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RECD. NO. DA 781 | VOL. XXVII, No. 13 | MARCH 13, 1423 BS | RABBI SANSI 27, 1438 HSR

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PAGE 3

OPEN LETTER TO TRUMP

Bana al-Abed, 7, begs US president to help children of Syria

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A man tries to get in a bus in the middle of Topkhana Road in the capital yesterday. Public transport in Dhaka lack the facilities needed. Moreover, the seats designated for them are often occupied by able-bodied people.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

**TOP QUOTE**

"Our position is not good. I say it's alarming. Our position is only better than Afghanistan in South Asia."

TIB EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
DR IFTEKHARUZZAMAN
SAID ON BANGLADESH'S POSITION IN TI CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX

Despite fertile land loss, weather stresses and depleting irrigation water, Bangladesh's agriculture keeps contributing a fifth of the GDP each year. Along with other factors, government's policy support in the form of fertiliser subsidy plays a big part here. But misappropriation of the key agro input by a syndicate involved in shipment and transport, and mismanagement by the authorities, in this case Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation, have tainted this otherwise commendable effort. If such large-scale corruption is outrageous, the culture of impunity within the corridors of the BCIC and elsewhere is worrisome. This systematic graft has cost the state about Tk 100 crore each year since 2009.

In this four-part report, HASAN JAHID TUSHER exposes the corruption in the fertiliser sector.

FERTILISER RIDDLE 2

Cheated by the Invisible Man

Fertiliser authority mysteriously gets deceived by same trader time and again

Once bitten, twice shy. This idiom means when something hurts you once, you tend to avoid that thing or person. But this does not seem to apply to the state-run Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC). A man has been conning BCIC over and over again but the corporation continues to do business with his firm.

This is the story of a fertiliser transporter, who stole from the corporation, disappeared, resurfaced to steal again, disappeared once again and is now back for business.

In 2005, the Rapid Action Battalion arrested Nur Trading Company's proprietor Mohammad Elias Kanchan for misappropriating 700 tonnes of government fertiliser worth Tk 5.47 crore.

After three months he came out on bail and promptly disappeared for a few years, staying away from this lucrative business.

But with the blessing of a section of BCIC officials, he

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According to the contract, all the fertiliser was to be delivered within 21 days but he took four years. He did not deliver the rest 7,272 tonnes worth Tk 31.81 crore. He was served several notices and warnings over the years but he ignored those.

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