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PHOTO FEATURE

Zahedul Khan captures the camaraderie of the Scouts Jamboree at Mouchak



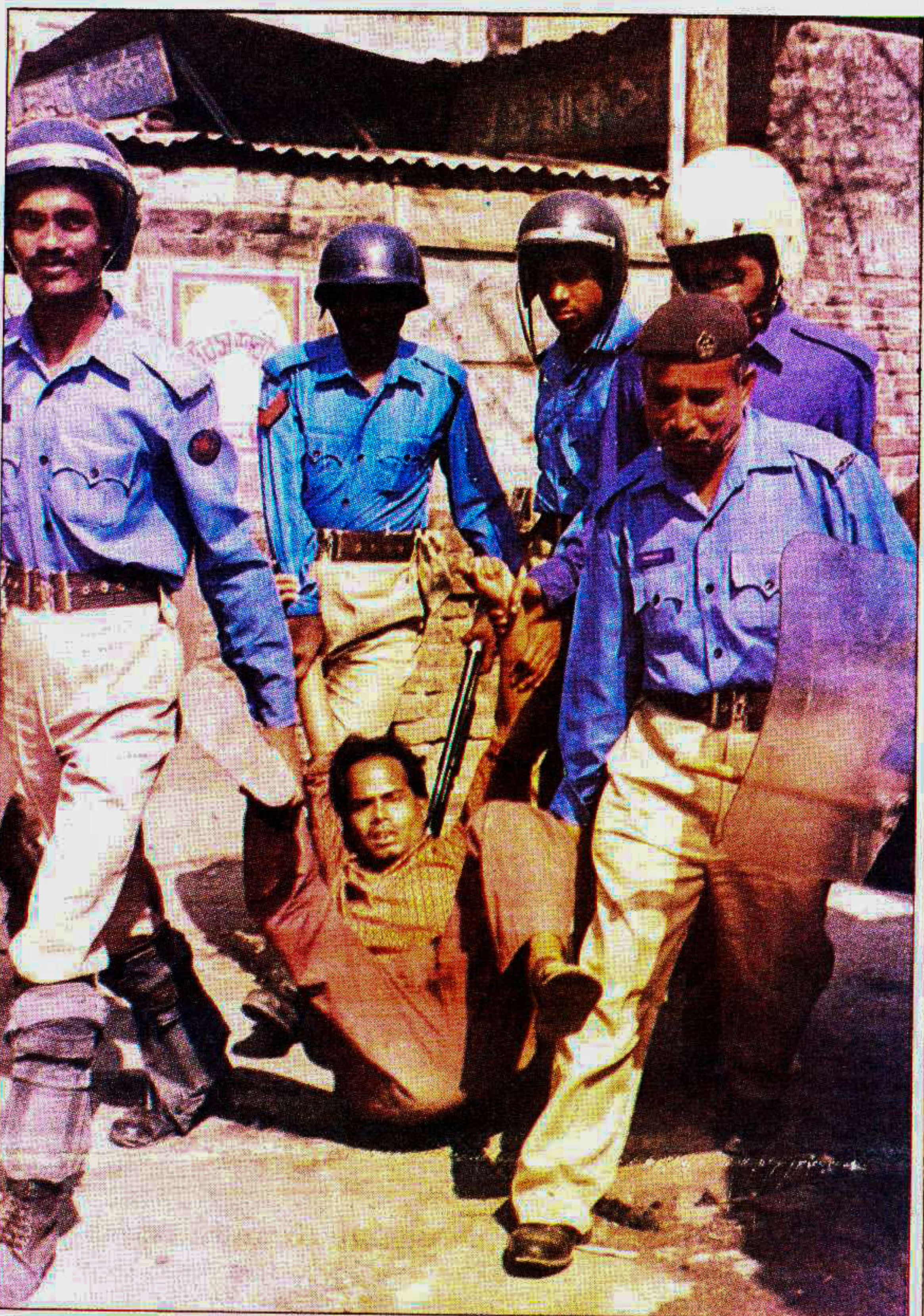
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PEOPLE

Ahmed Sofa face to face with Ziaul Karim, and Halima Khatun narrates her childhood days to Navine Murshid



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Time out for a picket

For this pro-hartal activist, the day of 'heroics' came to an abrupt end when police carted him off to the slammer following clashes in the afternoon. The photo was taken in the Bijoy Nagar area yesterday.

