



IS IT A ROAD OR DUMPSITE?

Nausea-inducing garbage lies piled high on Aga Sadek Road in Old Dhaka just metres away from the office of ward 33 of Dhaka South City Corporation, rotting in the heat and spreading unsanitary liquids for around a month as per local traders who also allege that only a negligible amount is cleared out every day. The photo was taken on Wednesday noon.

PHOTO: FAHD MANNAN

Gazipur handmade puffed rice makers struggling

In need of financial, govt assistance

ABU BAKAR SIDDIQUE AKAND, Gazipur

A good number of people at Barotopa village in Sreepur of Gazipur are now passing busy time producing muri (puffed rice) in a conventional way to meet the increasing demand during the Ramadan.

There are at least 250 people involved in the manual production of puffed rice in the area.

"The handmade muri has a high demand in market despite its relatively higher price. I have been marketing the homemade muri for nine years for those customers seeking to buy chemical free and unadulterated muri," said Mohammad Salim, a puffed rice trader in the capital's Gopibagh area.

He told these to journalists while describing quality and features of such muri produced at the village.

Salim said he supplied the muri to the market after collecting it from the producers at the village, adding, "The muri is sold in some specified stores only and customers buy from there."

The handmade muri is in high demand, particularly in Cantonment area and Rajarbagh Police Lines where 1Kg of muri is sold at Tk 90.

Some Uddin of Barotopa village, who has been producing muri for some 20 years, said they collected paddy from a local trader for producing the muri to which no chemicals were added except for salt.

"My wife, Parul Akter, is a muri maker too. Paddy trader, Mohor Ali of Barotopa Bazar, gives us 11 maunds of paddy a week, from which we can produce seven maunds of muri. For this we are paid only Tk 4,000. On top of that we are often given Tk 3,000 for the same amount of production if the quality gets low," added Somej, who supports a family of five by producing muri.

Gias Uddin, who too is engaged in the job, said they picked dry leaves up twice during the dry season and then used them as kitchen fuel while producing the muri.

"The wage is too low," he added.

Abdus Sahid, another muri maker, said it took eight days from threshing and husking

paddy to producing muri.

"Typically we get 11 maunds of paddy a week from the trader. We are given 22 more maunds during Ramadan, as there is a high demand at the time," Sahid added.

The producers, however, said instead of taking the paddy from traders, they could produce muri on their own if they could directly get the paddy from the government or a financial assistance to run the business.

Kamruzzaman, a customer in the market, said the price of the handmade muri is higher than that of the machine-made ones by at least Tk 40.

Crispy and tasty, the muri does not get spongy even when mixed with other food items, mentioned the customer.

Another buyer, Tajul Islam, said, "The rice of the machine-made muri is stored in the warehouse, but the paddy from which handmade muri is made is directly collected and husked. We witness the process every day," adding, "One can easily distinguish between qualities of the two types."

However, paddy trader Mohor said he collected "Mota paddy" (a particular variety of paddy known as Mota in Gazipur) from Patuakhali as it is highly expedient for

producing muri. In addition, IRRI-28 rice is also suitable, but it is not in abundance, mentioned Mohor.

"It costs a lot to bring the Mota paddy from Patuakhali because the traditional varieties of rice sold in the market cannot yield quality muri," said the trader, adding that each month he marketed 1,200 to 1,400 maunds of muri out of 2,100 maunds of paddy brought from Patuakhali.

The production cost for 1,200 maunds of muri stands at around Tk 84,000, while it brings him a profit of Tk 24,000 to Tk 30,000, he mentioned.

"Six years back, I used to export the handmade muri to Dubai, Malaysia and Singapore. But it is quite difficult for us now to export the muri despite a high demand, as the items made with machines can easily flood the market," said Mohor.

Producers want to buy paddy and produce puffed rice on their own with the government assistance, instead of working for traders.

NEWS IN brief

Missing Jhalakathi man found dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhalakathi

A man was found dead in Nabogram village of Jhalakathi Sadar yesterday, a day after he went missing. The deceased, Mohosin Howlader, 30, of the village, used to ride motorbikes on rental basis, said Mahe Alam, officer-in-charge of Jhalakathi Sadar Police Station.

He left home with his rented motorcycle on Thursday evening and did not return home. The next day his hacked body was found in a field, said the OC. The body was sent to Jhalakathi Sadar Hospital for autopsy. A case was filed in this connection.

Technician dies from electrocution

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

An air-conditioning technician died after being electrocuted while he was repairing the air conditioners of Sonali Bank in Dupchanchia of Bogra on Thursday evening.

The deceased, Zakir Hossain, 35, of Sirajganj, had been working as a technician of air conditioner (AC) supplying company, Brothers' Corporation Ltd, in the capital.

