

Bangladesh: Resist GM golden rice! Protect local varieties of rice!

Rally and Human Chain formed demanding stoppage of golden rice

Friday 15 February 2019, by [ALAM Badrul](#), [BKF](#) (Date first published: 13 February 2019).

Today on 13 February 2019 Wednesday at 11 am, organized by Bangladesh Krishok Federation, Bangladesh Kishani Sabha, Bangladesh Adivasi Samity, Bangladesh Bhumihin Samity, Labour Resource Center, Right to Food and Social Security Forum a rally and human chain demanding resistance of golden rice and protection of local variety of rice took place in front of National Press Club, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Presided over by Bangladesh Krishok Federation president comrade Badrul Alam the rally and human chain was addressed by Bangladesh Krishok Federation General Secretary comrade Zayed Iqbal Khan, Vice-President Rehana Begum, renowned labor leader Abul Hossain who is also Central Member of Workers' Party of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Bhumihin Samity General Secretary comrade Subal Sarker, Central Leader Shamsul Alam, Right to Food and Social Security Forum Coordinator Aminur Rasul, Bangladesh Shramik Federation General Secretary comrade AAM Fayeze Hossain, Labour Resource Center General Secretary Shibli Anowar, Bangladesh Kishani Sabha central leader Nasrin Sultana, Bangladesh Adivasi Samity Omoli Kisku, among others.

The speakers in the human chain and rally said golden rice is a genetically modified rice which was invented by Transnational Corporation. It has been propagated that it contains beta carotene, Vitamin-A, and zinc which would remove the nutrition deficiency and night blind among the poor people. In effect, there is no proof found till now on this. Rather, the adverse aspect came to sight mostly.

In a country like Bangladesh with rich bio-diversity and fertility foreign companies makes all ill-attempt indiscriminately to introduce GMOs. In the mean time, Bangladesh government has given approval of commercially cultivation of Bt. brinjal (egg plant) despite protest, movement and resistance from the people. Still Bt. potato and Bt. cotton are on field test. Current Bangladesh Agricultural Minister and Bangladesh Rice Research Institute approved the golden rice already. Now it is waiting only for clearance of Environment and Forest Ministry for commercially cultivation in the country.

In the rally and human chain the speakers also added that the contamination of golden rice is high level of aggressive. It is not the fact that the field in which the golden rice will be cultivated will contaminate that field or surrounding field only but also contaminate soil, water and air indeed. How many natural ways of pollination will be valid for golden rice. So it will contaminate others plants so easily. Syngenta Companies took endorsement from Bangladesh Rice Research Institute for the field test of golden rice in 2015. This is only Bangladesh which gave this kind of approval for golden rice.

The chair of the Rally and Human Chain, Bangladesh Krishok Federation President Badrul Alam said that if golden rice is introduced in Bangladesh peasants and agriculture will be affected seriously. For the peasants will be made allured to accept and for the cultivation of this rice. As a result, the own process of production and preservation of seed of peasants will be jeopardized extremely. Peasants

will lose the sovereignty over their traditional seed preservation process. Thus, in the long run, peasants will lose their food sovereignty as negative consequence of golden rice.

Mr. Alam also mentioned that in different provinces of India including Andhra peasants fell a victim to crops failure by cultivating GM Bt. cotton resulting in choosing the path of massive suicides. So far, more than 2.5 million peasants committed suicides. It was told that peasants would benefit from the cultivation of GM Cotton. Adversely their lives perished. In our country peasants in different places including Noakahali also faced massive crops failure and became pauperized by cultivating hybrid Narika and Jhalok rice coming from Africa. Peasants were not given any compensation for this loss. With golden rice there is possible circumstance like this to be arisen.

Meanwhile the commercialization of GM Bt. brinjal did not bring any good result for this peasants. All the peasants who were made to accept this Bt. brinjal are sufferers. It is also told that US, Canada, Australia has already approved this rice. But there is loophole in their endorsement. Their approval is some sorts of giving consent to others. They did not give approval to cultivate in their own countries but have no reservation to grow in the developing countries. Even the peasant in Philippines where the golden rice emerged has destroyed the trail filed of golden rice as protest.

The speakers fervently call upon the government to comply with demands as follows:

1. Let not the golden rice be introduced in Bangladesh
2. Let not the golden rice be given the clearance by the Ministry of Environment and Forest
3. Let the commercial cultivation of Bt brinjal be stopped
4. Let the GM crops which are in test field be stopped immediately
5. Let not the approval of the crops harmful for public health and destructive to environment be given

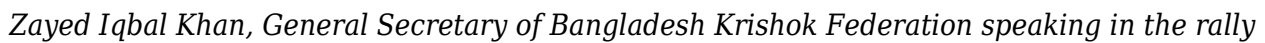
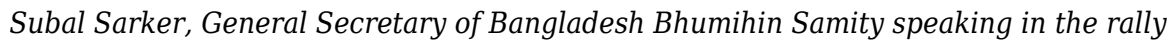
Photos of the program on golden rice in Dhaka, Bangladesh.



Aminur Rasul, Coordinator of Right to Food and Social Security Forum, speaking in the rally



Shibli Anowar, General Secretary of Labour Resource Center, speaking in the rally



Below are press-cutting of the program published in dailies (different electric media also widely broadcast the program).





