

Dhaka Day by Day

Low paid and Yet Satisfied

by Lamis Hossain

Jainul Abedin likes pan. His stained lips and reddish teeth flashed in a mischievous smile revealing this fact.

The Noakhali native would love to disclose more of his life story, but when the phone rings in the next room, he dashes off in light leaps; his navy blue muffer flapping behind. The bright red seater wrapped around a lean physique and his sprightly demeanor belie the drawn face, he answers the phone in the next room in the quavering voice of an old man. "Hello?"

Jainul is an office peon, ready to make tea and bring paper whenever you want. His eagerness to serve makes him easy to exploit, but Jainul doesn't seem to mind too much. "I've been in this job since 1972," he claims proudly, but he isn't as sure about his own age. "I'm around 55 years," he informs. His weather beaten face and grey hair make him look much older.

Jainul hasn't always worked in an office. Before the Liberation War of '71, he used to be a shopkeeper at Purana Paltan lane in front of a Bombaya family's house. He starts reminiscing about the family in Urdu and recites what seems like snippets of conversation from the past. He looks a little annoyed when asked to translate. "I used to be quite close to them," he offers unapologetically.

Why didn't he remain a shopkeeper then? "People looted everything I had," he explains. "Some even came to beat me up." Jainul, therefore, packed up and headed home. His head was grazed by a bullet, or so he claims, when a Dhaka-Narayanganj launch got shot at. "Look, see this mark?" Jainul asks pointing aside his

hair to show some stitch marks.

Following independence, Jainul got a job of guarding the Supreme Court library for a year, before taking up his present one as a peon in a research institution. He gives a conspiratorial smile. "I've seen everything here," he says without volunteering further information.

But does she enjoy his work as a general dogbody? "I like working here," he answers. "I had more responsibility before. I shaped many things here. I know the office very well," the peon adds. His pride in his occupation is certainly a change from the reluctant attitude of many in the job. Jainul believes that those he has served will acknowledge his loyalty to them. "Ask any of them (previous and present directors) about me if you doubt my sincerity".

But though he has a generally positive attitude, Jainul feels he hasn't always received his dues. "Four years ago I had an accident while I was doing a job errand," he recalls. "My leg had to be put in plaster, but my brother had to give me the money in the end."

He also sees his family only once a month but this doesn't bother him too much. At least he gets to see them. He doesn't complain about his Tk 1,800 salary a month either. How has he managed to stay in the job for so long without becoming bitter? "You have to be patient. If you work with patience you'll make a name for yourself (as dependable). You have to keep on the straight path and refuse to fill yours or anyone else's pocket," he says simply. Sounds like a discarded work ethics these days.



Foundation of science building of school laid

The opposition political parties would be wholly responsible if any constitutional crisis is created by the mass resignation of the opposition MPs from the Parliament.

Housing and Public Works Minister Rafiqul Islam Mia said this yesterday at the foundation laying ceremony of the science building of Gurnita High School in Muradnagar thana of the Comilla district, reports UNB.

The minister said, BNP came to power through people's mandate. It would be changed through ballots, not by other means.

He said the opposition could not suggest the government how the elections could be made fair and impartial. It could be fair and free if the illegal arms, black money and undue influence could be stopped, the minister added.