CHT impasse nearing end?

By Special Correspondent

Shantu Larma, chairman of Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS), continued to have discussions yesterday with officials following up his talks with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Monday break the impasse on full implementation of the CHT peace accord.

The sources said his talks with the Prime Minister had a positive impact on his standoff with the government on the interim Regional Council of which he was nominated as Chairman last October. He had raised a number of problems like release of former military activists of PCJSS and withdrawal of cases against them, nomination of the 22-member RC, resettlement of Bengalis and rehabilitation of refugees repatriated from India.

He had also demanded enhanced powers for the RC, designed a play a pivotal role in administering the CHT. He also called for amendments to the three hill district council acts and accused a section of government functionaries of holding back the implementation of the CHT treaty signed on December 2, 1997. The sources said Shantu Larma would be given the status of a state minister when he takes charge as RC Chairman as per the treaty provisions.

Six die in 60 hours

Hartal claims two more on final day of senseless strife

By Staff Correspondent

One person was killed and more than a hundred were injured in violence on the last day of the opposition-sponsored 60-hour hartal across the country yesterday.

And the policeman, who had been fighting for life at Combined Military Hospital after being injured during hartal hours on Tuesday, also died yesterday.

With the two, the death toll in violence during the 60-hour shutdown rose to six. In all, some 500 were injured in the three days.

For the third day yesterday, the hartal called by the allied opposition to press for four-point demands paralysed normal life throughout the country. The shutdown generally disrupted road communication and left most shops and businesses closed.

Trains and inland water transports operated almost normal. Biman ran both domestic and international flights on schedule. Schools, as usual, were closed.

In the port city, a pro-BNP Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activist was shot dead and 20 others received bullet injuries in a clash with anti-hartal activists yesterday. They fought at North Jaladi village under Banshkhali thana of the district in the afternoon, police and party sources said.

The dead, Mohammad Yousuf, 20, was identified by BNP leaders as joint convenor

of JCD's North Jaladi unit of Banshkhali. But police said both Awami League and the BNP claimed the victim was their activist, our Chittagong correspondent reported.

In the capital, a BNP advisor Major (ret) Shahjahan Omar sustained bullet wounds during a chase and counter-chase between pro- and anti-hartal activists in city's Motijheel yesterday afternoon.

JAGPA president Shafiqul Alam Prodhan received minor bullet wounds during a clash between police and pickets at Paltan at around 11:30 a.m.

The clash erupted after a bomb was hurled at police from a pro-hartal procession led by Prodhan. He was released after treatment at a private clinic.

Some 11 policemen sustained bomb injuries when several bombs were hurled at police deployed near the Nightingale Restaurant at Bijoy Nagar-Kakrail crossing at about 11:30 a.m.

Processionists led by BNP leaders Sadek Hossain Khoka and Abdul Matin Chowdhury fought with police for around half an hour. Police lobbed teargas shells to disperse them and picked up around 10 from among them.

At least six persons received bullet injuries and several others were hurt as Jamaat-e-Islami activists and pickets fought with Jubo League activists near the daily Sangram office at Maghbazar at around



In the line of duty

Police constable Tajuddin, wounded on Tuesday at Tantibazar area when a bomb hurled by hartal pickets struck him in the head, died yesterday. Other policemen gather to show respect before Tajuddin's body is taken away for burial.

— Star photo

11:30 a.m. yesterday.

Chase and counter chase between the pro- and anti-hartal activists continued for about an hour turning the area into a virtual battlefield. Police lobbed teargas shells to bring the situation under control.

A reporter of the daily Shyambazar, Sarwar Babul Chowdhury, received bullet injuries in his right hand after being caught in crossfire between pro- and anti-hartal activists at Paltan at around 11 a.m. Ruling party activists man-

handled a photographer of the daily Sangbad, Sohrab Alam, near the Jatrabari crossing during hartal hours yesterday noon. The anti-hartal elements also snatched the photographer's camera but later returned it.

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Freedom at last

By Staff Correspondent

With the opposition-sponsored general strike coming to an end at six yesterday evening, people who had been virtually confined to their homes for 60 hours started streaming out on the city streets almost madly.

As the sun set on the western horizon last evening, hartal-callers withdrew their pickets from Dhaka streets, so did the anti-hartal zealots. Police personnel were also withdrawn from all strategic points - removing people's fear that they might be beaten up by any of the three parties involved in a hartal.

