki Pao" on January 12, the director-producer duo -- Simon and Sara Afreen -- spoke to The Daily Star on the film, its reception and their plans.

What was the thought behind "Shunte Ki Pao"?

Kamar: It was not very planned, but when we went to that remote village in the Sundarbans, called Sutarkhali, we saw a novel unfurl -- and as a filmmaker, my instinct was to take it to people, show them the story of the dignity, struggles and simplicity of the residents of that place.

What was the overall experience of "Shunte Ki Pao"?

Kamar: When we decided to make the film, we started going back and forth to the place, connecting with them. If you want to be in an intensive interaction with a community, you have to become one of them. And it took us about six months before the shooting began to do that.

Sara: It was about getting them to be comfortable with us. At first, shooting a film created a big buzz among them. But then they gradually got used to us over time. And at one point, we became part of the social fabric; it became easy for us to work.



Simon and Sara Afreen

Kamar: There were certain logistical problems, like toilet and food issues. The village was a five-hour boat journey from the last point where our supply vans could go. This made the film very challenging, but proposed a lot of potential at the same time.

As a director, what was the most striking characteristic for you about the film?

Kamar: At one stage of the film, in a complex understanding of a central character, I suddenly realised that the crisis that she was going through was no different from the crises that confronted me and Sarah, or that of a friend in New York. The epiphany was amazing. It told me that the most basic human crises are universal -- be it related to dignity, search for identity or the desire to touch our dreams. The setting, the surrounding, the "frame" is different, but the rest are just the same.

Does that make you confident that the viewers will be able to find parts of themselves in it?

Kamar: We have done six screenings of the film at two festivals -- both in Europe. But they could relate to the crises. So yes, I am very hopeful, and I have made the film with the hope that when you watch the film, the questions that came to my mind would come to yours as well.

Apart from the film, what have you brought back from Sutarkhali?

Sara: We have learned a great deal from the people of the village. Positivity is the most striking of them. We are the most privileged in our country, and yet we complain all the time. But the people we filmed were always so optimistic, and they cherished life like we never could. That is what surprised the audiences overseas. They asked why these people in the film are so happy despite the difficulties they go through, and we said they were like

that in real life.

What was it like to work with non-actors?

Kamar: From a film-schooling background, we were always looking for characters in the village before we started shooting, to find who would fit our story. And after we made the selections, during the six-month period prior to the shooting, we conducted a cleverly concealed informal grooming session for them, to prepare the people to fit our story. And of course we had to tailor the script to their needs at times as well.

What is your next move after "Shunte Ki Pao"?

Kamar: Our target is to show the film at as many places in the country as we can, in partnership with film societies and clubs in the country. A lot of film clubs have shown interest in screening, and we want to take it to as many people possible, to show them the story that we found extraordinary.



Group art exhibition at Zainul Gallery

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Faculty of Fine Arts (FFA), University of Dhaka and the Slade School of Fine Art, UCL, London are engaged in an exchange programme supported by the International Strategic Partnerships in Research and Education (INSPIRE) project of the British Council. The programme began in 2011 and will conclude in March this year.

The exchange has led to three diverse workshops at the FFA, one at the Slade School, along with an exchange of faculty over the course of almost three years.

As part of the concluding phase of this three-year programme, an exhibition titled "Inspired" is now on at Zainul Gallery, FFA, Dhaka University. The exhibition features artworks from the workshops by students of the two institutions. The exhibition was inaugurated on January 9.

A publication documenting the exchange programme was also launched at the inauguration.

Professor Nazrul Islam, former chairman of University Grants Commission; Professor Shahid Akhtar Hossain, Pro-Vice Chancellor, DU; Robin Davies, director of partnerships and programmes, British Council Bangladesh; artist Rafiqun Nab; Professor Dr. Susan Collins, director of the Slade School of Fine Art; Dryden Goodwin, reader of the Slade School of Fine Art, among others, attended the programme.

As part of the programme, a five-day workshop, titled "Shaping the Space Between", was held at FFA in February 2011. John Aiken, Professor, Slade School of Fine Arts, London was the coordinator of the workshop. Students from Drawing and Painting, Printmaking, Sculpture, Ceramics, Graphics and Oriental departments (of FFA) participated in the workshop.



