



As we pass through these phases of life and finally get into work life, somewhere deep down we wish we could go back to the simpler, tiffin box days.

Work over lunch

A typical lunch hour at office is dictated by a monotonous routine, whereby employees get a small break from their harried schedules. People from all departments march to the canteen, where groups of colleagues can be found chitchatting.

In other cases, on an extremely busy day at work, some employees can be seen having lunch alone at their designated cubicle, or aggressively typing away at their keyboard unbothered to eat but trying to complete the tasks at hand. Unfortunately, sometimes due to heavy workload this small recess is also missed by many.

Instances like these forces you to take a walk down memory lane and reminisce the meek days, when life as we knew it was humbler and when there did not hang a guillotine of responsibilities on our necks. To keep up with the fast paced environment and to excel in the competition of life, somehow we all end up in places where we never desired to be, trapped in a web of corporate politics and encumbrance of obligations.

Respite from a hectic schedule

However, among the pressure of crunching numbers and meeting deadlines, a one-hour break for lunch comes as a respite to many.

“Often days, I look forward to lunch time because this hiatus allows me to casually catch up with colleagues and discuss something other than work. To some extent, this also boosts our productivity at office,” says Mahir Ahmed, assistant executive, Branding and Corporate Communication, IPDC Finance.

While some companies offer flexible lunch schedules, others have rather rigid timetables. It is not possible to go out of office for lunch in the prospect of a “colleague’s hangout” within such a short period. On the contrary, on special occasions such as Pahela Falgun, groups of colleagues flock to restaurants and order according to their heart’s desires. Being forced to consume lunch at their workplace, it is not every day that they get to eat according to their heart’s will, despite having access to a plethora of delicious cuisines available right at their fingertips.

At other times, when workload is relatively low, it is a common sight to witness groups of employees enjoying a warm cup of tea at the local tea stall and

discussing futile incidents or concocting crucial conversations regarding life and its odysseys.

“Our office location is in an eerie dead-end, which allows us a repose from work by sitting on the pavement sipping coffee after lunch. This makes me recall the days when I had plenty of time to spare for hangouts. Now I have my own identity, and

am receiving so many benefits and facilities, yet I barely have time to maintain social and familial relationships,” said Pushpo Meem, a banker working at Gulshan.

The other group of people

Despite having access to so many options and holding numerous privileges, we do not fail to complain. If you ever happen to be travelling on the road during lunch hour, you may witness a band of rickshaw pullers taking their afternoon siesta, uncomfortably resting their heads on the passenger seat and using their dowdy cummerbund as a shade from the scorching sun.

This ten-minute break after their luncheon, maybe the only one they can afford to have, amidst the frenzied chores that they continue to do day after day to earn basic bread and butter for the family. The half-an-hour lunch break may be his only opportunity to socialise and catch a break from the shackles of commuting through the roads and alleys to earn a living.

Lunch hour among the working-class people is not limited to grabbing a quick meal before re-joining work. It has more meaning and insight than the naked eye can see. Whether it is a banker contemplating his life choices or a rickshaw-puller happy to take a quick nap amidst the hustle of work, lunch time mania poses more significance than just consuming food.



By Fariha Amber
Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed

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