Weather

Dry spell likely

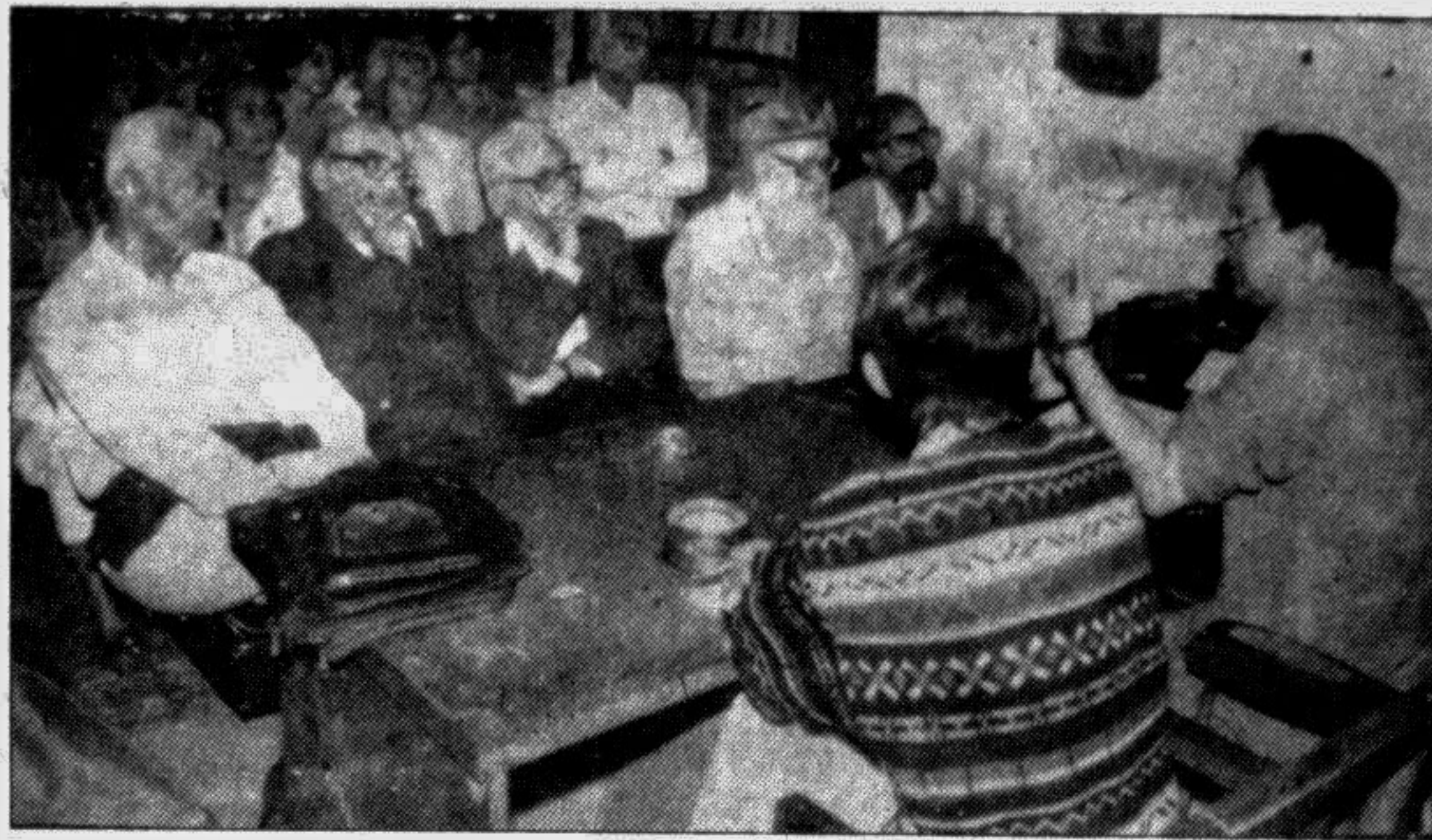
Weather is likely to remain dry across the country with temporary partly cloudy sky in the regions of Chittagong, Noakhali and Barisal during the next 12 hours till 6:00 pm today, reports UNB.

The Met Office forecasts no appreciable change in the night temperature over the country during the period but may register a fall in the following week.

Country's highest temperature 29.8 degrees Celsius was recorded at Sitakunda and the lowest 9.2 degrees at Dinajpur. The sun sets today at 5:19 pm and rises tomorrow at 6:40 am.