Police, quoting the bank manager Mahabubul Alam, said Zakir went to the roof of the building of the bank, to repair the ACs and got electrocuted. Seeing this bank guard Nazrul started screaming and the bank officials hurried to the roof. Zakir who was lying on the roof was rushed to a health complex where doctors declared him dead, said police.

Contacted, Owner of Brothers' Corporation Raihan Mojid said his company has been supplying ACs to the branches of Sonali Bank and Zakir was sent from Dhaka to repair ACs.

Appeal for help

CITY DESK



Jahirul Islam, 38, a shopkeeper in the capital's Mirpur area, has been suffering from bone marrow cancer since 2006.

As his condition has become worse, doctors suggested sending him abroad for an emergency bone marrow transplantation surgery which will cost him around Tk 30 lakh, says a press release.

However, it is impossible for Milton to bear the cost as currently he has no income since he cannot walk or stand for a while. If he tries to walk blood comes out from his urethra.

Moreover, the father of two sons has to spend around Tk 1,500 per month for 2-4 bags of blood and medicines.

Every month he has to ask for help for his treatment cost. His family depends on his wife's small income of handicrafts and he sold all of his properties for his treatment.

So, his family members have appealed to generous people to extend their helping hands to save his life.

Aid can be sent to AC No: 16410135922, Dutch Bangla Bank, Mirpur-10.

For more information anyone can call at 01721078408. Address: 6/Kha, 1/14, Mirpur-10.

COX'S BAZAR ANSAR CAMP ATTACK

Five 'Myanmar citizens' held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) on Thursday claimed to have arrested five Myanmar citizens involved in the attack on a Rohingya refugee camp at Nayapara in Teknaf on May 13.

The arrestees are Rafik Prakash Mamun Mia, Abdur Razzak, Abdus Slalam, Md Harun and Jan-e-Alam.

One of the arrestees Abdur Razzak, a member of Rohingya Solidarity Organisation and an alleged illegal arms dealer, admitted that he recruited about 15 persons to carry out the attack, said Meftah Uddin Ahmed, commanding officer of Rab 7, at a press conference at his office.

The arrests were made in Kutupnang area of Ukhia upazila of the district, he said, adding that the attack on the Ansar camp left the camp commander dead; the attackers also looted 11 firearms and 670 bullets.

Meftah said that the arrestees admitted that they entered Bangladesh through the Naf river and went back to Myanmar after carrying out the attack.

Bullet-hit body found near jail area

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

The bullet-hit body of a young man was recovered near a prison in Sikkardhona area of Cox's Bazar yesterday.

The deceased was Md Ismail, 26, of Romaliarchara area. Police recovered the body from a mountain near the area, after locals informed them, said Md Aslam Hossain, officer-in-charge of Cox's Bazar Sadar Police Station.

The deceased was an alleged hijacker, said the OC, adding that several murder, abduction and hijacking cases had already been filed against him.

The OC said a mark of a single gunshot was found in Ismail's chest and he might have been killed by his rival groups or in an internal clash.

The deceased's relatives confirmed his identity at the morgue, he added.



Puffed rice (muri) being prepared at Barotopa village in Sreepur of Gazipur in the conventional way.

PHOTO: STAR

President on 4-day

FROM PAGE 3

Two girls presented bouquets to President Abdul Hamid and his wife Rashida Khanom while the Bhutanese prime minister presented Khadhars (ceremonial scarf) to the Bangladesh president.

Later, the president was taken to Taj Tashi Hotel in Thimphu through a ceremonial motorcade where he will be staying during the visit.

Schoolchildren, carrying miniature flags of both Bangladesh and Bhutan, welcomed the president just outside the airport. Hamid exchanged greetings with them.

At the hotel, the president was received by the chairman of Royal Privy Council Lyonpo Chenkyab Dorji.

During the visit, Hamid will have a meeting with the king of Bhutan at Tashichhodzong, a Buddhist monastery and fortress, today.

Hamid will also have a meeting with former King Jigme Singye Wangchuck, father of the current Bhutanese king. Bhutanese Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay will meet President Hamid at Taj Tashi Hotel today.

The president will also address the joint session of the Bhutanese Parliament on Monday.

Abdul Hamid will visit the historically and culturally important places like Kuenselphodrang and Dochula.

The president is scheduled to return home on July 4.

2 lakh Bangladeshi

FROM PAGE 3

Now Malaysia is not hiring any foreign workers as it suspended recruitment of foreign workers from all countries, including Bangladesh, on February 19, a day after Dhaka and Kuala Lumpur signed a deal over hiring workers.

On February 18, the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding for recruiting 1.5 million Bangladeshi workers through government arrangements over the next three years.

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বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বিষয়: সরকারি যানবাহন অধিদপ্তরের ৩য় ও ৪র্থ শ্রেণির কর্মচারী নিয়োগ সংক্রান্ত।

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