

**Forays into News & Current Affairs and programming  
– NTV**



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**August 2010**



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-NTV**



**A Report Submitted to  
The Department of English and Humanities  
Of  
BRAC University  
By**

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**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement  
For the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English**

**August 2010**



## ***Acknowledgement***

When I started my under graduation programme in BRAC University, I did not think it would be a privilege to study in English and Humanities Department in this university. It has been like a home to me, especially after the Residential semester in TARC. And I thank Prof. Firdous Azim, the Chairperson of the Department of English and Humanities, with all my heart for giving me the opportunity to study in English with all the support and courage that she gave me. She has always been there for me in these 11 semesters in her department. Without her appreciation and guidance it would not have been this easy for me to come this far.

However, not only her but also my course instructors Dr. Syed Manzoorul Islam, Prof. Kaiser Huq, Ms. Shenin Ziauddin, Ms. Nausheen, Ms. Ruksana helped me whenever I needed like I was their child. Nonetheless, Ms. Sohana Manzoor, my advisor, always chose the best for me. I would be happy to say proudly that I was lucky to get some of the best teachers in the English Department. Besides, all the other teachers from Business departments inspired me and welcomed me in doing my minor in Business. Despite being an English major student, they facilitated me to do well in Business courses. Nevertheless, Mahtab Haider, my internship supervisor, showed me the right direction throughout my internship. I am thankful to him for supporting me whenever I faced any problem at my work place.

I would also like to thank all my senior colleagues at NTV for being supportive and patient with me during the three months that I worked there. As a fresh intern at NTV I was confused about a lot of things but the HR and Administration head Ms. Sultana A. Banu, the Chief News Editor, in- charge of National Desk, Monira apu, Tahmina Apu, Nasrin Apu, Rubel Bhai from News Department were always there to give me the strength to believe in myself. The Programme Head, the producer of Boi Boshonte Alfred Khokon, Mamun Bhai, Feroz Bhai, Raahat Alam helped me to prove that I can do well. They always had faith in me and pushed me to try harder and not give up.

Last but not the least I would like to thank my parents, Fatema and Maroof for being there, especially in my bad days.



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# 1. Introduction:

I was always interested in media and culture from my early childhood when I used to attend all the art, recitation and speech competitions in Shishu Academy, Bangla Academy, and many other organizations. From the very beginning of my undergraduate studies, I decided to concentrate on media and culture.

When it came to my internship after nine semesters, I was persistent to gain some experience in electronic media at any television channel. From my early childhood, the electronic media attracted me especially after I became associated with Bangladesh Television at the age of seven. Directors, producers, programme, make up, studio, Camera, lights, stand by, action—all these terms became so familiar that made me believe that I belong to electronic media. In 2004, I hosted a programme's Eid special episode in the Bangladesh-based television channel, NTV. And I liked the environment of the station as well as the people I worked with. As a result, when I was at the stage of selecting a television channel to do my internship, the first name came in my mind was NTV. I spoke to the head of HR and Admin, Ms. Sultana A. Banu, about my interest in working with the programme department in their station. She suggested I focus on news desk rather than non-news programming. Since I got the opportunity to learn about both the departments, I agreed to work in news. However, in professional settings there are few people who have the time to offer hands-on teaching. When I was introduced to my supervisor, Alfred Khokon, in Programme department, I was more than happy because he is one of the senior



producers and the only producer who makes intellectually stimulating programmes such as talk shows with senior artists of our country, musical programmes with senior traditional singers. While working on the editing panel one day my supervisor suddenly decided to make me the host of his yearly programme “*Boi Boshonte*” that covers Ekushey Book Fair. I gave the audition and got selected. I got a great opportunity to learn more about Bangladeshi writers, poets, books and language rather than reporting. Things I learnt from this programme, will help me through out my educational and professional life.

After that, I started working in News and Current Affairs with no such interest at the beginning. But, as my days went on, I started liking it more than programmes. Because, something new is always happening in the news room and people are very much aware of other channel’s news. There is this competition regarding the delivery of the news, angles and footage between the channels. On the other hand, in programme department, there are fixed programmes a topics most of the time. However, in news room, every other second there are different types of news coming from all the corners of the world. I must say, the work is much more challenging than any other sectors of job market. Moreover, I got the chance to know about what is happening around the world and gradually I got curious to know more, to learn more and to work more. The pace of the News Room engrossed me so much that I decided to do my masters in Media and Mass Communication. And I could take this decision only because BRAC University has media and culture as one of the majors in English and Humanities Department.