Beetle Baily

by Mort Walker



Henry

by Don Trachte



Erratum

In an article, titled "Ustad Zakir Hussain to perform in Dhaka", published in the January 10, 2013 issue of the Star Arts & Entertainment, it was inadvertently mentioned that the upcoming concert -- featuring Ustad Zakir Hussain, Bela Fleck and Edgar Meyer -- is being organised by Blues Communications and Bengal Music. Blues Communications and Bengal Music are organising the concert. We regret this error.

Infatuated with nature

Solo exhibition of Biren Shome

TAKIR HOSSAIN

As a painter Biren Shome's growth has been slow and steady. He was involved in student politics in the 1960s. He took part in all major movements in the country from the mid-'60s on. During the Liberation War, he worked in the publicity wing (as designer) for the Mujibnagar Government. As a freedom fighter, he also witnessed painful and brutal incidents on the battlefield.

Since childhood, Shome has been moved by rivers, nature and the idyllic rural scenery. He was born and raised in Jamalpur, and his village is close to the Brahmaputra river. The painter seeks to depict the simple charms of nature. He began his career as a realist painter, depicting rural landscape with its rich abundance of colours, silhouette and serenity.

The painter's current solo exhibition, titled "Life in Abstraction, Abstraction in Life", is now on at the Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts in Dhanmondi, Dhaka.

In the early and mid '70s, a number of painters made the Liberation War the subject of their works. After independence, they reflected their experiences through their art. Shome is one of them.

Initially Shome's canvases featured figurative forms and panorama. Over the years, he engrossed himself in semi and pure abstraction. Flamboyant colours, mellow and uneven texture as well as composition are the main features. At times, his works appear monotonous because of his use of recurring forms and composition.

At the ongoing exhibition, his works on display delve deep into abstract expressionism. The themes emerge



Paintings by Biren Shome.

in his works symbolically and at times according to his paintings' characters. The painter feels that nature comes into view in his works through his personal observations and experiences.

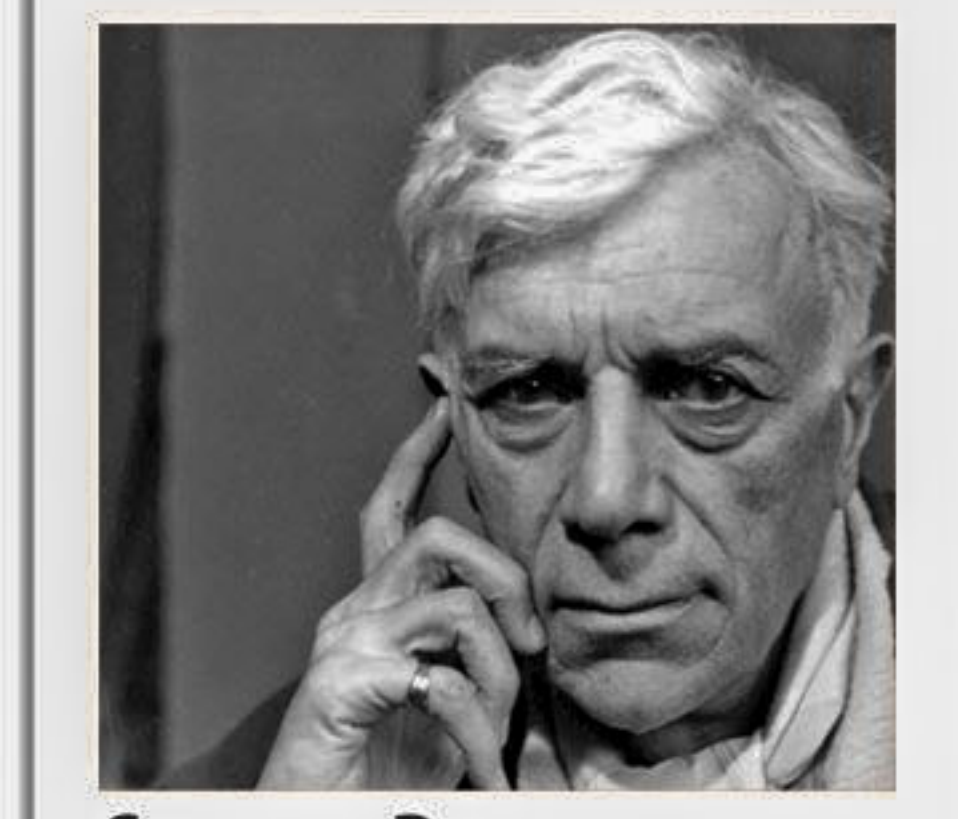
For Shome, his paintings are abstract transformations in which, linguistically speaking, the components of the original visual experience have been thoroughly transformed. The movement is from a transient and contingent authenticity into one that captures a sense of immanence and eternity. It is for this reason that Shome lays so much emphasis on colours.

