



COLLAGE: AZRA HUMAYRA

When Eid holiday evenings belonged to TV programmes

FARHEEN RAHMAN

"Ajke keu channel paltale kintu khub kharap hobe, keu remote e haat dibi naa," boomed the voice of my grandfather on the evening of Eid. Soon, the kids, teenagers, and a few reluctantly dragged young adults would be gathered in the living room while the TV volume rose slightly higher than necessary. The real celebration, however, arrived during the advertisement breaks, when bowls of *bhaja muri* and *chanachur* appeared along with cups of *cha*. And somehow, between the dramatic acting, sarcastic commentary, and *dadu's* living room dictatorship, everyone ended up watching the whole programme anyway, which goes to show, the fun of Eid also included these shows and the chaos around them.

The excitement of Eid television was never limited to a single day; it spanned the entire holiday. Channels would prepare special line-ups of dramas, telefilms, musical shows, comedy segments, dance performances, and magazine programmes designed specifically for the festive season. Families would schedule their evenings around these broadcasts, and the living room would transform into a shared theatre of laughter and debate.

Today, however, the rhythm of those

evenings has changed. The television is no longer the undisputed centre of attention. Smartphones outshine the TV screen, and global streaming platforms vie with national channels for viewers' time. Many young people now spend their Eid vacations scrolling through short videos or watching international series. For some, traditional Eid programmes feel predictable or old-fashioned, while others simply prefer the convenience of watching content individually rather than gathering around a scheduled broadcast. In a festival that celebrates togetherness, entertainment has become more solitary.

Yet the Bangladeshi entertainment industry continues to prepare for Eid with the same enthusiasm as ever. This Eid season is bringing a wave of new film releases, such as *Prince: Once Upon a Time in Dhaka*, *Bonolota Express*, *Malik*, and *Durbar*, among many others. Television channels are also keeping the Eid tradition alive with carefully curated schedules throughout the holiday week. The beloved magazine programme, *Ityadi*, is returning with its traditional Eid special.

Perhaps the real challenge today is not the lack of Eid programmes, but the shrinking habit of watching them together. The programmes still exist, the artists still

perform, and the channels still invest in creating festive experiences. What may be missing is the collective moment, the shared laughter, the spontaneous commentary, and the friendly arguments about which show was better.

Maybe this Eid vacation can offer an opportunity to rediscover that tradition. Watching a drama, a musical show, or even a classic episode of *Ityadi* with family might feel slightly old-fashioned at first. But then again, many things that feel old-fashioned often turn into the most cherished memories.

The programmes themselves may change with time, but the spirit behind them still remains. Maybe all that is needed for today's generation is to pause their scrolling for a while and give these Eid programmes another fair shot. Who knows? The next memorable Eid debate in the living room might just be waiting to happen.

And if the hero overacts, the choreography looks slightly dramatic, or someone in the room insists that Eid programmes were better in 2005, that only makes the experience more authentic. After all, half the fun of Eid television was not just the programmes themselves but also the laughter, teasing, and running commentary that surrounded it.

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