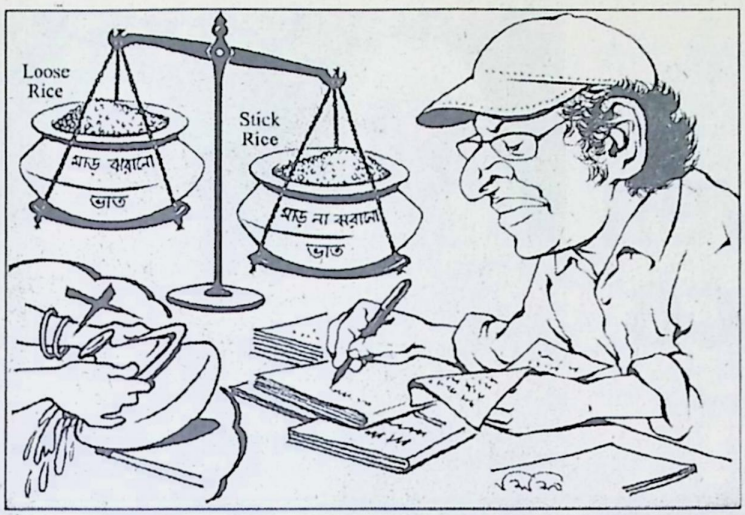


Gazi Rafiq on his research table to determine the theory of difference of mass– a cartoon by Shishir Bhattacharjee.



Gazi Rafiq presenting his keynote paper at a seminar held on March 8 at National Press Club. Chief guest DU Vice Chancellor AAMS Arefin Siddiq, special guest economist Prof MM Akash, Nutritionist Dr Khursheed Jahan, Dr Khaleda Islam and Moinul Hasan Saber were also present.

The first system is much practiced among us. Most Bangladeshis follow this method out of habit and as a part of our cooking culture, without knowing the consequences of draining out the liquid. But this process, says Rafiq, results in a loss of 18 types of nutrient particles, including vitamins and a significant portion of carbohydrate. Cooking rice in this way we do not only lose nutrition, but a portion of the rice grains also gets lost with the gruel. This Rafiq terms as the 'third stage wastage of rice'.

"While I was thinking of how to measure and control this economic loss I contacted a few places like FPMU (Food Planning & Monitoring Unit) and INFS (Institution of Nutrition and Food Science) back in 2011. I was interested to know the quantity loss of edible rice during cooking. But unfortunately I did not find any scientific study available in this area."

Then Rafiq decided to run a few tests on his own in order to gain some statistical and mathematical evidence of his theory.

"As for the first attempt I took two separate samples of parboiled milled rice weighing 500 gms and boiled them separately draining away gruel from one and drying out the gruel from the other. Now weighing the boiled rice I could get an estimate of how much rice was wasted from the sample we drained away the gruel.

With different types of rice the result can vary from 80 to 100 gm. Repeating the test with variable and different types of rice the third stage wastage of rice was found actually to be 13-15 percent, which translates to an estimated 293 crore 25 lakh US dollars annually.

Rafiq presented his scientific keynote paper in a seminar held on March 18, 2012 at the National Press Club Dhaka on his research. It was attended by Dr AAMS Arefin Siddique, Vice Chancellor of University of Dhaka, Dr Khursheed Jahan , a renowned nutritionist and faculty in DU and also economist Dr MM Akash. He has also acquired a copyright from the copyright office government of the People 's Republic of Bangladesh as the author of his research "Difference of Mass in applying alternative Method of cooking Rice."

In the attempt of making this practice popular among the general people, Bangladesh television is airing a 3minute promo. He has also written a song advocating sticky rice:

Ma bhai-boner achhejana
Mar phele bhaat khete mana
Boshabhaat a sholoana
Shustho thaka jai

"The population has grown more than twice from 7.5 crore since our independence and food production is also accelerating with the growing population," Gazi Rafiq says. "Therefore, we need to plan wisely and stop waste of food to strengthen our food security."

This self-effacing, soft spoken man is not interested in becoming famous from his research. "All I want is to change this wasteful practice so that we as a nation can become self-sufficient in food production," he says optimistically. ■