The maximum and minimum temperatures and humidity recorded yesterday in major districts of the country are given below:

City	Temperatures in degrees Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	6 am	6 pm
Dhaka	29.0	11.2	67	57
Chittagong	29.2	15.0	78	67
Rajshahi	26.5	13.0	69	84
Khulna	27.6	11.6	77	64
Barisal	28.5	10.6	80	82
Sylhet	28.5	12.5	60	53
Cox's Bazar	27.7	16.0	65	80
Dinajpur	26.9	09.2	70	67



Professor Aijaz Ahmad (in punjabi), a Senior Fellow of the Nehru Memorial Library, Delhi speaking at a discussion on "the future of Marxism" at the Lekhak Shibir office in the city yesterday. Seated (foreground) is Azfar Hussain, General Secretary of the Lekhak Shibir.

— Star photo

Osmany Memorial Children's Award giving ceremony

State Minister for Finance Mojibor Rahman yesterday urged the children to go through the life and works of 'Bangabir' Osmany for building up themselves as worthy citizens of the country, reports BSS.

He made this call while addressing the Osmany Memorial Children's Award giving ceremony arranged by the Bangladesh Youth Front at the National Sports Council auditorium in the city.

Secretary of Women Affairs Ministry Motiur Rahman, Editor of the Bangladesh Times Mahbub Anam, Editor of the Weekly Robbar Tosharrar Ali and Shamsul Alam also spoke on the occasion while Faruk Ahmed Chowdhury chaired the function.

The state minister said the government believes that the talents of the children should be nourished for the sake of the nation. That is why the government has taken up different measures for the flourishing of the latent talents of the children. In this connection, he recalled that late president Ziaur Rahman had established the Shishu Academy.

Paying tributes to General Osmany, Mojibor Rahman said the late leader had not only led the freedom fighters in 1971, he also fought for establishment of democracy in the country.



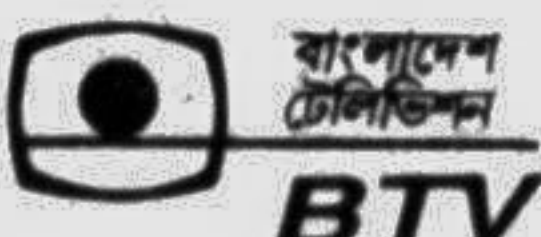
Christmas celebration in a city home. The Christian community celebrated their greatest festival befittingly in the city and elsewhere in the country yesterday.

Chittagong Press Club election Dec 31

CHITTAGONG, Dec 25: The biennial conference of Chittagong Press Club and election of its managing committee will be held on December 30 and 31 respectively, reports BSS.

According to a press release of the election commission today a total of twenty-four candidates from two panels will contest for eight posts.

It said voting will start from 10:00 am on December 31 (Saturday) and continue till 4:00 pm without any break.



Monday

- 8:45 Opening announcement Recitation from Holy Quran
- Programme summary
- 9:00 SAARC cricket tournament India vs Bangladesh
- live telecast from National Stadium-1
- 12:30 Closing of the first half of the sports programme
- 1:00 Starting of second half of the sports programme
- 5:10 Sangbad
- 5:25 Sports programme
- 6:30 Moder Garab Moder Asha
- 7:00 Open University
- 7:25 Nazrul songs
- 8:00 News in Bangla
- 8:30 Sukher Thikana
- 9:00 Bhara Nadi Banka
- 9:00 News in English
- 10:00 Murphy Brown
- 10:30 Comedy series: Coach
- 11:00 Khabar/The News
- 11:30 Tomorrow's programme summary
- Closing announcement
- Close down

'Future of Marxism is open-ended'

By Staff Correspondent

The future of Marxism is open-ended, concluded a prominent Marxist theorist at a talk delivered on "the Future of Marxism".

Aijaz Ahmad, best known for the book "In Theory", in a thought-provoking and insightful two-hour talk argued that the relevance of Marxism did not fade and as a body of knowledge Marxism has more power than the "political Marxism".

