

# **Bangladesh: Rally, human chain and procession held in front of Dhaka National Press Club in the context of World Food Day**

Thursday 21 November 2024, by [BKF](#) (Date first published: 25 October 2024).

**On 21 October 2024, a rally, human chain and procession were held in front of Dhaka National Press Club in the context of World Food Day, demanding the people's rights to food, land and water.**

Held under the chairmanship of Bangladesh Krishok Federation President Comrade Badrul Alam the rally was addressed by, among others, Textile Garments Workers Federation President prominent Labor Leader Abul Hossain, Bangladesh Krishok Federation General Secretary Zayed Iqbal Khan, Vice President Rehana Begum, Ready Made Garments Workers Federation President Lovely Yasmin, Bangladesh National Workers Federation President Shamim Ara, Bangladesh Landless Association Vice President Dr. Shamsul Alam, United Labor Federation General Secretary Nahid Hasan Nayan, National Labor Federation General Secretary Maryam Akhter, Motherland Garments Workers Federation President Saleha Islam Shantana and General Secretary Al Amin, Bangladesh National Democratic Garments Workers Federation General Secretary Salma Akhter, Dhaka District CNG auto-rickshaws [compressed natural gas] Mishuk [electric tricycles] Driver and Workers Union General Secretary Sakawat Hossain Dulal, Bangladesh Garment Workers Federation General Secretary Bachchu Mia, Bangladesh Student Union Formation Process Convener Lydia Ahmed Silva, etc. After the meeting, a protest procession paraded various roads of the city.



The president of the meeting, Comrade Badrul Alam, said in his speech that the goal with which the United Nations decided to celebrate World Food Day every year has not been met. Instead of building global food security, food shortages and food insecurity have emerged. Even today, 750 million to 100 million people around the world go hungry every day. 4.5 billion people in the world do not get nutritious and healthy food. 50% of these people live in the Asian continent. He said that the United Nations had announced the 15-year 'Millennium Development Goals' in 2000 to eradicate hunger and poverty. Since the goal was not met, the 'Sustainable Development Goals' were announced in 2015 for a period of 15 years, i.e. until 2030. Today is the last stage of 2024. There is no possibility of meeting the target in the remaining 5 years.

All these indicate that the world's policymakers are not finding the right solution or are deliberately deceiving the people of the world. Or are just joking with the people on the issue of hunger and poverty. He also said that Bangladesh is currently going through a difficult time. Despite the change

of government about two and a half months ago, there has been no relief in public life. The rise in commodity prices has brought suffocation to public life. Most people are not able to consume the necessary food. Due to lack of ability to purchase food, people are harming their health by eating unhealthy and junk food. They are not able to meet medical expenses by buying food at high prices. However, both food and medical treatment are constitutional fundamental rights of the people. He said that about 22% of the people are living below the poverty line. Malnutrition is at a serious level among those living below the poverty line. The social safety net that exists for them is not enough to overcome this situation.

Comrade Badrul Alam recommended the introduction of sustainable agricultural systems, i.e., environmentally friendly farming (agroecology), and the establishment of people's rights over land and water to build a world free from hunger and poverty. He also expressed the opinion that agroecology will play a major role in preventing climate change. He expressed the opinion that food sovereignty policies and strategies should be integrated and implemented in the development policies of each country, giving special priority to small farmers and family farmers, to increase food production in the world.

According to the Global Hunger Index-2024, Bangladesh is 3 steps behind among 127 countries in terms of its ability to eliminate hunger this year, ranking 84<sup>th</sup>. According to the index, Bangladesh is now facing moderate levels of hunger. In a word, it can be said that there is a silent famine in the country. He called on the government of the country to come out of this situation by discussing with the active farmers' organizations of the country and finding a specific roadmap.



Speakers at the rally expressed concern over the rise in commodity prices and said that despite the change in government, the living standard of the people has not changed, but rather has deteriorated. People are struggling to buy food items. Even after cutting the family budget, they are not saving. On top of this, natural disasters due to climate change are making the situation even more fragile. They called on the current interim government to take immediate and special measures to prevent food crisis and commodity prices. The speakers also said that the government should not just observe food days, but should take effective initiatives to ensure food production, self-sufficiency, and safe, healthy and nutritious food.

Demands proposed at the meeting:

1. World Bank-IMF: Get out of our food system
2. The world's richest countries must compensate for destroying our food system
3. Stop converting agricultural land for other purposes
4. Return the rights of land and water to the people now
5. Reduce import dependence, support local production
6. Stop mono-crop farming for export purposes

7. Prevent price hikes
8. Introduce eco-friendly farming methods
9. Establish food sovereignty to eliminate hunger and poverty



It is worth noting that World Food Day is celebrated internationally on October 16 every year. This year's theme was 'The Right to Food for a Better Life and a Better Future'. The day has been celebrated regularly since 1981. It was decided to celebrate the day in commemoration of the establishment of the 'Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)' in 1945. Organizations related to food and food security, such as the World Food Program and the International Fund for Agricultural Development, also celebrate the day with great importance. This year, the day is of special importance because the annual session of the Committee on World Food Security under the United Nations held in Rome, Italy on October 21-25 will discuss and ratify the policy recommendations and guidelines on world food security and nutrition (adopted in 2004). At the same time, the annual meeting of the World Bank-IMF is going to be held in Washington, DC, America. There will also be a special discussion on world food and agriculture.

## Bangladesh Krishok Federation (BKF)

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