



PHOTO STAR  
Sylhet Division Development Action Council forms a human chain in the city yesterday demanding precautionary measures against earthquake damage.

## JP leader joins Awami League

UNB, Dhaka

ABM Mostakim, a Jatiya Party leader and industrialist from Ashashuni upazila in Satkhira district, has joined Awami League.

Mostakim called on AL general secretary Abdul Jalil Monday night at the party's Dhanmondi office and joined the opposition party, expressing his commitment to fight "the misrule of BNP-Jamaat alliance government," says a party press release.

Party leaders Begum Motia Chowdhury, Obaidul Kader, Advocate Abdul Hamid MP, Sultan M Mansur, Syed Abul Hossain and vice-principal Abdus Shaheed were present at that time.

## Govt college teachers abstain from work

DU CORRESPONDENT

Teachers of 265 government colleges including 11 Teachers' Training College and three Alia Madrassahs observed a daylong work abstention programme yesterday to press home their various demands including withdrawal of non-education cadre officials from education cadre posts.

No class was held at any government colleges in the country including in Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, Barisal, Rajshahi and Sylhet, says a press release.

The other demands of the teachers included creation of 5,000 new posts, regularisation of 3,000 teachers, and selection grade for lecturers. The BCS General Education

Association in a statement said a rally will be held in Dhaka College on August 1 to drum up support in favour of their demands.

The association also called for intervention of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia to realise their demands.

## 1911 more held

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested 1,911 people, including six listed criminals, during their countrywide drive in the last 24 hours ending at 6am yesterday. During the drive, they also recovered seven firearms, one other weapon and 12 bullets.

## South Asia Court of Women begins August 11

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A three-day 'South Asia Court of Women on the Violence of Trafficking and AIDS' begins in the city on August 11.

The Asian Women's Human Rights Council (AWHRC) organises the event in collaboration with the Policy Research for Development Alternative (UBINIG) and Narigrantha Prabantana.

More than 1500 women rights activists, experts, academics, media personnel, legal experts, and testifiers from seven South Asian countries will attend the programme, organisers said at a press conference yesterday.

"The court will neither be a substitute nor parallel to any existing court of law, rather a symbolic one, which will particularly concentrate on women's subjugation," said UBINIG Executive Director Farida Akhter.

"Fundamental character of this court is that the jury will hear the plaintiff in absence of judge and defender, and will draw future work plan," she explained.

The jury members will come from South Africa, Ireland, India, Nepal, Pakistan, the US, and host Bangladesh.

The court endeavours to provide women with an alternative space where they will get an opportunity to recount different forms of violence they faced, Farida said.

"Women and child trafficking occurs with the aim of sexual slavery, forced marriage, and collecting human organs. But once a trafficked woman is rescued, she suffers further social stigma in the name of HIV test," she said.

The court of women will seek to understand the issues in the context of violent global order calling upon the states and governments to make appropriate economic, social, and legal provisions to protect the rights of victims of trafficking.

Sayda Akhtar of UBINIG said that 647 members of 102 organisations from across the country had already confirmed their participation.

The AWHCR has held 17 similar courts so far in India, Pakistan, Nepal, China, Japan, Egypt, Lebanon, Kenya, Morocco, South Africa, Australia, and Cuba. The event in Dhaka will be funded by the UNDP.