## 2. NTV:

### **2. i. The beginning:**

NTV is a leading global digital Bangla channel based in Dhaka, Bangladesh which has been acclaimed as one of the leading education and entertainment Bangla speaking Channel. It has its own fully state of the art Satellite Earth Station. The earth station is used to broadcast's digital signal to Telstar 10 satellite whose downlink frequency is 4d173 MHz. this satellite has a huge coverage area across South-East Asia, Dubai, well into Europe, USA, UK & Canada. The broadcast studios, production and post production operations, newsroom and administrative offices are set in a 35,000 sq. ft. facility in Dhaka, a complete broadcast centre meeting the highest international standard.

NTV offers high quality programming broadcast 24-hours-a-day and beliefs which are depicted in its programming. Realizing its strength in programming and the need for Bangladeshi entertainment in the overseas market, the company launched NTV in the USA, UK, Dubai, India and South-East Asia.

### **2. ii. Management:**

NTV under the prominent leadership of the honorable Chairman Alhaj Mohammad Mosaddak Ali, Managing Director Enayetur Rahman, and executive Director Hasnayan Khurshid, has diversified its activities in Electronics Media World and already attained significance in the media business. Due to dynamic leadership of the key figures of the



company within a short span of time NTV won the heart of Bengali spoken people all over the world and become No. 1 channel.

### **2. iii. Operations:**

NTV begins its commercials operation in July 2003. It offers high quality programming broadcast 24 hours a day from 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2004 and its rated No. 1 in Bangladesh. NTV offers a variety of programming including news, entertainment, drama serials, music programs, movies, documentaries, talk shows, children's programs, religious programs, cultural programs and much more. NTV in Bangladesh's no. 1 cable channel for 8 years running (as of 2010).

### **2. iv. Broadcast area:**

The popularity of NTV arises from its understanding of Bangladesh culture and beliefs which are depicted in its programming. Realizing its strength in programming and the need for Bangladeshi entertainment in the overseas market, the company launched NTV in the USA, UK, Dubai, India and South East Asia & Australia. NTV has won numerous viewer-choice awards for its program both nationally as well as internationally.

### **2. v. Employee pool:**

The company has a staff of nearly 500 persons and practices a dynamic equal opportunities policy of the skills development and training. NTV always aims to improve, constantly

striving to reflect the needs of both its viewers and its Advertisers. Since its commercial launch in July 2003, NTV has expanded its schedule eight to twenty four hours a day, covering an increasingly wide range of interests, including news and current affairs, entertainment, drama, music, films, foreign series, sports, national events, documentaries, talk shows, children's and education programmes.

#### **2. vi. News & current affairs:**

Generally, news & current affairs has proved to be one of the most popular elements of the NTV schedule, with the NTV news bulletins attracting huge nightly audiences. Since its inception the channel has introduced various types of news like *Prothom Khobor*, *Dupure rkHobor*, *Bikaler Khobor*, *Deshor Khobor*, *Shandhar Khobor*, *Rater Khobor*, *Tazza Shironam* and lots of ground breaking programs like *Shuvoshandha*, *Ajker Shokal*, *Frankly Speaking*, *Gallery*, *Transworks Sports*, and *Right Click*. All these news-based programs proved to be major successes with local audiences and were bench marks in their times. The sports programs have also been widely acclaimed, with a special appreciation for the live coverage of international cricket.

#### **2. vii. Program guide:**

NTV has own numerous viewer-choice awards for its programmes both nationally as well as internationally. NTV's programming delivers a variety of choices for all segments of the audience, including news, primetime comedy and drama series, television movies, miniseries, theatrical films, specials, children's programs, daytime dramas, game shows, talk



shows and late night shows. Ntv has always believed in bringing innovative programming to its viewers. Programmes that target the youth market includes *Marks All Rounder*, *close up 1* *Tomakei khujche Bangladesh*, *Super Hero Super Heroine*, *Muzik Jamz*, *Sports*, *Siddiqua Kabir's recipe*, *bhinno shader khobor*, *Ramizer Aina*, *Kacher Manush*, *Manush Bodol*, *House Full*, and many more.

## **2. viii. The goal of NTV:**

Professionalism, experience, creativity and vision have been central to the development of NTV and the dynamic of the NTV family. Once again, this has been the focus of the company's Management efforts over the past year and it is this that has helped NTV achieve a strong and pattern of growth and will ensure its continued growth in the future. The company combines the use of state of the art production and broadcast technology with focused market and audience research in order to ensure a schedule that offers both quality and content. NTV is 'committed to change' and to also cater for the special needs of an audience that is both urban and rural. In the context, the network's programmes are as much about information as they are entertainment.

### 3. News and Current Affairs:

News that we watch on television, seem very easy to watch but it is not that easy to collect the news and show it on the television. There are several steps and processes in making the news eye catching, informative and neutral. The reporters from every district or location firstly take notes of important issues and the camera persons capture the significant moments. And then the reporters write it down or type it to send it via e-mail or fax. On the other hand, the news room editors collect that news and edit it. If it is a very important issue, they make it long to deliver a *package*. Meanwhile, another news room editor goes to the editing panel to capture the video footage of the particular news and make it short according to the duration of the news whether it is a *package* or *OOV*. This work is quite complicated because the timing of the footage has to be written accurately so that the PCR does not face difficulties while playing the tape. Moreover, the producer does not get enough time to rewind or forward if the duration is not written correctly.