The seasoned artist feels that painters usually start to explore their creativity with the depiction of nature, and the changes it goes through during different seasons. In recent times, the painter has changed his style. His works are now replete with pure forms, compositions and textures. Over the years, Shome has diminished his figures, as forms are very noticeable in space.

His current works -- oil and acrylic on canvas -- flaunt textures in blue, emerald green, crimson and brown. In some of the paintings, Shome brought in strokes of scintillating red, black, oranges in intangible forms.

It is easy to comprehend that the artist has made a great attempt to change the composition, but the themes are very limited. At the exhibition, most of his forms and compositions convey nature and its fascinating aspects. The artist is fastidious about his use of space, which gives an outstanding depth to his works. The exhibition ends tomorrow.

DID YOU KNOW?



Georges Braque and Cubism

Georges Braque was a major 20th-century French painter and sculptor who, along with Pablo Picasso, developed the art style known as Cubism.

To some extent he even surpassed Picasso in his innovations during the early development of Analytical Cubism.

Braque believed that an artist experienced beauty "... in terms of volume, of line, of mass, of weight, and through that beauty s/he interprets his/her subjective impression..."

French art critic Louis Vauxcelles first used the term Cubism, or "bizarre cubiques", in 1908 after seeing a picture by Braque.

Braque fought for French Army during World War I. In May 1915, Braque received a severe head injury in battle at Carey and suffered temporary blindness.

His earliest works were impressionistic.

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| BTV | 09:35 Tom & Jerry Tales 10:30 Theatre 10:35 Bangla Feature Film 11:00 Renangon-er Dinguli | Maaranga Television | 02:30 Ichchhey Gaan-er Dugur 05:02 Square Hospital Doctor's Chamber 08:00 Drama 09:00 Game Show: Houseful 12:02 Drama |
| ATN BANGLA | 03:05 Bangla Feature Film 05:00 Gram Gonjor Khabor 08:00 Diploma Misti Lalor 11:00 Tune with Us | CHANNEL 9 | 05:00 Bangla Feature Film 09:00 Power Voice 11:45 Music Box 12:30 Margin Call 13:30 The Conspirator 04:30 The Da Vinci Code 07:00 A Little Bit of Heaven 08:50 Wild Things 10:40 Wild Things II |
| CHANEL i | 12:05 Prokriti O Jibon 02:40 Telefilm 07:50 Sherakonath 09:35 Top Model | Fox Movies | 10:40 Margin Call 12:30 The Conspirator 04:30 The Da Vinci Code 07:00 A Little Bit of Heaven 08:50 Wild Things 10:40 Wild Things II |
| ETV | 10:02 Sonamoni Shukh-e-Oshukh-e 01:30 Bangla Feature Film 06:30 Tarana | RADIO | 12:00 Boier Paka 02:00 Foorti Unlimited 06:00 Bumper to Bumper 08:00 Gals-front 09:00 Back to Back music RADIO TODAY FM 89.6 08:00 Good Morning Dhaka 11:00 Flash Back 12:30 Jibon Program 02:15 Ragul Gaan 05:00 Today's World Music |

