

## 'Raise awareness about drugs'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday called for raising mass awareness about drugs to free the nation from the curse of drug addiction.

Social movement against drugs is a must for checking drug abuse,

said Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed.

He also called for stringent action against illegal arms and drug traders. To curb illegal drug trading, the government has incorporated the issue into the Speedy Trial Act, he added.

The discussion was held to mark the launching of an anti-drug sticker at the National Ptres Club with the slogan 'Drug-free Bangladesh'. The Jhalak Foundation launched the sticker that reads 'Sorbonasher Onnya Nam Madak' (another name of destruction is drug).

Drug addiction is the biggest problem in the society, the minister said, adding that the drug addicts should not be alienated from the society, rather their problem should be dealt with sympathetically.

Quoting available statistics, Matiur Rahman, editor of the Prothom Alo, said illegal drug trade involving around Tk 5,500 crore takes place in the country a year and people of upper class are engaged in it.

He called for putting pressure on the government to bring the illegal drug traders to justice.

He said the government has a responsibility to raise awareness about drugs.

Detailing anti-drug campaigns launched by the Prothom Alo, Matiur Rahman called on the government to provide more funds to various organisations working against drug abuse.

Hasan Shahrier, executive editor of the Ittefaq, and Mustak Ahmed Chowdhury, advisor of the foundation, also spoke. Masum Ahmed Chowdhury, chairman of the Jhalak Foundation and the Oriental Bank, presided over the discussion.

## British MP calls on Hasina

UNB, Dhaka

Visiting member of the House of Commons of the United Kingdom Oona King made a courtesy call on Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina at her Sudha Sadhan residence here yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed bilateral matters, including political and economic situation, in Bangladesh.

Sheikh Hasina's Political Advisor Saber Hossain Chowdhury and Press Advisor Jawadul Karim were present.

## IJSG website launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

International Jute Study Group (IJSG) launched website at its secretariat in the city yesterday with a view to creating awareness of the beneficial effects of jute use and to promote international jute trade through disseminating relevant information, says a press release.

Science, Information and Communication Technology Minister Dr. Abdul Moyeen Khan inaugurated the website (<http://www.jute.org>).

Dr. Moyeen Khan said technology should be used to develop marketable jute products.

He also said that technology play a vital role for developing international cooperation between jute producing and consuming countries.