#### 3. i. Reporting:

Reporting is not a very easy task. It is not just about going to places and collecting news and submitting it to the news desk. Reporters are entitled to a very dangerous job. The reporters along with the camera person may have to record very risky and difficult incidents. Sometimes, their lives are at risk recording issues like strikes, floods, wars, political conflicts and so on. Moreover, they have to be very careful about reporting the news from a neutral angle because; sometimes they are threatened by the powerful people of a country.



### **3. ii. News Desk:**

Besides, the news room editors are not always satisfied with the information of the reporters. Especially reporters, who work in different districts, are mostly under rated and unrecognized by the news editors. On the other hand, the news room editors' work is also not very easy either. They have to edit the news and type it again at least half an hour before the news time. And these news have to be updated every now and then by calling the reporters or going online for international issues. International desk editors face problems in translating news because they have to inform the viewers from an unbiased angle. After the editing is done, they save it in a folder to be rechecked by the senior editor.

### **3. iii. News Presentation:**

After all of these people's effort for hours, the news presenter takes the news to the viewers via television. This may also sound very easy. However, it takes a lot of effort to present it properly in front of three cameras at a time. The presenter always has to be involved with the news and with whatever is happening around the world. They also have to be familiar with the sports world to make the sports news more interesting and lively. Additionally they have to be very careful while presenting the political news. They have to make sure that they do not sound biased or give any facial expressions. The news presenters have to be ready to make phone calls to the reporters during the news time if there is any crucial incident in the country. If they do not know what is happening, they will not be able to ask questions to the reporters. In addition, technology is something very vacillating. The Auto cue may fail anytime or any technical difficulties from

the PCR or MCR may occur. The presenter has to be prepared on her/his own to face any sort of difficulties and handle it spontaneously.



## 4. Programme flow:

### 4. i. Planning:

First of all, a programme whether it is a musical show or a talk show, planning is the primary stage of making a programme. Before thinking about the concept, the producer has to think about what kind of programmes are being telecasted on the television and what type of programme does the audience expect. He has to come up with news ideas and innovative programmes. Under planning, the most significant aspect is budget setting. However, the budget depends on many things such as the duration of the programme, the time schedule, what type of a programme it is, who the target audience is, the location and other related facts that are concerned in making a programme. For an example, 'boi boshonte' was an occasion based programme of eight to ten minutes. So, the budget of this programme was very less. As the location of the programme was Bangla Academy and it is not far from Karwan Bazaar. The crew members were one production boy who helped the camera person. One person was the technical director who used to decide from where the scene should be captured, from which angle the anchor and the book fair will look nice, and how the anchor should present the links. Another person, the script writer and director of the programme was in charge of the over all execution and script. The producer of the programme basically fixes the budget according to all of the above facts. Additionally, the producer has to keep in mind the fact of the sponsors of the programme. The quality of the programme has to be good to attract big sponsors. Though the marketing department fixes the sponsorship, and time slot of the programme, the producer may suggest the preferred time slot.

#### **4. ii. Proposal:**

After planning the producer submits the proposal along with the summary and the whole concept of the programme and budget to the Programme head. The programme head makes corrections and sometimes he cut the cost. After his approval, the concept goes to the Managing Director of the channel to approve.

Once the Managing Director approves, the producer decides who to take for anchoring the programme according to the limited budget. He has to allocate fixed salary for the anchor, and if anyone is brought from outside NTV to work in the team. The producer starts the shooting with his team.

#### **4. iii. Editing:**

And the most crucial part is the editing part of the programme. It takes a lot of time to edit a programme. The producer has to book the editing panel a few days ahead. All the editors are not equally efficient and in that case, the producer has to sit with the editor to direct the editing part also. Time duration is a big factor in editing. Sometimes, the producer has to negotiate with the presentation department to give few more minutes for his programme. Presentation department basically fixes the schedule of all the programmes and news timing along with the advertisements.



#### **4. iv. Telecast:**

After editing the programme, it goes on air. However, the producer gets feedback from the audience, the channel, and the sponsors. If it is a regular programme, the producer has to think of innovative ideas everyday on the basis of the feedback from the Programme Head and the Managing Director. If the programme does not catch audience's attention the producer is sometimes told to stop the programme.

Besides, on occasions, the head of the programme gives the producers a plan to make programmes on that specific occasion. Then, the producers make occasional programmes on the basis of the occasion.