Aijaz, who prefers to declare himself as an orthodox Marxist, refused to accept the notion of the collapse of Marxism.

Aijaz, in his talk, which was organised by the Bangladesh Lekhak Shibir (the country's leading left-leaning writers' organisation) yesterday, raised a few pertinent points of Marxist thinking. In his powerfully moving account Aijaz pointed out that the future of Marxism can only be understood in terms of the history of Marxism itself, and traced to what historical position made the birth of Marxism imminent. "If we follow the development," Aijaz maintains, "of Marxism through the past one hundred years, we will see that the history of mankind is not the same before or after Communism Manifesto."

Socialism has forced capitalism to rethink its own position, particularly when the democratic nature of capitalism was turning into fascism in the 40s, said Aijaz — Senior Fellow of the Nehru Memorial Library, Delhi.

In response to a question, raised in the open discussion programme following the talk, Professor Aijaz emphasised the proposition that "Marxism, as a theory, has all the tools — some are very developed — to explain the predicaments we are facing today."

Professor Aijaz Ahmad is in Dhaka in connection with a three-day seminar held between December 20-22 on 'Colonial and post-colonial encounters' organised jointly by the Department of English, Dhaka University and Bangla Academy.

An introductory note on Aijaz before the talk was given by Azfar Hussain.

Aijaz will leave Dhaka for Delhi today.

Obituary

E M A Zaman, retired manager of the Sadharan Bima Corporation died of old age ailments at his residence yesterday at noon. He was 76, says a press release.

Quikhuant of the deceased will be held after Asr prayers December 28 at his residence (Chhayabati, 53/1, R K Mission Road, Gopibagh).

Freedom fighters rally

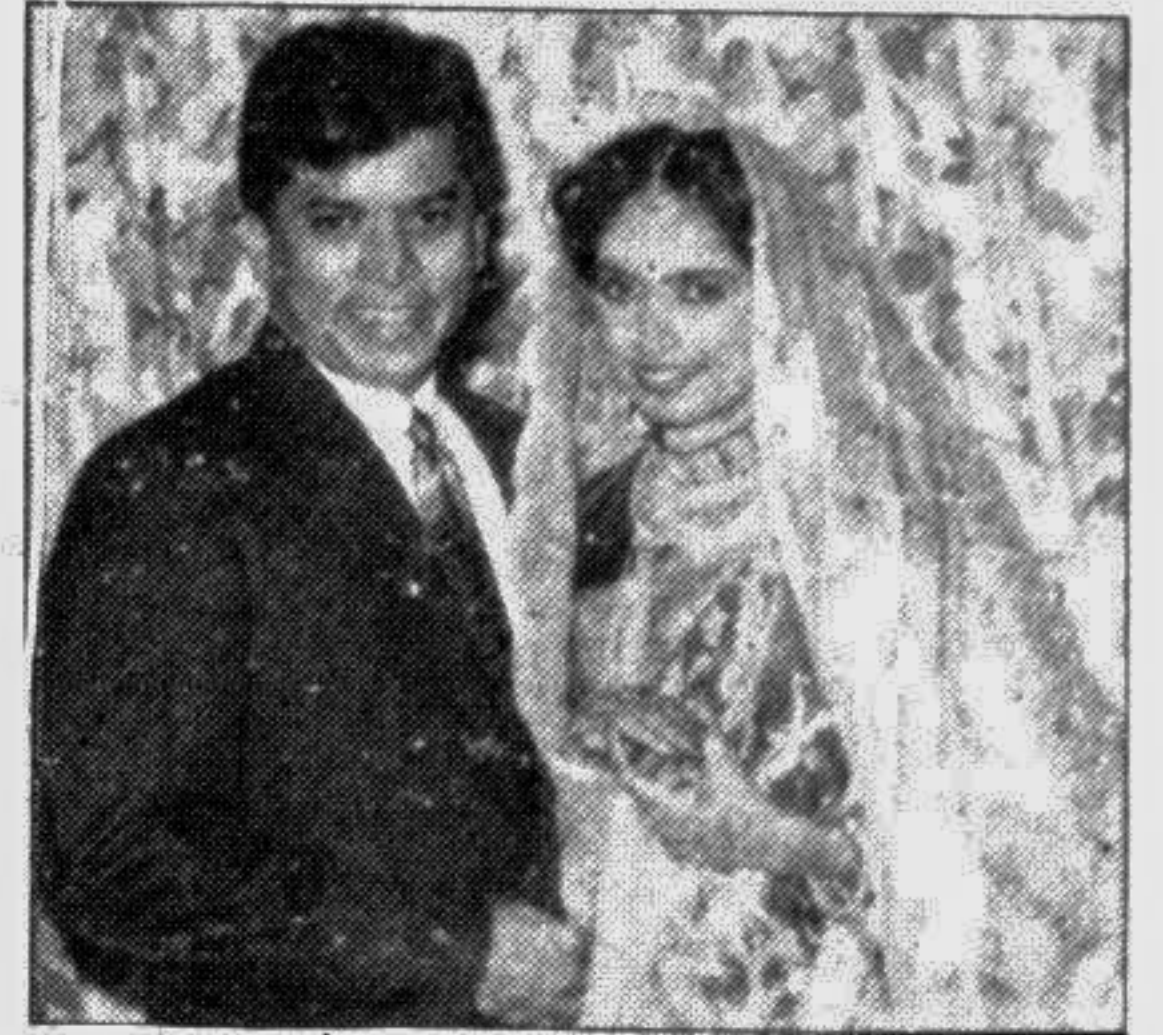
Speakers at a freedom fighters rally in Mehendiganj recently called for translating into reality its true perspective the ideals and spirit of the Liberation War to make independence meaningful and materialise the dreams of lakhs of martyrs, reports BSS.