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| abc radio FM 89.2 | 09:30 Eak Osk 01:20 Alok Showdhaney 05:20 Kacha Laska 09:20 Bhowa Sarda 07:20 GP Louneh 07:45 Megh Barata 08:10 Adaa 11:10 Gagar Neer Lies RADIO FOORTI 08:00 Adabul | 12:00 Boier Paka 02:00 Foorti Unlimited 06:00 Bumper to Bumper 08:00 Gals-front 09:00 Back to Back music RADIO TODAY FM 89.6 08:00 Good Morning Dhaka 11:00 Flash Back 12:30 Jibon Program 02:15 Ragul Gaan 05:00 Today's World Music |
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Dhol
On ETV at 09:05pm
Drama Serial
Cast: Hilol, Shoshi

Exit Wounds
On HBO 11:25
Genre: Action, Comedy, Crime
Cast: Steven Seagal, Jill Hennessy

Roshni
On Channel 9 at 11:30pm
Drama Serial
Cast: Moushumi, Lutfar Rahman

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| 10:10 Drama 12:05 Phone & Live Studio 10:10 Bhalo Thakun 11:25 Amaraj Ramnagar 06:25 Gaan O Fun 11:25 Aeri Khon Ki Korbo (Live) | 10:45 Gridiron Gang 03:20 Bangkok Knockout 06:25 Kindergarten Cop 07:30 Spy Kids 2: Island of Lost Dreams 09:30 The Hangover Part II 11:25 Exit Wounds | HBO | 04:30 Melissa & Joey 08:00 Last Man Standing 09:00 The Front Row with Anupama Chopra 09:30 Packed to the Rafters 11:30 Two And A Half Men |
| ntv | 02:35 Tele-film 06:45 Roopmadhuri 09:00 Close Up One 11:30 Drama | BANGLAVISION | 03:30 Dangerous Encounters 05:30 Monkey Thieves 08:30 Dangerous Encounters 09:30 Ultimate Wild 10:30 Banged Up Abroad 11:30 Taboo |
| Rtv | 12:35 Jadur Deshe 07:35 Glamour World Dot Com 08:20 Drama Serial 12:05 Phone Live Music | Desh TV | 03:00 Priyojon-er Gaan 08:15 Bindu Thekey Britto 09:45 Drama 11:45 Call-er Gaan |
| 11:05 Shomoy Katak Gaan-e | 05:30 Music Train 08:00 Amar Guita Arar Gaan 08:35 Drama 11:05 Shomoy Katak Gaan-e | Boishakhi TV | 04:30 Wildest Latin America 09:30 Wild Discovery 10:30 Jungle Gold 11:30 A Haunting |

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| ATN BANGLA | 09:20pm Chhayabrita | Boishakhi TV | News (Bangla) at 10am, 2pm, 5pm, 8pm, 11pm |
| Channel i | 11:30pm Roshni | BANGLAVISION | News (English) at 9am, 9pm |
| ntv | 08:15pm Mayanigam | BANGLAVISION | News (Bangla) at 10am, 2pm, 7:30pm, 10:30pm, 11pm |
| ETV | 09:30pm Dhol | ntv | News (English) at 1pm, 5pm, 6pm, 9pm, 11pm |

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| ATN BANGLA | 12:30am Lead News | Boishakhi TV | News (Bangla) at 10am, 2pm, 5pm, 8pm, 11pm |
| CHANNEL i | 09:45am Tritio Matra | BANGLAVISION | News (Bangla) at 10am, 2pm, 7pm, 9pm, 11pm |
| 12:00am Aiker | Shongbadpatro | ntv | News (Bangla) at 1pm, 3pm, 5pm, 7pm, 9pm, 11pm |
| Boishakhi TV | 12:30pm Hndoye Jummabar | Desh TV | News (Bangla) at 10am, 2pm, 7pm, 9pm, 11pm |
| BANGLAVISION | | ntv | News (Bangla) at 1pm, 3pm, 5pm, 7pm, 9pm, 11pm |

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| ATN Bangla | 11:30pm Maha Shatto Al-Ouran | TALK SHOW | 11:30pm Maha Shatto Al-Ouran |
| CHANNEL i | ntv | | |
| 09:45am Tritio Matra | 12:30am Hello America | | |
| 12:00am Aiker | Desh TV | | |
| Shongbadpatro | 07:45pm Mukh O Mukhorata | | |
| Boishakhi TV | Rtv | | |
| 12:30pm Hndoye Jummabar | 10:40am Taroklap | | |
| BANGLAVISION | Gtv | | |