## 5. Learning from NTV:

I have started my internship at NTV from 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2010. First of all, I started learning programme editing for a few days. I also learnt how to edit and what techniques are used to edit a programme. I have seen two different types of programmes: talk show and entertaining or cultural show. For an example, in talk show, participants' voice is much more important than the guest and the host. As a result, the editor cut a few parts of the guest but tries to keep the participants' voice. Moreover, a talk show has to be natural and not mechanical. However, it is necessary to edit because of the limitations of the duration. The editor has to make a 29 minutes programme into 23 minutes which sounds very easy but it is very tough to do so. After editing a conversation if there is an urge to hear more from the speaker, the audio could be lowered down so that it seems the end of his speaking. This it will not sound unfinished. Camera plays an important role also. Here **insert** is important. Because, from one master shot to another master shot looks odd. But in the middle of two shots if an insert of a neutral footage of the audience or the whole set is put in, it looks natural.

In any programme, if the speaker or participant or host talks about the sponsor or their product or service, it becomes a low quality programme. Viewers may think they are promoting the product or service instead of the topic of the program. So, while editing if anyone says something about the sponsor the editor edits that part and keeps it neutral and realistic.

After one and a half month, I have also worked with News and Current Affairs department. I edited news which has come from the national correspondent from different districts of Bangladesh. They send the details through fax and I have to make it as short as possible like



from 150 words to 70 words. However, News language is totally different from the language we normally speak.

## 6. *'Boi Boshonte'*:

I worked on a program named "*Boi Boshonte*". It is about the Ekushey Book Fair held in February. I had to cover all the incidents happened in the fair everyday and interviewed writers, readers, editors, publishers and all the people who were involved in this book fair. I was occupied from the beginning of the programme, starting from the planning to hosting and the editing. So it was a great opportunity for me to learn numerous things regarding programme and reporting as it was a reporting based programme.

It was helpful for me because I could learn about the camera and light and also what a **master shot** and an **insert** is. For **cut way**, the camera person has to capture insert shot so that while editing the programme, if anything is needed to be removed from the conversation or speech of any person from the middle, the cut way shots can be inserted. For an example, I had to take a couple of interviews of the writers and poets. The duration of the total program was about 10 minutes and in these 10 minutes we had to cut short a lot of things.

I also have learnt the graphics part. When the name of a person is showed, it is called **Aston**. And in the end, the name of the cast and crew is called **end scroll**. Moreover, I have been learning how to organize an outdoor shooting with one camera and also with two cameras, how to write and edit a script.

It was not very easy to work as a reporter. In my point of view, reporting is the most difficult work in both programming and news.

In the last episode, I've learnt something very interesting and important. I've covered news about a writer who claims someone's books and translations to be his. That means his books are just



plagiarized from the Indian writers' books. And few publications are publishing his books and selling it with or without knowing the fact. And it took a bit time to convince those publications, who have stopped publishing after knowing it, to speak up because they share a good relationship with that writer. At last one of the publishers was prepared to talk after being threatened! It was quite an exciting experience. At first we went to Aziz Super Market to buy the real books written by Indian writers and then we went to Ekushey Book fair and bought the book that is copied by the Bangladeshi writer. And we showed it line by line. I have learnt how to cover this kind of sensitive and risky issues. Now I know how to manage someone important to speak against immorality. It has also taught me to present negative news positively. The language plays a very important role here. I had to be aware that I speak in a very neutral and positive way so that no one can blame our programme later. For an example, in my link, I have said "few authors and translators complained to Boi boshonte" instead of saying "we have found few authors and translators who spoke against the writer".

## 7. Personal account:

NTV was established eight years ago. It has been carrying out its operation for all these time and has gained expertise in the media sector. So, employees are very professional and experienced. Everything in NTV is well organized and the office is very clean. I liked working there because of all of these. Everyone was always very caring about me. I was a child to them and they were always concerned about my health, transportation and were very lineal regarding work. I could attend my classes timely and nobody kept me for long when I had class.

The work environment was very comfortable and my supervisor, Mr. Anisuzzaman always gave me time when I needed his help. He used to sit beside me and point out my mistakes and guided me through out my internship. Even, people I did not work with helped me whenever I asked them to. Nobody ever seemed irritated to help or guide me.



## 8. Conclusion:

NTV is the leading television center in Bangladesh. Although NTV ranks third in Television Rating Position (TRP) their programmes are widely accepted by the audience in Bangladesh. However, the preview committee is very careful and strict when they approve of a programme. They ensure the quality programme with valuable content.

The rules and regulations in the HR and administration department are very strict. As a result, people who work there are very skilled and disciplined. The total atmosphere is very different. My idea of media has changed after working at NTV. Both the departments are so different from each other and are equally good in their own way. All the employees of the Programme department are very lively and enthusiastic. On the other hand, people working at the News and Current affairs department are punctual, calm and serious. The programming and the news departments have diversity among them and that made it even more exciting to be a part of NTV for the three months of my internship period.