The rally and reunion, the first ever in this thana headquarters since liberation of the

country, was arranged by the thana unit command of Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Sangsad.

Commander of the sector number three and former chief of army staff Maj Gen (ret'd) K M Shafiqullah Biruttu attended the rally as the chief guest while local parliament member Mohiuddin Ahmed inaugurated the function.

Congratulations!



Elora and Evan

— Mithu bhai

সলিমুল্লাহ হল প্রাক্তন ছাত্র সমিতি

সলিমুল্লাহ হল প্রাক্তন ছাত্র সমিতির প্রথম বার্ষিক সাধারণ সভা ও পুনর্মিলনী অনুষ্ঠান ২৬-২৭ জানুয়ারি ১৯৯৫-এ দু দিন অনুষ্ঠিত হবে।

সমিতির সদস্যদের পুনর্মিলনী অনুষ্ঠানের জন্য ৫০০/- টাকা চাঁদা ও স্যুভেনীর-এ ছাপানোর জন্য ২ কপি সাদা-কালো ছবি এবং বায়োডাটাসহ আপামি ১৫ জানুয়ারি ১৯৯৫ তারিখের মধ্যে জনাব একে এম বারী, প্রবন্ধে - এ্যারোলিনা টাভেলস লিঃ, ১৬৫, ডিআইটি এক্সটেনশন রোড, ঢাকা, ফোনঃ ৮৩৩৪৬১, ৮৪১৫৩৮ এই ঠিকানায় যোগাযোগ করতে অনুরোধ জানানো যাচ্ছে।

যারা এখনো সমিতির সদস্য হননি তাদের এটি ফি ১০০/- টাকা এবং পুনর্মিলনী অনুষ্ঠানের জন্য ৫০০/- টাকা চাঁদা ও উল্লিখিত ছবি ও বায়োডাটাসহ একই ঠিকানায় যোগাযোগ করতে অনুরোধ জানানো যাচ্ছে।

অধ্যাপক ইয়াজকীন আহমেদ

আহবায়ক

মৃত্তিকা বিজ্ঞান বিভাগ, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

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