Some rushed to kitchen markets, some to department shops and hospitals, while some seemed to have come out only to take a breath of free-

dom. For many, on the other hand, it was the first chance to socialise after three long days of isolation.

However, when the cherished freedom came, a large number of trucks with their long-stranded lorries carrying essentials like fresh vegetables rushed towards capital through Jatrabari from various eastern directions and others through Gabtali from northern districts.

With life swinging back to normalcy, usual traffic jam started staging a comeback. Honking cars, buses, tempos and so many other modes of transports joined long tail of a big traffic queue at Sayedabad. Poor rickshaw-pullers who had their three good days of free roads over, again found the Dhaka streets too difficult to negotiate with.

"Despite its innumerable negative implications, hartals have at least one very important positive side," a middle-aged passenger on a rickshaw was heard saying. "It is only hartals that can offer us comfort on the city streets. No traffic jam, no smoke - no pollution."

ANNOUNCEMENT

Today's The Daily Star on Friday includes a 4-page supplement on US Trade Fair and a one-page supplement on Rotary International. We regret that regular items such as Insight, Nation, SAARC and Yeptalk have been dropped due to space constraints.

Energy sector deals struck with US

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh and the United States yesterday signed three agreements to develop an energy information system, conduct a gas utilisation study and provide technical assistance in the implementation of US company Unocal's Western Region Integrated Project (WRIP).

At a press conference at Petrobangla yesterday, visiting US Acting Assistant Secretary for Policy and International Affairs of the Department of Energy Calvin Humphrey, said that the US government would provide 8,80,000 US dollars for the studies and technical assistance programmes under these agreements.

Of these agreements, technical assistance in WRIP is the only project-oriented scheme. The assistance in the WRIP is aimed at helping Bangladesh conduct its negotiation procedures in smooth and transparent manner as the Unocal hampered project is very complex in nature, said US Ambassador John C Holzman at the press conference.

State Minister for Energy Prof Rafiqul Islam, Energy and Mineral Resources Secretary Dr Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, Acting Secretary for Power GM Mondal, Additional Secretary of Energy Syed Tanvir Hossain, and other high officials from Energy Ministry, Petrobangla and Bangladesh Power Development Board were present in the signing ceremony. Humphrey, describing the

salient features of the agreement, said that by implementing the Energy Information System with the help of Energy Information Administration of USA, Bangladesh would have an up-to-date and detailed database on its energy potentials.

The Gas Utilisation Study was actually signed late last year and the US government had fixed 0.4 million dollars for this project. The study undertaken by US agency James Chemical Engineering, now gets an additional fund of 1.67,000 US dollars.

The study, expected to be completed in a few months, would highlight a wide range of priority projects for making the country's gas sector more significant in the economy. Under the third agreement, the US Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) would provide consultation services to help implement the WRIP project.

US Ambassador Holzman explaining the third contract said that the Unocal's WRIP was a complex and unusual project. "It needs transparency and Bangladesh needs to protect its interest. That is why we are providing expertise to look into WRIP component and help Bangladesh in its negotiations," he said.

Adding to his points, Calvin Humphrey said, the power and gas tariffs proposed in WRIP needed to be rationalised and a fair price should be ensured.

The WRIP is a 750 million dollar scheme that focuses on the development of the Shahbazpur gas field, the setting up of a series of power plants and the building of pipelines in several regions of the country. While Unocal claims this project to be sound, Bangladeshis experts believe that it is risky for Bangladesh and that the country would lose billions of dollars from it. Even the World Bank has been opposing the project.

Replying to questions whether the USA was pushing Bangladesh to export gas, US Energy Delegation leader Calvin Humphrey said, "The goal of our discussions was not to push gas export. We are here to help Bangladesh develop its energy sector. We're not here to dictate anything."

"But, all possibilities (of gas utilisation) should be seen," he added.

Focusing on the second round block bidding, Calvin Humphrey noted that the Americans were concerned about the second round bid.

"If its process is transparent and if a level playing field is ensured, then I am sure some competent US companies can come here to compete."

I feel confident that the second bid would go forward and there will be a level-playing field for all," he said. State Minister for Energy Prof Rafiqul Islam said that it was more important to extract

natural resources for its economic use than leaving those alone. "That is why our Prime Minister has created a congenial atmosphere for foreign investment in this sector," he said.

Meanwhile, UNB adds, despite differences with the government, BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia has said she will extend total support in developing the country's energy sector.

The assurance of the opposition leader came at a meeting with the US delegation at her official residence yesterday evening.

"I am satisfied. The discussion was fruitful," Humphrey told a correspondent.

Ambassador John C Holzman who was standing by his side said, "United States does not, in principle, support hartal. I have told Begum Khaleda Zia that hartal is not the justified way to ventilate grievances."

Prayer Timings

February 12

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-25	5-29
Jumma	12-15	1-30
Asr	4-10	4-20
Maghrib	5-58	6-02
Esha	7-10	7-20

Source: Islamic Foundation

Second round bidding for gas blocks starts again

Star Report

Petrobangla has invited the oil companies which were issued Letter Of Intent (LOI) for five blocks to a second phase of negotiations beginning on February 17, a well placed Petrobangla source said.

With this move, the process of second round block bidding for oil and gas exploration in the country resumes after nearly half a year.

Earlier in December, Petrobangla had invited these companies for negotiations. But they all regretted.

This time the negotiations will begin with US company Enron discussing technical components of Production Sharing Contract (PSC) for blocks 5 and 6. Petrobangla allocated six days for discussions with Enron.

This will be followed by a three-day negotiation with US company Unocal for block 7.

Pangaea, another company, which was issued a LOI for block 8 has been invited to a three-day discussion from February 26.

Multinational Shell Oil has been invited for negotiation on block 5, on February 28. Shell has responded to Petrobangla's invitation saying that it would discuss block 10 in addition to block 5. Otherwise, it indicated, it was no longer interested in the negotiations.

KAFCO

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES WITH KAFCO

KAFCO (Karnaphuli Fertilizer Company Limited), the largest international joint venture in Bangladesh, invites applications from suitably qualified persons for the following positions at its ammonia/urea fertiliser complex in Rangadia, Chittagong. The requirements for the qualifications mentioned below may be waived in the case of candidates with particularly strong work experience. Remuneration will be in line with the high expectations KAFCO will have of the successful candidates.

Manager, Human Resources Development

Candidate are expected to be in their early forties, possess at least a graduate degree, and hold a qualification in personnel management. They should have 15 years or more work experience in large industrial concerns, preferably in foreign or international companies. A sound knowledge of employment legislation and experience in industrial relations within the country are essential attributes, and exposure to computerised personnel management systems will be a distinct advantage. A candidate will have to demonstrate excellent written and oral communication skills both in Bangla and in English. They will also be decisive, creative and approachable, and should be able to train people and exercise overall supervision of the work of KAFCO's HRD & Personnel Department.

Deputy Manager, Administration

Candidates are expected to be in their thirties or early forties and possess at least a graduate degree. A minimum of 10 years experience in support services in reputable, preferably industrial, concerns is necessary. The ideal candidate will be hard-working, adopt a "hands on" approach to their work, have good communication skills, and be computer literate.

Medical Officer

Aside from possessing at least an MBBS from a recognised institution, a candidate must have at least 10 years experience in patient care in large hospitals and/or large industrial concerns. A developed ability to deal with injuries (particularly burns) in chemical industries will be a distinct advantage. The successful candidate will have to cater to the medical needs of over 630 employees, and of their families, at the KAFCO Plant and Housing Colony.

Deputy Manager, Security

Candidates are expected to be in their mid to late thirties or early forties and possess at least a graduate degree. A minimum of 10 years experience in the Armed Services at the rank of Captain or above is necessary. Work experience in large industrial concerns is preferred, and specialised training and experience in security is essential. The successful candidate must be able to exercise overall supervision of security operations in KAFCO's Plant, jetty, well points, housing colony, and adjacent areas.

Security Officer

Candidates are expected to be in their thirties, and have a minimum of 10 years experience in the Armed Services, preferably as a commissioned officer. Work experience in large industrial concerns is desirable, and experience in security is essential.

A candidate should submit a letter of application and curriculum vitae, copies of certificates and testimonials, a recent passport-size photograph (preferably in colour), and a list with contact details of 3 referees, to the Manager-Administration at KAFCO's corporate office at the following address:

Karnaphuli Fertilizer Company Limited

Uttara Bank Bhaban, 15th Floor, 90-91 Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000

Applications should reach no later than February 22, 1999. The position for which an application is made should be clearly marked on the envelope. Each application will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Canvassing for a candidate shall be considered a ground for disqualification of that candidate.